Rockcliffe Park Public School

School Council Constitution

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MISSION STATEMENT

The RPPS School Council is made up of all parents/guardians of students enrolled at Rockcliffe Park Public School (RPPS) and members of the larger School Community whose common goal is to make RPPS the best it can be for its students.

ROLE OF SCHOOL COUNCIL

Through volunteer recruitment, fundraising, lobbying and program coordination, the School Council strives to involve parents, keep the School Community informed, and enhance and enrich the learning environment for students.

The School Council will act in an advisory capacity to the Principal of the School to make recommendations to the Principal and, as appropriate, the Board. The purpose of the Council is to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. The overall interests of the school and students are the Council's first priority.

RPPS SCHOOL COUNCIL BYLAWS

These Bylaws, which are required under Ontario Regulation 612/00, should be read and interpreted with the purpose of facilitating and making the operations of School Council more transparent without derogating from Council's rich history and the spirit of volunteerism which has always been so strong in our School.

These Bylaws were updated in April 2013 and are based upon the existing bylaws and the guidelines found in the following documents:

- The Handbook "School Councils: A Guide For Members"

  www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf

- Ontario Regulation 612/00 of the Education Act

  http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_000612_e.htm

- OCDSB Policy School Councils P.014.SCO

  http://publicapps.ocdsb.ca/au_pp_main.asp#forms

ARTICLE I – NAME AND DEFINITIONS

The organization shall be called the Rockcliffe Park Public School (RPPS) School Council, hereinafter referred to as the **Council**.

The **School Community** is defined as persons living within the attendance boundaries of the School, parents/guardians with children attending the School, School staff, students and guests invited by the School Council.

Council Members are defined as parents and/or guardians of Rockcliffe Park Public Sch0ol students, hereinafter referred to as **Members**.

Council Officers are defined as Officers voted into the RPPS School Council Executive, hereinafter referred to as **Officers**.

Any Reference to "**Standing Committee Chair**" or Other "**Committee Chair**" shall also mean the plural should a Chair and Co-Chair be chosen.

Standing committee is defined as a committee duly constituted by the Council which has a continued existence and is not related to the accomplishment of a specific, once-only task as are ad hoc or special committees.

Any reference to **parents** or **guardians** herein shall mean parents or guardians of students enrolled at Rockcliffe Park Public School.

Any reference to the "**School**" herein shall mean Rockcliffe Park Public School.

Any reference to the "**Board**" herein shall mean the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board. Any

reference to "**OCASC**" herein shall mean the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils.

Any reference to "**Chairman**" herein shall mean the RPPS School Council Executive Officer chairing a Council meeting.

Any reference to "**Principal**" herein shall mean the Principal of Rockcliffe Park Public School.

Any reference to "**RPPS**" herein shall mean Rockcliffe Park Public School.

In all Bylaws and special resolutions of the RPPS School Council:

- the singular includes the plural and the plural the singular;
- the masculine includes the feminine and the feminine includes the masculine; and

- "**parent**" includes guardian and "**guardian**" includes parent

ARTICLE II - GENERAL

These Bylaws supplement and are subject to the terms and requirements of the Regulations made under the *Education Act (Ontario)*, as amended from time to time and the policies and procedures of the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board.

ARTICLE III - COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL EXECUTIVE

The RPPS School Council Executive shall be composed of a minimum of nine (9) parent Members together with the Principal, and may also include one teacher, one non-teaching employee of the school and one or more community representatives.

Each year, parents/guardians of children enrolled at RPPS may become Officers of their School Council Executive by filling out a nomination form, (see APPENDIX B : School Council Parent Self-Nomination Form or APPENDIX C : School Council Parent Candidate Nomination Form), available online or provided by the School office.

Prior to the election, the outgoing School Council Executive shall fix the number of parent representatives to be elected.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

The Council will vote the following Officers from the elected parent Members:

- Chair
- Vice-Chair,
- Past Chair,
- Treasurer,
- Secretary,
- Book Fair Standing Committee Chair,
- Volunteer Coordinator and
- OCASC Representative(s).

The Officers shall fulfill their duties in accordance with the respective job descriptions. The Council may also include a Community Representative, Teacher Representative and Non-Teaching Staff Representative. Further details can be found in APPENDIX E : RPPS Council Positions.

The term of office for Executive positions is one year.

ARTICLE V - ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start of each school year.

2. Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing, must have a child registered at the school, and must declare if he or she is employed by the school board.

3. Each parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school shall be entitled to one vote for each vacant parent/guardian membership position on the council.

