

**EMILY CARR**



**SCHOOL  
COUNCIL**

**CONSTITUTION**

**Approved May 26, 2015**

(Refer to the meeting minutes of April 21 and May 26, 2015)

## ARTICLE 1: NAME

- a) The organization shall be called the Emily Carr School Council, hereinafter referred to as “the Council”.
- b) The school board shall be called the Ottawa Carleton District School Board, hereinafter referred to as “OCDSB”.

## ARTICLE 2: OBJECTIVES

- a) The objectives of the Council are:
  - i) to develop a strong relationship between home, school and the wider community served by the school, to enhance educational opportunities for all students, and to help each student develop to his or her full potential;
  - ii) to seek the views and opinions of the school’s community to the operation of the school and the programs and services provided;
  - iii) to provide advice to the principal and, as appropriate, to the OCDSB and/or its senior staff, on the development and implementation of policies, programs and services affecting the school;
  - iv) to be an effective voice for promoting the interests of the school and students, and to actively support the school in meeting the education, social and recreational needs of students; and,
  - v) to improve pupil achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents through the active participation of parents.
- b) The Council’s primary considerations are those, which concern the school and its pupils as a whole. Council meetings shall not be a forum for discussion about individual students, staff, parents/guardians, trustees or Council members unless:
  - (i) it is representative of a more general problem; and,
  - (ii) specific permission has been sought and received from Council.

### ARTICLE 3: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE COUNCIL

- a) The Council shall not have any of the powers and duties reserved by law or regulation for the OCDSB or the school principal or for those matters governed by collective agreements.
- b) The specific responsibilities of school councils as per the OCDSB Policy P.014SCO are listed in Appendix A of this Constitution.
- c) The Council's powers shall include, but not be limited to:
  - i) raising funds to further its activities and goals;
  - ii) holding open forums on matters of interest to the school community;
  - iii) representing Council's views at meetings of the OCDSB or other relevant bodies;
  - iv) conducting surveys of students, parents or the public;
  - v) providing input to the OCDSB Principal, Vice-Principal, teachers and staff on school programs, curriculum and organization.

### ARTICLE 4: MEMBERSHIP

- a) Definitions
  - (i) a "member" of Council is any person who holds or shares a position of the Council.
  - (ii) a "community representative" shall be an Ottawa Public School ratepayer who is, during the term of office, not a parent/guardian of any student attending Emily Carr Middle School, nor a member of the OCDSB. A person employed by the OCDSB can be appointed as a community representative on Council if he/she is not employed at Emily Carr and other members of the Council are informed of the person's employment before the appointment.
- b) Composition of the Council.

In accordance with Ont. Reg.612/00 made under the Education Act, the Council shall be composed of:

- (i) a maximum of 10 parents/guardians of students enrolled or registered in Emily Carr Middle School, who have been elected in accordance with Article 7 below;
- (ii) a community representative appointed by a majority of Council;

- (iii) the Principal and/or the Vice Principal of the school, as a non-voting member;
  - (iv) a teacher, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal, who has been elected in accordance with Article 7 below;
  - (v) an administrative/support staff person who has been elected in accordance with Article 7 below;
  - (vi) one pupil enrolled in the school who is appointed by the principal of the school, if the principal determines, after consulting other members of the Council, that the Council should include a pupil; and,
  - (vii) if school membership is established in the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, a person appointed by this Association.
- c) The Council shall have a minimum of nine members, the majority of which shall always be parents/guardians of students. At a minimum, the Council shall have five parent/guardian members and four staff/other members.
- d) Subject to Article, 5 c)(iii) below, Council shall continue to function with fewer than nine members provided that all reasonable efforts have been made to fill the vacant positions.
- e) A member of the OCDSB, may be elected as a parent member provided they notify the other parents that they are an employee of the OCDSB prior to the election. Employees of the OCDSB cannot hold the position of Chair or Co-Chair of the Council.
- f) Officers of the Council shall be:
- (i) the Chair or Co-Chairs;
  - (ii) the Vice-Chair;
  - (iii) the Secretary;
  - (iv) the Treasurer; and,
  - (v) the Fund Raiser Director

The duties and powers of the Officers are set forth in Appendix B to this Constitution.

