

Tuscany School Council - Operating Procedures



1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "School" means Tuscany School;
- B. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- C. "Parent(s)" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at the School;
- D. "Principal" means the acting principal of the School;
- E. "Chair" means the acting chair of the School Council;
- F. "Regulation" means the *School Councils Regulation* as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- G. "School community" means Parents, the Principal, teachers, staff, students and interested persons in the community at large;
- H. "Operating Procedures" means this governing document serving the same purpose as the Bylaws referenced in the Regulations; and
- I. "CBE" means the Calgary Board of Education, being the public-school board in Calgary.

2. AUTHORITY

The School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, such as the Regulation or otherwise, hereinafter referred to as "legislation."

3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Mission - To partner with the School community to enhance the well-being and effectiveness of the School, so that each student has the best learning experience possible.

Vision - We see the School as a vibrant and welcoming community, where every child is actively engaged in effective learning and in developing the citizenship skills that he or she will require to become a positive contributing member of society. The Council will undertake discussions and activities that will enhance student learning and foster the well-being and effectiveness of our School community.

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4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the School Council, in keeping with the legislation, are to:

- A. Represent the Parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the Principal and the CBE on matters relating to the School such as the School's philosophy, mission and vision, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs.
- B. Foster a positive, collaborative environment with a variety of opportunities for meaningful engagement by members of the School community.
- C. Support special events that will support and enhance student learning, encourage participation and promote the well-being of the School community.
- D. Facilitate a performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of this evaluation to the CBE and the School community.
- E. Develop a communication plan to share information with the School community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders.
- F. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics, as set out in Section 17.
- G. Consult with other School Councils and provincial organizations.
- H. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively.
- I. Advise the CBE, and any other municipal or provincial organization, on broader educational issues.

5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP

The School Council uses a Town Hall operating style and model of governance.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
 - 1) All Parents;
 - 2) The Principal;
 - 3) One or more teachers and staff of the School, elected or appointed by the teachers;
 - 4) Others as decided by the School Council (optional).
- B. The voting members of the School Council shall consist of Parents.
- C. The non-voting members of the School Council shall consist of all members who do not meet the definition of a Parent.
- D. The number of Parent members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

6. DECISION MAKING

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

- A. It is the firm intention of the Parents that the decisions of the School Council be reached through a consensus-building process. Such a process should be utilized to its fullest prior to any formal vote being taken by the School Council with respect to any matter. When a member's views are at variance with a majority of the School Council, that member will abide by and respect the decisions made by the School Council.
- B. When a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved, seconded, and passed, by the majority of School Council members present at the meeting during which the vote is taking place.
- C. **The sitting Chair of School Council shall not make a motion, nominate or participate in any voting, unless there is a tie, in which case the Chair will have the casting vote.**
- D. A decision may be made by consensus, however, it must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.

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7. QUORUM

- A. Quorum will be attained, when the majority of voting members present at any School Council meeting, are Parents and when the Principal, or a designate, is present.
- B. In the absence of a quorum:
 - 1) If the Parents and School Council members present agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council may continue for the purposes of discussion of issues;
 - 2) No motions shall be considered or approved; and
 - 3) No decisions by consensus shall be reached.

8. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and TERMS OF OFFICE

The “Executive Officers” are Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The Executive Officers are the primary members required for the operation of the School Council and all other roles on School Council are optional.

The “Executive Committee” consists of the Executive Officers and all coordinators of existing initiatives and committees. Please see Appendix A for a list of current positions on the Executive Committee.