4. An election committee shall be struck by the school council in May to help plan the election process, the gathering of nominations, and the running of the election. No one standing for election, or the spouse of anyone standing for election, shall be a member of the election committee.

5. The election committee shall:

    - provide nomination forms (see the self-nomination and nomination forms in the appendices);
    - ensure that the school community is notified of election procedures and election date(s), location, and time, at least fourteen days in advance of the election;
    - request a profile from all candidates and make these available to the electorate;
    - conduct the elections by secret ballot;
    - count the ballots;
    - help the principal notify all candidates of the results;
    - keep all results and related information confidential.

6. Only the names of the successful candidates shall be made public. A list of candidates and the vote results will be kept on file by the council for use in the event that a vacancy on the council occurs.

7. All individuals standing for election shall be notified of the results before the results are released to the school community.

8. The school council shall help the principal ensure that the names of new members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election.

9. At the first meeting of the new school council at the beginning of the year, the council shall set dates, times, and locations for its meetings throughout the year.

If there is a tie for the final position for a representative on the Council the winner shall be determined by lot drawn by the Council Chair.

The Principal and the Chair of the Election Committee shall resolve any appeals related to the Council election process or results as soon as practicable following the election.

For more information on the schedule of election events, see APPENDIX A : Election Schedule of Events.

ARTICLE VI - FILLING VACANCIES

Should an elected Council Officer position become vacant before the next election, the Council may fill the vacancy by appointment from the non-elected candidates from the previous election based on the number of votes received starting with the person who received the highest number of votes.

If there are no such non-elected candidates or if none of the previous candidates remain interested in becoming a Council Officer, the Council may, by means of a notice posted in the School newsletter/email/website, request that interested parents from the School Community submit their names for consideration within fourteen (14) days. The Council shall then appoint one of those who indicate an interest by majority vote at a meeting of the Council.

When a vacant spot on the Council Executive is filled, the new Officer's term shall expire at the time of the next election.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

The first meeting of the Council shall be held in September immediately following the elections. Subsequent meetings shall be held monthly from October through June on the second Tuesday of every month, subject to change by resolution of the Council.

The Secretary will take accurate Minutes of all Council meetings, including the attendance and the recording of any motions introduced and motions passed by Council. Minutes are maintained on the Council website and on file in the School office for 5 years. The secretary will also try to distribute the minutes to all of the people present at each meeting.

All parents/guardians are encouraged to attend Council Meetings and to participate on committees whether they are Council Officers or not.

ARTICLE VIII - PLACE OF MEETINGS AND NOTICE

All Council, Standing Committee and Other Committee meetings must be held at the School, must be open and accessible to the public, follow Council meeting procedures and are to be publicized via website.

Council may appoint a day in any month for regular meetings at an hour to be named, and for a regular meeting no notice need be sent.

ARTICLE IX - QUORUM

50% +1 forms a quorum for the transaction of business by the Council.

No business may be transacted at any meeting unless the requisite quorum is present at the commencement of the business.

ARTICLE X - VOTING

Before voting on any resolution, the Council Executive shall, wherever practicable, allow all parents attending a Council meeting to express their opinions through a show of hands.

Resolutions of the Council shall then be passed by a simple majority of the votes cast by Officers who voted in respect of that resolution.

These Bylaws may be amended by a resolution passed by a majority of not less than two-thirds of the votes cast by Officers who voted in respect of that resolution.

ARTICLE XI - FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

The School operates as a category under the School banking system. All funds raised by the Council, committees and sub-committees will be kept in the School based accounts and monies deposited, cheques issued, receipts and invoices will be managed with accordance to Board Policy.

All non-budgeted expenditures must be discussed and pre-approved at a Council meeting.

The Treasurer shall keep a record of all revenues, operating expenses and expenditures throughout the School year and a detailed Year-End reconciliation will be included in the Council's Annual Report.

ARTICLE XII - BUDGET

The second meeting of the Council, held in October, will include a budget component to make recommendations on how to allocate all School-generated funds into appropriate line-items.

It will be recommended that all school-generated funds raised will be allocated to pre-determined line items including operating expenses of Council and its Standing Committees or Other Committees.

A budget is to be voted on and approved by Council and a year-end reconciliation will be included in the Annual Report. Prior to the meeting, Council will provide effective communication to ensure that maximum parent participation is achieved. Interim budget meetings may take place as required to make recommendations to allocate additional revenue. Any changes will be discussed

and voted on at subsequent Council meetings.

ARTICLE XIII - FUNDRAISING

All fundraising activities and expenditures must be conducted in accordance with Board policies. All funds raised by the Council will be used in accordance with Board Policy.