- g) Other positions on Council include, but are not limited to Volunteer Coordinator, Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils Representative, and Members at Large. The duties associated with these positions are also

set forth in Appendix B to this Constitution.

- h) A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member or officer of the Council.
- i) Membership on the school Council shall terminate:
  - (i) at the time of the next election;
  - (ii) when a parent/guardian member no longer has a child enrolled at Emily Carr Middle School;
  - (iii) at the discretion of the Council, when the member has missed three consecutive meetings of Council;
  - (iv) in the case of the Principal and/or Vice-Principal, when he/she no longer holds the office of Principal;
  - (v) in the case of a teacher, when that teacher is no longer an employee of Emily Carr Middle School;
  - (vi) in the case of the administrative/support staff, when that person is no longer an employee of Emily Carr Middle School;
  - (vii) when a Council member has sent a letter of resignation to the Chair or Co-Chair.

## ARTICLE 5: OPERATION OF THE COUNCIL

### a) Quorum

A quorum shall be a majority of Council positions filled at the time of the meeting.

### b) Voting

- (i) Each Member of Council, except for the Principal and/or Vice-Principal, shall have one (1) vote. The Principal and/or Vice Principal are not entitled to vote in votes taken by the Council, pursuant to Ont. Reg. 612/00.
- (ii) Proxy voting is permitted except at the Annual General Meeting (“AGM”).
- (iii) In general, voting shall be by a show of hands. A vote by secret ballot may be held at the discretion of the Chair or Co-Chairs.
- (iv) Motions shall pass on a simple majority of quorum, except when amending the Constitution under Article 5(c) below.
- (v) In the case of a special or emergency meeting of Council under 5(b) (vi) below, a vote may be taken by telephone/fax/e-mail consultation.

c) Meetings of Council

- (i) The Council shall hold at least four meetings each school year, including the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- (ii) The AGM shall be the first Council meeting and shall be called within the first 30 days of the school year on a date fixed by the Principal.
- (iii) Meetings cannot be held unless there is quorum and unless a majority of the members present at the meeting are parent members.
- (iv) Notice of meetings shall be published in the school and in a newsletter or flyer to parents/guardians, at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.
- (v) Meetings shall be open to the public and no person may be excluded from the meetings other than for disruptive behaviour.
- (vi) Special or emergency meetings of the Council may be called at the discretion of the Chair or Co-Chairs, on notice to all Council members. Such a meeting may only be called for matters, which cannot be dealt with at a regularly called meeting. Quorum must be present for a decision. Minutes of such meetings shall be posted in the school and distributed to all Council members as soon as reasonably possible.
- (vii) Minutes shall be taken of all Council meetings. A copy of the minutes, committee reports, correspondence and Treasurer's reports shall be kept up-to-date at the school office and shall be available for review by parents/guardians.

d) Amendments to the Constitution

This Constitution may be amended at any regularly called meeting of Council, by a majority of two-thirds of a quorum of Council members present. Notice of the proposed amendments shall be posted at the school five days in advance of the meeting with notice of the meeting as described in b(iv) above. In the required newsletter or flyer, parents/guardians shall be notified that a change to the constitution is proposed, and that the text of the changes is posted at the school.

e) In order to address specific issues, Council may create ad hoc committees. The committee shall consist of one or more persons, one of whom shall be a parent/guardian member of the Council. Such a committee may include persons who are not members of the Council but are still parent/ guardian of students enrolled or registered at Emily Carr Middle School. The Council shall establish the guidelines and mandate of the committee.

f) Issues presented by non-member of the Council

Topics falling within the Council's scope may be raised by anyone in the school community.

