

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

FOR

WETASKIWIN REGIONAL PUBLIC SCHOOLS

COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COUNCILS

CONSTITUTION

Article 1 NAME

1.1 The name of the council shall be Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Council of School Councils (hereinafter called Council of School Councils)

Article 2 DEFINITIONS

In all Bylaws of the Council of School Councils:

- a) Council means the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Council of School Councils.
- b) Parent means all parent(s), guardian(s), or legal custodian(s) of a student enrolled in Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools.
- c) School means any school in Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools.
- d) Educational Stakeholder - parent(s) of students enrolled in Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools and all other person(s) who have an interest in the education of students in Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools.

Article 3 MISSION and VISION STATEMENTS

3.1 Mission Statement

The Mission of the Council of School Councils is to communicate among school councils and to the Board respecting educational issues.

3.2 Vision Statement

The Council of School Councils shall actively support the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools in their vision to educate and care for students, staff and community in a safe and nurturing environment.

Article 4 OBJECTIVES

In keeping with the Province of Alberta School Act and the current School Councils Regulation the Council of School Council's objectives are as follows:

- 4.1 To provide input to the Board on issues of importance such as, Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools philosophy; mission; school policies; programs and directions; and budget allocations to meet student needs.
- 4.2 To stimulate continuous improvement through meaningful involvement of all members of the school community.
- 4.3 To facilitate communication among all the members of the School Community and promote an approach to schooling in which decisions, at the Board and school are made in a cooperative manner.
- 4.4 To facilitate the development of the common vision of the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools.
- 4.5 In cooperation with the Board Chair, the Council of School Councils will keep the Wetaskiwin Regional Division No.11 Board of Education informed of the issues and needs within Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools communities.

BYLAWS

Article 5 AFFILIATIONS

5.1 Council of School Councils will encourage the membership of all Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools School Councils in the Alberta Home and School Councils Association (AHSCA) to enable Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Councils to access Alberta Home and School Councils Associations resources and services.

Article 6 MEMBERSHIP

6.1 The general membership of Council of School Councils shall be any parent of a student enrolled in Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools, and any other educational stakeholders.

6.2 The membership of the Council Executive shall be:

- (a) A minimum of one parent or member of the public representing each of the eighteen Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools, elected or appointed by their individual school council.
- (b) The chairman of the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Board/or designate.
- (c) The Superintendent of Schools/or designate.
- (d) The chairman of the Board and the Superintendent are non-voting members.

Article 7 OFFICERS

7.1 (a) The chairperson will be elected by the school council representatives attending the first Council of School Councils meeting of the school year.

(b) The Council of School Councils Executive shall elect their Officers to the following positions: Vice- Chairperson, Secretary /Treasurer. Any member of Council of School Councils is eligible to be elected to any Officer position.

7.2 The term and eligibility of the Council of School Councils Executive Officers is as follows:

(a) The Council of School Councils Executive Officers will be elected for a one-year term.

(b) The term of the Council Executive Officers shall run from first meeting to first meeting of the following year.

(c) No Council Executive member shall hold the same office for more than three consecutive years unless otherwise decided by Council of School Councils.

(d) Should a vacancy occur in any office, the Council of School Councils shall have the power to appoint one of the Council of School Councils members to fill that office for the remainder of the unfinished term.

(e) Election of Officers of the Council of School Councils shall be done by a majority vote.

7.3 Elections shall comply with the Wetaskiwin Regional Division No. 11. Board of Education policy on School Councils.

Article 8 DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS

8.1 The Chairperson

The Chairperson shall be responsible for providing leadership, planning the agenda for the meetings, chairing and maintaining rules of order of the meetings, for the Council. The Chairperson shall receive all correspondence for consideration of action. The Chairperson will sign and date the minutes of each Council of School Councils Meeting once they have been accepted.

8.2 The Vice-Chairperson

The Vice-Chairperson shall assist the Chairperson with duties as assigned and, in the absence of the Chairperson, assume the duties of the Chairperson.

***8.3 The Secretary/Treasurer**

The Secretary shall be responsible for keeping accurate minutes and records of the meetings, taking care of all correspondence and communications, and keeping an accurate list of names and addresses of the Council of School Councils members. The Secretary will sign the minutes of each COSC Meeting after they have been accepted.