At the annual budget meeting, funds raised through Council activities will be allocated with line items reviewed annually.

Literacy grants may be given to other schools in the Book Fair's name.

- The literacy grants are given on an annual basis to other schools.

- The schools are selected according to the need of the school base (eg. beacon schools). This is determined on advice of the Principal. In order to be eligible for the grant, the selected schools must identify a literacy project that the grant will support.

ARTICLE XIV - FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year end is August 31.

ARTICLE XV – STANDING COMMITTEES

The Council may establish permanent standing committees, as deemed necessary from time to time. The appointment or election of standing Committee members will be decided on an individual committee basis and detailed in the standing committee's Terms of Reference.

Membership on such committees shall not be restricted to Members of the Council, although each standing committee shall include at least one Officer of the Council.

Any member of the Council, parent of RPPS students and members of the community may attend meetings and participate in discussion of any standing committee.

Standing Committees may include, but are not limited to the Election Standing Committee and the Book Fair Standing Committee.

Council will approve Terms of Reference for each standing committee, as needed.

The Council Treasurer will act as Treasurer for all Council standing committees, as needed.

Each standing committee Chair will provide a report at each Council meeting on the activities of the standing committee.

ELECTION STANDING COMMITTEE

The Council will establish an Election Committee no later than April 30th in each year.

The Committee will be responsible for planning the election process, gathering nominations and running the election. The Election Committee will be composed of at least two (2) parents who are not running for election or re-election in the next Council elections. The Committee will follow the outlined Election Procedures (ARTICLE V - ELECTION PROCEDURES).

No election will be held when the number of candidates is equal to or less than the number of positions available, for those years the Election Committee will be responsible for collecting nomination forms from each candidate.

BOOK FAIR STANDING COMMITTEE

ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF THE BOOK FAIR STANDING COMMITTEE

The role of the Book Fair Standing Committee is to manage Council's main fundraiser, Book Fair.

The Book Fair Standing Committee will have power to act without seeking approval on operational matters assigned to them by the Council. These include:

- purchases relating to approved budget items
- day-to-day operations not directly affecting RPPS staff and/or students

Matters not specifically assigned to the Book Fair Standing Committee in their Terms of Reference document will be within the jurisdiction of Council.

FINANCIAL PROCEDURES

The BFSC Accounting Team is responsible for presenting the budget, making payments, managing the Book Fair account and overseeing the handling of all monies during the Book Fair fundraiser. The Accounting Team must draft a budget for approval by School Council each year, and provide a Financial Statement as part of the Book Fair Final Report to Council.

The Council Treasurer will act as Treasurer for all Council Standing Committees and/or Other Committees, as needed. They will also sit on the BFSC Accounting Team and act as BFSC Book Keeper should that position be vacant. They are responsible for reporting the financial results of the Book Fair Fundraiser to the School Council and ensuring the BFSC manages its accounts in accordance with Board Policy, except where noted in the By-laws, Policy documents or Terms of Reference and agreed upon by the Board, Council and BFSC.

Unless otherwise directed by the Board, the BFSC will hold their own banking account with debit/credit card capabilities and access for cash deposits (this is not possible within the confines of a school based account, therefore a separate account is held by the BFSC). The BFSC account will include start-up costs and operating expenses for the Book Fair fundraiser and other BFSC activities, as per the approved budget, as well as any deposits of monies raised during the Book Fair fundraiser. This bank account

requires 2 signatures on cheques and 2 authorized signatories present for withdrawals. The finances of this account will be reported by the BFSC Accounting Team Representative at BFSC general meetings.

Each year, as soon as possible after completion of the Book Fair fundraiser, the majority of monies raised (minus the start-up costs and operating expenses for the Book Fair fundraiser and other BFSC activities, as per the approved budget) will be transferred to School Council's school based account. Finances of the BFSC account will be reported by the School Council Treasurer at Council meetings.

All Book Fair revenues and expenses will be included in the Council financial reports.

A BFSC Financial Statement shall be included in the Council's Annual Report.

BUDGET

The BFSC must submit a draft budget for approval by School Council at their June meeting. Suggestions for allocation of funds generated by the Book Fair Fundraiser should be prepared in time for Council's budget meeting in October.

Occasional BFSC budget changes may occur throughout the school year, any changes will be approved at BFSC general meetings and reported on in the Chair's School Council report at the next scheduled meeting.

ARTICLE XVI – OTHER COMMITTEES

The Council may establish ad hoc or other special purpose committees, as deemed necessary from time to time, and appoint the members thereto: membership on such committees shall not be restricted to Members of the Council, although each committee shall include at least one Officer of the Council. The Council shall appoint the Chair of any committee except the Book Fair Standing Committee Chair, which is an elected position.