- A. All Executive Committee positions must be filled by Parents.
- B. Every Parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive Committee position on the School Council.
- C. **An elected Executive Committee member’s term is two years, however positions that do not require a two-year term are noted in Appendix A.**
- D. **The terms of office are from the first day of the month immediately following the AGM (Example - July 1, 2016 following an AGM in June 2016) until the last day of the month of the AGM taking place 2 years later (Example - June 30, 2018 following the June 2018 AGM). This allows time for a proper handover of the role prior to the end of the School year.**
- E. The Executive Committee will be elected by Parents attending the Annual General Meeting or in the event of vacancies after the Annual General Meeting, elected by the voting members present at a subsequent School Council meeting.
- F. **In the case of more than one person running for the same position, a secret ballot vote will take place and will be tallied by a member of the School administration team present at the Annual General Meeting.**
- G. Any Executive Committee member may resign his/her position at any time, by providing written notice to the Chair and Principal.
- H. **The Executive Committee will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.**
- I. **All voted members of the Executive Committee are expected to attend the regular monthly meetings, in addition to performing their individual position duties as laid out in Appendix A.**

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9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- A. The Core Activities of the Executive Committee members are to:
 - 1. Advise the Principal and CBE on educational issues that pertain to the School;
 - 2. Establish and review School Council's goals, objectives, action plans and procedures;
 - 3. Communicate and consult with Parents and the School community;
 - 4. Establish and execute initiatives that enhance the school environment, including but not limited to, special events, fundraising campaigns, teacher appreciation and School spirit activities and apparel;
 - 5. Support the School's initiatives when applicable. This includes, but is not limited to, procuring volunteers for School activities and executive member presence for specific School activities (ie. Kindergarten Orientation); and
 - 6. Meet regularly.
- B. Decision-making authority is limited to:
 - 1. Determining the School Council Operating Procedures.
 - 2. Setting policies to govern School Council activities at the School level, as described in the School Act;
 - 3. Planning engagement activities that align with the School Council's legislative purpose; and
 - 4. Choosing to provide advice to the Principal and CBE.
- C. Appendix A provides a list of existing Executive Committee positions and pertinent descriptions for each role. Should Council require that a new role or committee be formed, it shall be added to Appendix A accordingly.

10. DUTIES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS / MEMBERS AT LARGE

- A. These members of School Council are those who are not a part of the Executive Committee, but may still attend School Council meetings and will:
 - 1. Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
 - 2. Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
 - 3. Communicate information of interest to the School Council and School community;
 - 4. Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
 - 5. Have a clear understanding of the School Council's objectives;
 - 6. Attend School Council meetings;
 - 7. Identify possible topics for agendas;
 - 8. Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility.
- B. The School Council may appoint committees that consist of School Council members and/or School community members. Committees meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the School Council and present a report of their activities at School Council meetings.

11. VACANCIES

With the exception of School Council positions filled by the Principal and teacher representative(s), any vacancy of the Executive Committee will be advertised to the Parent community. Elections for a vacant position will be held at subsequent meetings of the School Council until the vacancy is filled.

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12. MEETINGS

A. Regular/Monthly Meetings

A minimum of 6 School Council meetings will be held per school year or as called by the Executive Committee. It will be decided when these meetings will take place at the Annual General Meeting. The meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised. The first meeting of the School year must take place within 20 days of the start of the School year.

B. Executive Committee Meetings

A minimum of 2 Executive Committee Meetings should be held during each School year, the first of which should take place prior to the first monthly School Council meeting of the School year. This allows for planning, idea sharing and team building between the coordinators of the existing initiatives and committees.

C. Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, an establishment meeting will be held in accordance with legislation, otherwise an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place once each School year.

- 1) The Annual General Meeting of the School Council will be held in the month of June or at an appropriate time during the School year as determined by the School Council. The meeting will be advertised throughout the School and the community no less than 2 weeks beforehand and will state the business to take place at the Annual General Meeting.
- 2) All Parents are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
- 3) The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
 - a. The election of Executive Committee members;
 - b. Any proposed amendments to these Operating Procedures;
 - c. Presentation of the financial statement of the previous year;
- 4) The Annual General Meeting may also include:
 - a. Plans and budget for the upcoming year;
 - b. Discussion of any major issue in which all Parents should have input such as changes to the vision or mission of the School, CBE, School policy or other major changes in the School program or focus;
 - c. Any evaluation of the School Council.

D. Special General Meetings

The Executive Committee may at any time give notice of a Special General Meeting of the School Council. Notice will be given to the School community 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 General Meeting, all Parents in attendance shall have the right to vote.