The Treasurer function shall consist of keeping a complete record of all financial transactions of the Council, presenting an account of the funds to the Council members, and maintaining the records and books of the accounts. All financial transactions and any audit requirements will be conducted through the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Associate Superintendent: Business Administration.

Article 9 COMMITTEES

9.1 Council of School Councils may appoint committees consisting of Council members to the Constitution and Bylaw committee, or any other committees with either delegated or advisory responsibilities.

9.2 A committee chairperson shall keep the Council of School Councils informed as to their progress and receive approval before taking any action.

9.3 Constitution and Bylaws Committee

(a) Shall consist of all Council of School Councils members.

(b) The Committee shall be responsible to review and recommend revisions to the Council Constitution and Bylaws as required.

9.5 Ad-Hoc Committees

(a) The Council Executive have the right to form Ad-Hoc Committees as they require.

Article 10 MEETINGS

10.1 Quorum

Thirty-three percent of school representative members will constitute a quorum for all meetings.

10.2 Meeting Logistics/protocol

- (a) The chairperson calls the meeting to order.
- (b) The chairperson recognizes members before they speak.
- (c) Each item is entitled to full and free debate by individual members - one at a time.
- (d) Each person desiring to speak should be allowed to speak once before anyone speaks for a second time.
- (e) Where possible, consensus will be the preferred method of decision-making (Appendix C.) however; formal motions should be dealt with according to parliamentary procedure (Appendix B).
- (f) The chairperson is responsible for moving the meeting along and ensuring no one monopolizes the floor.
- (g) Only one subject may be discussed at a time.
- (h) If time does not permit full discussion of an item, a motion may be made to table the item for discussion at another meeting.
- (i) Every member has equal rights.

(j) Any motion that contradicts provincial laws and regulations, local policy, or School Council Constitution and Bylaws is out of order.

10.3 Decision Making Procedures

- (a) All decisions, as much as possible will be made by consensus (Appendix C)
- (b) If a vote is required at least fifty one per cent of those voting must be voting members of Council of School Councils.

10.4 Council of School Councils Meeting

- (a) The first meeting of Council of School Councils, shall be held on or before October 15th of each year.
- (b) Council of School Councils will determine meeting locations.
- (c) Council of School Councils shall have at least five meetings each school year, not including the Board/School Councils public meeting or special meetings which may be called.
- (d) The Meetings of the Council of School Councils will be advertised throughout the School Community at least seven days in advance of the Meeting date.
- (e) School councils may submit their written requests for discussion seven days in advance for any Meeting of the Council within the current school year.
- (f) Action resulting from such a discussion request may or may not be pursued, at the discretion of Council of School Councils.
- (g) If an issue of discussion can not be satisfactorily resolved within the Council of School Councils, the issue will be forwarded to the Board.

Article 11 AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS AND/OR APPENDICES

11.1 The Council of School Councils bylaws remain in force from year to year unless amended at a special meeting of the Council of School Councils, called for that purpose.

11.2 The bylaws of the Council of School Council shall be amended by a two-thirds (of those in attendance at the meeting) majority vote.

Only Council of School Councils members may vote on by-laws and/or by-law amendments.

11.3 Notice of amendments to Council of School Councils bylaws must be circulated at least seven days in advance of the meeting.

Article 12 CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

12.1 When a conflict occurs within the Council of School Councils, a special meeting of Council of School Councils executive and the involved parties will be called within 14 days of the conflict being identified.

12.2 At the above mentioned meeting, the Conflict Resolution Procedure outlined in Appendix D will be followed.

Article 13 ARBITRATION

13.1 If after having gone through the Conflict Resolution Procedures the dispute is not resolved, either party may request arbitration from:

- (a) the Board of the Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools
- (b) the Alberta Home and School Councils Association.
- (c) any impartial body agreed on by both parties.