- i) Topics can be presented verbally or in writing to a Council member. Topics can also be presented to the school administration.
  - ii) The topic shall be discussed at the next meeting of the Council. If the matter is urgent, the sponsor may ask the Chair or Co-Chairs to convene a Special Meeting, per Section 5b)(v) above. Sponsor(s) of the topic may be asked to make a brief presentation.
  - iii) Council should then discuss the topic and either provide an answer or establish an ad hoc committee as per Article 5(e) above.
  - iv) The ad hoc committee shall report to the Council at its next meeting, making recommendations upon which the Council will vote.
  - v) The Chair or Co-Chairs shall ensure that the sponsor of the topic is advised of the recommendations and outcome of the vote.
- g) The Council shall publish a newsletter at least four times a year to inform parents as to the status of Council activities.
- h) Correspondence  
All Council correspondence distributed through the school to the general population must first be reviewed by the Principal, or in the case of absence, his/her delegate.
- i) Budget  
The Council shall prepare a budget to disburse monies raised. Input from the Principal, Vice-Principal, parents, teachers and administrative/support staff will be taken into consideration. The Council shall vote on the draft budget at a regular meeting early in the school year.

## ARTICLE 6 – FINANCIAL CONTROL

- a) Monies raised on behalf of or by the Council are intended for support of Council activities and the school community.
- b) The Council shall establish and maintain a bank account in its name.
- c) Cheques drawn on the Council bank account shall bear two (2) signatures of the Officers of Council (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary or Treasurer).
- d) Two members of the same family shall not exercise signing authority.
- e) The signing authorities may authorize routine expenditures not to exceed \$50. The Treasurer, at the next Council meeting, shall report any such expenditure.

Any expenditure over \$50 requires a motion and approval at a Council meeting.

- f) Notice of any proposed expenditure over \$2,500 shall be published in the school and in a newsletter or flyer to parents/guardians at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.
- g) Complete books and records of all financial transactions of the Council shall be maintained. These books and records will be maintained according to generally accepted accounting principles.
- h) A financial statement shall be presented at each meeting, a record of which will be included in the minutes.
- i) The financial record of the Council shall be reviewed annually by an independent reviewer who is not a member of Council; or alternatively, by two members of Council who are not signing authorities. The report of the reviewer shall be presented at the AGM.
- j) The fiscal year shall be September to August.

## ARTICLE 7: ELECTIONS

- a) The election of parent members of Council shall be held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- b) The Council, in consultation with the Principal, shall ensure that the annual election/appointment of teaching and non-teaching representatives to the Council is carried out by each of these constituent groups during the first thirty (30) days of the school year.
- c) Subject to Articles 4e) above and 7d) below, any parent/guardian of a student enrolled at Emily Carr Middle School may place his/her name for election to any of the parent/guardian positions.
- d) A person is not qualified to be a parent member of a school council if;
  - i. he or she is employed at Emily Carr Middle School; or,
  - ii. he or she is employed elsewhere by the OCDSB (unless he or she takes reasonable steps to inform, people qualified to vote in the



election of parents members of that employment.

- e) Prior to the elections, a nominating committee will be struck. This committee will;
  - i. include the Vice-Chair, Secretary, Volunteer Coordinator, and Principal;
  - ii. give notice of the elections, including the date, time, and location, to the parents/guardians at least two (2) weeks in advance of the elections, through a posted notice and a notice given to students for delivery to their parents/guardians; and,
  - iii. ensure that adequate provisions are made for closed balloting, including the preparation of ballots, ballot containers, and the appointment of neutral persons to count the ballots and report the results.
- f) If elections are necessary, the Principal and one parent not involved in the election, shall conduct the secret ballot election.
- g) Voting by proxy is not permitted at the AGM for elections.
- h) Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- i) In the case of a tie, candidates will draw lots.
- j) If a position is not contested, the nomination shall be acclaimed at the AGM.
- k) Voting for parent members is open to all parents/guardians of students at Emily Carr Middle School.
- l) At the AGM the previous Council shall be dissolved. The Principal shall conduct the elections for the new Council members as described above. The new Council shall then conduct any remaining or new business.
- m) A by-election to fill a vacancy may be held at any regularly called meeting, on notice to all parents. All parents/guardians in attendance shall be eligible to vote at the by-election.
- n) Teacher Representative
  - (i) A person is qualified to vote in an election for the teacher representative, if he or she is a teacher at Emily Carr Middle School, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal.

o) Administrative/Support Staff

A person is qualified to vote in an election for the administrative/support staff representative if he or she is a person other than the Principal, Vice-Principal, or any other teacher, who is employed at Emily Carr Middle School.