Any School Council member may be suspended or expelled for the duration of the School year from attendance at any regular School Council meetings, if, upon a majority vote of voting members present at a Special General Meeting called for that purpose, it is determined to be in the best interests of the School Council to do so.

13. MEETING AGENDAS

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

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14. POLICIES

Subject to any provincial or CBE-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. 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.
- B. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: elections, communication (internal and external), record keeping, fundraising, privacy, location of meetings, official correspondence address, new member orientation, school council evaluation and social media.

15. SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISING

Subject to any provincial or CBE-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may raise funds that do not require incorporation to obtain (e.g., not casinos, bingos, raffles).

- A. The School Council will, where possible, encourage the Fundraising Association (as described in section 16 below) to do the fundraising for the School, the School Council and the School community.
- B. Should the School Council choose to fundraise, funds may be given to the School to track and record, given to the Fundraising Association or deposited in a bank account operated by the School Council.
- C. School Council funds given to the School will be subject to the CBE's policy on School Council fundraising and/or School-generated funds.
- D. In the absence of mutually agreed terms, School Council funds given to the Fundraising Association will be subject to the policies of the Fundraising Association.

16. FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION 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. The Tuscany School Enhancement Society (the TSES) does the fundraising that provides the bulk of the financial support of the School Council. Although the TSES is an independent society, it works collaboratively and interdependently with the School Council in the next interest of the students of Tuscany School and the School community.

- A. The School Council will communicate regularly with the TSES and/or other groups of Parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities.
- B. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open and transparent relationship with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of Parents.
- C. The TSES is a separate and distinct entity from the School Council that will abide by its own bylaws.

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17. CODE OF ETHICS

All School Council members shall:

- A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;
- B. Be guided by the mission statements of the School and School Council;
- C. Endeavour to be familiar with the School's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
- E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School community;
- F. Declare any conflict of interest;
- G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- H. Apply democratic principles;
- I. Consider the best interests of all students;
- J. Respect the confidential nature of some School business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- K. Not disclose confidential information;
- L. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School community as a whole;
- M. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- N. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School community;
- O. Accept accountability for decisions; and
- P. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

18. OWNERSHIP OF SCHOOL COUNCIL INFORMATION

- A. All pre-existing, current and future materials created by and belonging to the School Council are property of the CBE, via the Principal. This includes, but is not limited to, documents, files, email accounts and social media accounts for the School Council. While a Parent is sitting in an Executive Committee position, he or she is the rightful custodian of the information for the duration of his or her term only.**
- B. When a sitting Executive Committee member is leaving his or her position, he or she is required to pass on all role relevant documentation, as well as Council emails, website and social media logins and any other pertinent information to their successor. This includes both electronic versions and hard copies.**

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19. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School CBE'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.

- A. The School Council may request to remove an Executive Committee member or Parent providing that such Executive Committee member or Parent has been notified 21 days in advance of a Special General Meeting of the School Council called for that specific purpose. Such Executive Committee member or Parent will be given the opportunity to be heard at the meeting. Removal will take place by resolution of no less than 2/3 of the Executive Committee and Parents in attendance at said meeting (excluding the individual who is the subject of the resolution).
- B. If at any time, 10 Parents, or 5 Parents and 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 signed written letter to all Executive Committee members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following will apply:
 - 1) The Chair will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council.
 - 2) The Secretary will provide a minimum of 5 days written notice to all Parents and School Council members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special General Meeting.
 - 3) At the Special General Meeting, all Parents and School Council members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
 - 4) On motion, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
 - 5) If the majority of voting members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it.

20. PRIVACY

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

21. DISSOLUTION

As per the legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may choose to 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 the legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) school days after the start of the next school year.

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22. REVIEWS and AMENDMENTS

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

- A. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually by the Executive Committee or by a committee established expressly for that purpose.
- B. The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at any scheduled meeting of the School Council.
- C. Notice of proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School community no less than 5 days before a meeting.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted, by a majority of, the members entitled to vote, at a Regular or Annual General Meeting of the School Council.

Chair's Name

Chair's Signature

Secretary's Name

Secretary's Signature

Principal's Name

Principal's Signature

Date