13.2 The decision of the Board is binding on all parties.

Article 14 DISCIPLINE/REMOVAL

14.1 Grounds for Discipline or Removal

Grounds for discipline or removal may include but not be limited to:

- (a) a breach of the Code of Conduct (Appendix A)
- (b) contravention of the Wetaskiwin Regional Division No.11 policy and guidelines for school councils (code 960.000 #15)
- (c) using the meeting to promote personal interests
- (d) creating internal dissension affecting morale
- (e) adversarial relationships with school staff
- (f) disrupting the educational climate

14.2 Discipline

Any disciplinary action will be as determined by the Board

Appendix A

CODE OF CONDUCT

For School Council Members of Wetaskiwin Regional Public Schools Council of School Council members

(as suggested by The Alberta Home and School Councils' Association)

- * A member shall be guided by the mission statement of his or her school council.
- * A member shall endeavor to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- * A member shall practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth.
- * A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
- * A member shall encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- * A member shall apply democratic principles.
- * A member shall consider the best interests of *all* students.
- * A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.
- * A member shall not disclose confidential information.
- * A member shall limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- * A member shall use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise.
- * A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.
- * A member shall accept accountability for decisions.
- * A member shall declare any conflict of interest.
- * A member shall accept no payment for school council activities.

Appendix B**Robert's Rules of Order
Simple Reminders****Points**

The following three points are always in order:

1. **Point of Order:** a question about process, or objection and suggestion of alternative process. May include a request for the facilitator to rule on process.
2. **Point of Information:** a request for information on a specific question, either about process or about the content of a motion. This is not a way to get the floor to say something you think people should know. People misusing points of information in this fashion will be defenestrated, or otherwise sanctioned forcefully.
3. **Point of Personal Privilege:** a comment addressing a personal need - a direct response to a comment defaming one's character, a plea to open the windows, etc.

Motions

All motions must be seconded, and are adopted by a majority vote unless otherwise noted. All motions may be debated unless otherwise noted. Motions are in order of precedence: motions *may* be made only if no motion of equal or higher precedence is on the floor (i.e., don't do a number (move to end debate) when the body is discussing a number 4 (move to suspend rules).

1. **Motion to Adjourn:** not debatable; goes to immediate majority vote.
2. **Motion to Recess:** not debatable. May be for a specific time.
3. **Motion to Appeal the Facilitator's Decision:** Not debatable; *goes* to immediate vote. Allows the body to overrule a decision made by the chair.
4. **Motion to Suspend the Rules:** suspends formal process for dealing with a specific question. Debatable; requires 2/3 vote.
5. **Motion to End Debate and Vote or Call the Question:** applies only to the motion on the floor. Not debatable; requires 2/3 vote.
6. **Motion to Extend Debate:** can be general, or for a specific time or number of speakers. Not debatable.
7. **Motion to Refer to Committee:** applies only to the main motion. Refers question to a specific group with a specific time and charge.

8. **Motion to Divide the Question:** breaks the motion on the floor into two parts, in manner suggested by mover.

9. **Motion to Amend:** must be voted for by a majority to be considered and by a 2/3 to be passed. If amendment is accepted as “friendly” by the proposer of the amendment then many bodies will allow it to be accepted without a formal vote; this is a way of including a consensus-building process into procedure without endless debate over amendments to amendments. Strictly speaking, however, once the main motion is made **it** is the property of the body to amend.

10. **Main Motion:** what it is you’re debating and amending.

Appendix C

Consensus is

- * the collective opinion arrived at by a group whose members have:
 - listened carefully to the opinions of others
 - communicated openly
 - sought alternatives
 - had the opportunity to influence a decision
 - explicitly stated that even if they do not favor the proposal, they can allow the decision to stand and will not deliberately work against its success.

It is a process used to find the highest level of agreement without dividing the participants into factions.

Appendix D

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

Step 1. PLAN AHEAD

- * take time for individual planning and reflection
- * clarify specific concerns, interests and positions
- * identify underlying concerns
- * be aware of personal needs

Step 2. SET THE STAGE

- * set a positive tone
- adopt a problem-solving mode
- acknowledge the other person
- * agree to some ground rules

Step 3. TALK IT OUT

- * define the problem
- * understand issues from different perspectives
- * deal with emotions
- * identify needs and interests
- * discuss assumptions and values

Step 4. CREATE SOLUTIONS

- * identify a range of options
- * determine advantages and disadvantages
- * choose solution(s) that are mutually satisfactory

Step 5. PLAN FOR FOLLOW-~UP

- agree to a future meeting

THIS CONSTITUTION SIGNED AND DATED

COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COUNCIL CHAIR

COUNCIL OF SCHOOL COUNCIL SECRETARY

DATED THE _____ DAY OF _____, 2003