



HARRIET TUBMAN School Council Constitution

**ARTICLE I NAME**

This organization shall be known as Harriet Tubman School Council.

**ARTICLE II MISSION STATEMENT**

Harriet Tubman School Council will act as an advisory body to provide ideas and options to assist the Principal or designate and, when appropriate, school board trustees in their decision making to achieve success together.

**ARTICLE III GOALS or PURPOSE**

In order to enhance educational experiences, promote student achievement and encourage accountability, Harriet Tubman School Council will:

- Promote and maintain a safe, supportive and inviting environment for all students and staff at Harriet Tubman School.
- Enhance educational opportunities for all students in order to encourage each student to reach his/her full potential in educational social recreational areas;
- Identify issues and concerns within the school community and facilitate the productive exchange of ideas through discussion in order to make recommendations;
- Provide a forum in which educational issues, DSBN policies and procedures, and school practices may be discussed and addressed accordingly.
- Encourage the participation of students, parents/guardians, staff members and Principal or designate;
- Promote and encourage constructive, communications between home and school;
- Explore and utilize community resources and encourage participation of businesses and social organizations within the school community and beyond;
- To set an annual budget and raise funds to support initiatives identified by the school and/ or by Harriet Tubman School Council;
- To identify annual goals for Harriet Tubman School Council and communicate them to the school community.

**ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

Council members are elected for a term that lasts from the first meeting of one school year to the first meeting of the next school year.

The council will reflect the diversity of our school community.

Parents and guardians must form the majority of members on the council.

Membership shall consist of the following:

- A maximum of fifteen (15) parents/guardians of students currently enrolled in Harriet Tubman School will be elected every year.
- The parents or guardians will form the majority of Harriet Tubman School Council.
- A DSBN employee who works at Harriet Tubman School and whose children attend Harriet Tubman School is not eligible to serve as a parent member.
- DSBN employees who do not work at Harriet Tubman School may be elected as parent members as long as they notify the other parents that they are employed by the school board prior to their election.
- The school Principal or designate.
- One teacher employed at Harriet Tubman School to be elected by the teaching staff every year.
- One non-teaching employee to be elected by non-teaching staff every year.

- One or more community representatives who live or work within the Harriet Tubman School district to be appointed every year by the elected council.

## **ARTICLE V ELECTION OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

### **Notification**

The Principal or designate, in collaboration with Harriet Tubman School Council, shall support and encourage parents on an ongoing basis to consider involvement in the School Council.

Parents/guardians shall be notified that nominations for positions on the school council for the next school year will be received according to the by-laws of the Harriet Tubman School Council in June.

Before June 30th, the Harriet Tubman School Council will establish an ad hoc Elections Committee which will consist of two parents (not running for election) and the Principal or designate.

### **NOTES (to be removed following the 2015-2016 school year)**

#### **For the 2015-2016 school year:**

- **interim election notification will occur in March via Maywood, Memorial, Alexandra and Queen Mary newsletters.**
- **The interim school council will choose photographer/fundraising contracts as well as plan and host the September 9th Open House**
- **interim election nominations will occur before April 21st, 2015.**
- **interim elections will occur April 21st, 2015 at the "Welcome to the Harriet Tubman School Council" meeting.**
- **the election ad hoc Elections Committee will be comprised of Deb Dobrowolski and one other representative.**
- **The interim School Council will be comprised of two (2) co- chairs, one (1) vice-chair, one treasurer, one secretary, one communications manager. The combination of the one chair and two vice chairs must have one (1) Maywood representative, one (1) Memorial representative and one (1) Alexandra representative.**
- **the first meeting of the interim Harriet Tubman School Council will be on May 26th, 2015 to plan for the upcoming year.**
- **the second meeting of the interim Harriet Tubman School Council will be on September 2nd, time TBD, to plan for the September 9th Open House.**
- **Nomination ballots for the Harriet Tubman School Council will be distributed through the September Harriet Tubman Newsletter and elections will occur within the first 30 days of school.**

### **Nominations**

The Principal or designate will inform the community of the date, time and location of the Harriet Tubman School Council elections at least 14 days prior to the election date.

Nomination forms will be included in the September newsletter and available at the school office. Nomination forms shall be signed by the nominee (Candidates may be self-nominated).

Nominations shall be submitted prior to the elections.

#### **2015-2016 (see above)**

### **Elections**

Harriet Tubman School Council election of the parent members of the Harriet Tubman School Council shall be held at the first general meeting before the 30th of September.

All offices shall be deemed vacant for the purpose of holding the annual election of the Officers and Members.

For the purpose of holding the election, the Principal or designate or designate shall chair the elections of the School Council Officers.

The election Committee will count the ballots and notify the school community of the results.

The Executive of the Harriet Tubman School Council which will consist of the Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Communications Manager and Treasurer, Principal or designate and a member at large.

- For the **2015-2016 school year, the School Council will be comprised of two co- chairs (2), one (1) vice-chair, one treasurer, one secretary, one communications manager. The combination of the two chairs and one vice**

***chairs must have one (1) Maywood representative, one (1) Memorial representative and one (1) Alexandra representative.***

#### *Selection*

If there are an insufficient number of nominees to fill the positions outlined in the Harriet Tubman School Council by-laws, all qualified nominees shall be affirmed as members for the school year by September 30th.

If there are more nominees than the number of positions, an election shall be held according to the Harriet Tubman School Council by-laws;

Parents/guardians shall be notified regarding nominees and vacancies filled.

#### **ARTICLE VI RELACEMENT OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Vacant positions may be filled during the school year by agreement of the majority of the current Harriet Tubman School Council members.