Council will approve Terms of Reference for each committee, if required.

The Council Treasurer will act as Treasurer for all Council committees or sub-committees, as needed.

ARTICLE XVII - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Each Council Member shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and vision of the Council and a personal or vested interest, that arise in connection with his or her duties as a Council Member.

A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived or potential. Should an issue or agenda item arise during a Council meeting where a Council Member is in a conflict of interest, directly or indirectly, that Member shall declare his or her interest immediately and the Council will vote if he or she can continue to participate in the discussion and resolution of the issue or item.

ARTICLE XVIII - IN CAMERA

The meeting's Chairman can choose to hold an "in camera" session on an issue that requires privacy. This portion of the meeting would be restricted to those asked to participate by the Chairman but would normally include all Executive Officers.

In camera discussions items will not be listed on the Agenda but noted as "In Camera Discussion". The Chairman will decide if a portion of the discussion should be recorded in the official Minutes.

No By- law or resolution can be passed during an in camera discussion. Any information pertaining to this discussion should be circulated in camera and collected at the end of the discussion.

All in camera meeting participants are required to keep in confidence matters discussed in camera until the item is discussed at a regular Council meeting.

ARTICLE XIX - CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Every Council Member will be given an opportunity to express his or her opinion about the issue at dispute.

Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.

Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.

It is the Chairman's responsibility to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised, including making rulings on conflict of interest issues and to set out the joint interests of all Members.

If no common ground can be identified and all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success within a reasonable period of time, the Chairman shall, as soon as practicable, request the intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution to the dispute. An independent third party may be a board official or another individual mutually agreed on by the parties involved in the dispute.

ARTICLE XX - RULES OF ORDER

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised shall govern the Council in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Council may adopt from time to time.

These Bylaws were approved and/or confirmed on April 14, 2015.

_____

Chair
RPPS School Council

_____

Treasurer
RPPS School Council

APPENDIX A : ELECTION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

May/June A committee is established to deal with the school council election of parent members.

Early to mid-June A plan is put in place to deal with how the school council election will occur. By the last council meeting of the school year, the date[1], time, and location of the election are determined, as well as how the election will be advertised in the fall. A nomination form is also developed. School council chairs must have the necessary information for the election to the principal well in advance of the election.

Mid-August In the welcome-back-to-school mailing, the principal includes parent-candidate nomination forms and information about the date by which nominations must be received at the school, who is eligible to stand for election, the date of the election, and other information about the election. This package must be in parents' hands at least four- teen days prior to the election.

Early September The principal posts school council election information in an area of the school that is easily accessible to parents. Good venues would be the bulletin board and the school website. Parents return nomination forms to the school.

Early to mid-September A list of parent nominees with brief biographies is sent home or mailed out, with a reminder of the election date and information on the election process.

Mid- to end September The ballot box is prepared for the election of parent representatives, and arrangements are made for volunteers to help voters at the voting areas.

The election of the teacher, non-teacher, and student representatives may take place at the same time or shortly after the election of parent representatives.

Late September to early October The first meeting of the new school council takes place, and meeting dates, times, and locations for the upcoming year are determined. (The first meeting of the new school council must take place within thirty-five days of the start of school.)

The names of the new school council members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election, as are the dates, times, and locations of future meetings.

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[1] According to Ontario Regulation 612/00, section 4(4), the election must be held during the first thirty days of the school year on a date fixed by the school council chair or co-chairs after consulting with the school principal.

APPENDIX B : SCHOOL COUNCIL PARENT SELF-NOMINATION FORM

☐ I wish to declare my candidacy for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

E-mail: _____

I am the parent/guardian of _____ , who is currently
Name of student
registered at this school.

I am an employee of the school board: ☐ Yes ☐ No

_____ _____
Candidate's signature *Date*

Please include a brief autobiography on the back of this form.

You will be notified when your nomination has been received.

APPENDIX C : SCHOOL COUNCIL PARENT CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORM

☐ I wish to nominate _____ for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the school council.

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

Home phone: _____ Business phone: _____

E-mail: _____

I am the parent/guardian of _____ , who is currently
Name of student
registered at this school.

_____ is the parent/guardian of _____ ,
Name of person nominated *Name of student*

who is currently registered at this school.

The person I have nominated is an employee of the school board: ☐ Yes ☐ No

_____ _____
Nominator's signature *Date*

Please include a brief biography of the candidate you have nominated on the back of or on a separate sheet attached to this form.