## ARTICLE 8: AFFILIATIONS

- a) The Council may seek affiliations with other organizations of similar purposes, on a majority vote by a quorum of Council.

### **APPENDIX B** **RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

All Council members are expected to participate in council meetings, act as a link between the Council and the school community and encourage the participation of parents in Council and school events.

The specific duties of person holding particular positions on Council are as follows:

#### A. Chair

- Call Council meetings.
- Prepare the agenda for Council meetings.
- Chair Council meetings.
- Ensure that the minutes are recorded and maintained.
- Communicate with the Principal.
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the school community.
- Consult with senior OCDSB staff and trustees, as required.
- Prepare the annual report of the Council.
- Ensure that the school community receives proper notice of Council meetings.
- Sign routine correspondence on behalf of Council.
- Sign non-routine correspondence with approval of Council.

#### B. Vice-Chair

- Act as Chair when the Chair is not available.
- Sit on the Nominating Committee.

- Review documentation as requested by the Chair and summarize for Council members to keep them informed.
- Prioritize issues and lead discussion on various topics, as requested by the Chair.

#### C. Secretary

- Maintain a full and accurate account of all Council meetings, Committee reports, Treasurer's reports and correspondence from Committees and Council etc.
- Maintain a copy of the above-noted documents at the school office for review by other members of Council or members of the school community.
- Ensure that minutes from the previous meetings are distributed to all members of Council.
- Sit on the Nominating Committee.

#### D. Treasurer

- Be responsible for the finances of the Council, and ensure the safekeeping of Council monies.
- Ensure the safekeeping of the accounts, the books of account and supporting documentation for each entry into the books of account.
- Present a financial report at each meeting as well as an annual financial report at the AGM.
- Arrange for the examination of the financial records of Council as specified in Article 6(i).
- Prepare budget with the input of other Council members.

#### E. OCASC Representative

- Ensure that the Council is kept abreast of OCDSB decisions as they may relate to the school community.
- Ensure that the Council makes representations on behalf of the school community at the OCDSB when deemed appropriate.

#### F. Volunteer Coordinator

- Coordinate the requirement and demand for volunteers.

#### G. Members at Large

- Provide advice and input to council

- May be requested to hold specific responsibilities by Council Executive.

#### H. School Principal

- Facilitate the establishment of the Council and assist in its operation.
- Support and promote the Council's activities.
- Seek input from Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility.
- Give written notice of dates/times/location of Council meetings and AGM to every parent/guardian of a pupil, who on the date notice is given, is enrolled in the school.
- Communicate with the Chair or Co-Chairs of the Council, as required.
- Obtain and provide information, including the budgets for the school to enable Council to make informed decisions.
- Act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies, and collective agreements.
- Assist the Council in communicating with the school community.
- Encourage the participation of parents in the life of the school and the activities of the Council.

#### I. Teacher Representative

- Represent the viewpoints of the teachers during the Council deliberations.
- Liaise with the teachers in matters dealing with the Council.

#### J. Administrative and Support Staff Representative

- Represent the viewpoints of the administrative and support staff during Council deliberations.
- Liaise with the administrative and support staff personnel in matters dealing with the Council.

#### K. Community Representative

- Represent the viewpoints of the community during the Council deliberations.
- Liaise with the community as much as feasible in matters dealing with the Council.

#### L. Fund Raiser Director (an officer of ECMS Council)

- In charge of forming and directing a committee to organize school fundraiser(s) as set out by the Council and carry out the strategies voted on by Council.

Approved by the Emily Carr School Council at a meeting held on May 26, 2015. This Constitution supersedes and replaces earlier versions of this document.

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Chair

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Date

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Vice-Chair

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Date

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Treasurer

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Date

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Secretary

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Date

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Fund Raiser

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Date