You will be notified when your nomination has been received.

APPENDIX D : NOMINATION FORM RECEIPT

The nomination form for parent/guardian representative on the school council for

_____ Rockcliffe Park Public School

Parent nominee' s name *at* *School name*

has been received by:

_____ _____

Name of principal or chair of the nominations committee *Date*

APPENDIX E : RPPS COUNCIL POSITIONS

Chair

The Chair of the School Council performs the following: arranges for meetings, prepares meeting agendas, acts as Chairman at Council meetings, ensures the Minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained, ensures communication between Council and entire parent School body, facilitates the resolution of conflict and participates as an ex-officio member of all committees established by the Council. Acting on behalf of all parents of students at the School, the Chair liaises with the Principal, Staff and Board representatives to work with them to enhance the quality of life for all students at RPPS. The Chair ensures communication with the Council and as necessary the entire parent body.

Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair works closely with the Chair to assist in the day-to-day operation of the School Council. The Vice-Chair may stand-in for the Chair as Chairman of Council meetings or undertake other duties of the Council on the Chair's behalf.

Past-Chair[2]

The Past-Chair will remain an Executive Officer for 1 year after serving as Chair. The Past-Chair acts as a resource to the current Chair, to maintain continuity and provide assistance in planning the budget and implementing programs. The Past-Chair can also stand in for the Chair, Vice-Chair or Secretary to assist in the smooth operation of Council meetings and programs.

Treasurer

The Treasurer is responsible for developing and implementing the budget, subject to approval by Council and overseen by the Chair. All funds raised by the Council and its committees are kept in School based accounts, the Treasurer works with the School Office Administrator to ensure all monies collected and expenditures paid are completed according to Board procedure. The Treasurer provides a report on the Council's account activities at each meeting. The Treasurer must submit a budget for approval by Council each year, and provide a financial report of all Council revenues and expenditures at the end of each School year.

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[2] The past year's Chair remains for a term of one year as a resource for the new Chair and does not stand for election.

Secretary

The Secretary of the School Council is responsible for the administrative activities of Council. The chief responsibility of the Secretary is to take, distribute and maintain accurate Minutes of all Council meetings, including the recording of any motions introduced or resolutions passed by Council. The incumbent is required to attend all Council meetings, or appoint another Council Member as a designate to undertake their responsibilities.

School Council Representative(s) to OCASC

School Council sends one or two representatives to the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils. The incumbent(s) is/are responsible for representing the views of RPPS' Council to the larger body of School Councils, and pursuant to their meetings, reporting back to, or seeking input from, the Council with regard to the activities of OCASC. The individual, who volunteers to fill this position, is required to attend approximately 10 OCASC meetings a year.

Volunteer Coordinator

The Volunteer Coordinator is responsible for recruiting parent volunteers and coordinating their activities in the School. The Principal or Council Chair may call upon the Volunteer Coordinator to provide parent volunteers for a variety of School events and activities, as required.

Book Fair Standing Committee Chair

The Book Fair Standing Committee Chair is responsible for the Book Fair Standing Committee, meetings and directing the operational management of the Book Fair Fundraiser. The Book Fair Standing Committee Chair may appoint additional volunteers to help with the operation of the Book Fair Fundraiser.

Member(s) at Large

Parents wanting to become Council Officers but not wanting to hold a particular position may do so by becoming elected as Members at Large. Members at Large attend regular Council meetings and discuss and vote on issues along with other Officers. The maximum number of Members at Large would be 5.

Community Representative(s)

The School Council shall seek a representative from the School Community to represent the interests of RPPS within the School Community. The Community Representative(s) will attend Council meetings and communicate the needs of the greater School Community. This is a non-voting position. This member of the council must not be a parent or guardian.

Principal

The Principal attends all Council meetings or appoints a vice-principal delegate when required and may participate on Council committees. The Principal shall seek input of the Council on school improvement planning, school budgets, community partnerships, development of school policies and guidelines regarding student achievement, school code of conduct, dress code and Board policies (as directed). The Principal forwards relevant information from the Board and the Ministry to the Council. The Principal shall support and promote the Council's activities and encourage parents and community members to participate in events and programs.

This is a non-voting position.

Teacher Representative

The Principal and staff may elect a Teacher Representative to attend Council meetings and communicate the needs of the teaching staff. This is a non-voting position. This member of the council must not be a parent or guardian.

Non-Teaching Staff Representative

The Principal and staff may elect a staff member to be a Non-teaching Staff Representative to attend Council meetings. This is a non-voting position. This member of the council must not be a parent or guardian.