Principal or designate;

- become familiar with the Harriet Tubman School council Constitution;
- observe council's code of ethics and established by-laws;

#### **ARTICLE VII DUTIES and RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### *Role of a Council Member*

As a school council member, you will:

- place the overall interests of the school and students first;
- maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- attend council meetings regularly and contribute to the discussions; notify the Chair or Principal or designate if you are unable to attend;
- serve as a link between the council and the community; solicit views of other parents and members of the community to share with school council;
- maintain respect for the opinions, concerns, interests and ideas of others;
- work towards decision making by consensus creating an atmosphere of mutual trust, openness and collaboration; encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the community;
- ensure that all written Council-related correspondence is approved by Council and reviewed by the Chair and/or Vice Chair, the Executive and the Principal or designate

##### *Role of the Chair*

The chair of the council, who is elected by the council members, must be a parent, as well as previously a member for a minimum of one year. In addition to performing the same duties as other council members, the chair will:

- call, prepare agenda for and chair council meetings with input from members and the Principal or designate;
- ensure that minutes of council meetings are recorded, filed and posted;
- communicate regular with the school Principal or designate regarding all issues pertaining to the council;
- ensure that there is regular communication with the school community;
- will consult with the senior management team and trustees of the DSBN as required;
- will encourage the school and its community to participate in Harriet Tubman School Council activities;
- will assist with all Harriet Tubman School Council activities;
- will foster a positive image for Harriet Tubman Public School and the Harriet Tubman School Council within the wider community;
- will prepare a year end summary of Harriet Tubman School Council activities and share with the school community.

The chair may participate as an ex-officio member of all committees establish by the school council.

#### Vice Chair

- who is a Harriet Tubman School Council member and elected by council members, must be a parent;
- will chair meetings in the absence or at the request of the chair;
- work with the chair as necessary.

#### Treasurer

- who is a Harriet Tubman School Council member and elected by council members, must be a parent;
- works in collaboration with the school secretary;
- maintain accurate financial records of all receipts and disbursements;
- presents a monthly financial update;
- provides a detailed yearly financial report according to DSBN guidelines.
- prepare a preliminary budget for submission to the Harriet Tubman School Council.

#### Secretary

- who is a Harriet Tubman School Council member and elected by council members, must be a parent;
- keep minutes of all meetings noting those members in attendance and recording motions and their outcomes;
- files copies of Harriet Tubman School Council minutes;
- make minutes available prior to the scheduled meetings;
- prepares correspondence as required.

#### Principal or designate

- distributes ministry materials
- acts as a resource to the council on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements;
- attends all meetings;
- obtain and provide information required by council to enable it to give informed advice;
- solicits views on matters pertaining to the establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines pertaining to student achievement, accountability of the education system to parents; and the communication of those plans to the public;
- may participate on committees.

#### School Staff Members

- one each from teaching and non teaching school staff;
- contribute to the discussions;
- solicit views from their staff groups to share with their school council;
- may participate on any committee establish by school council;
- communicate information back to their staff groups;
- observe the council's code of ethics and established by-laws.

#### Communications Manager

- responsible for frequent and meaningful communication with Harriet Tubman parents and community;
- publish a quarterly newsletter featuring events and initiatives of the School Council;
- work closely with the school secretary to support school communication (school sign, monthly newsletter, website);
- generate additional communication to support fundraising and community events.

#### Community Member

- voting member who contributes to the discussions of the Harriet Tubman School Council;
- represents the community's perspective
- may participate on any committees established by the Harriet Tubman School Council;
- helps build partnership and links between the school and the community;
- observes the council's code of ethics and established by-laws

- reports on any community matter that may be of interest/relevance to the school community.

#### **ARTICLE IIX MEETING SCHEDULE**

Harriet Tubman School Council will have a minimum of 5 meetings each school year. Meetings will be scheduled for December, March or June, only if necessary.

#### **ARTICLE IX DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES**

Decisions by the School Council will be made through discussions of each issues. In order for a decision to be made, a Quorum must exist. A quorum for a general meeting shall consist of the Principal or designate or alternate plus seven other members of the Harriet Tubman School Council. Most decisions will be made through consensus other than those issues with monetary implications and any others deemed appropriate by school council which will be determined by a vote. Any one (1) member may call a vote with one (1) seconder. The vote result shall stand. In any vote, the Principal or designate or alternate may not vote, but must be present and the chair will vote only in the event of a tie.

#### **ARTICLE X SUBCOMMITTEES**

Sub-committees will be established whenever necessary. Each sub-committee shall consist of a council member co-coordinator and a Harriet Tubman School Council member who volunteers to serve. Sub-committees will make progress reports at each subsequent meeting. Sub-Committee Coordinators will be selected at the annual planning meeting.

#### **ARTICLE XI PRESENTATIONS**

Parents and groups will be invited to make presentations to the council provided either the council agrees in advance, or the Chair, in setting the agenda in co-operation with the Principal or designate, feels the timeliness of the issue does not allow for prior approval of the council. In all cases, the Chair should be notified of the issues before the matter comes to council.

#### **ARTICLE XII AMENDMENTS**

Any proposed changes or additions to the constitutions must be submitted to the Chair at least two weeks prior to a general meeting. Items to be considered will be placed on the agenda and presented in a motion form. All changes must pass by a majority vote or quorum, at a general meeting.

#### **NOTE:**

For 2015-2016 School Council, any proposed amendments to the constitution must be submitted to Ronna Lockyer, Principal or designate of Harriet Tubman, to be presented to the elected chair(s) at the April 21st, 2015 Elections Meeting.

During this meeting, all proposed amendments will be discussed by the elected council, edits to the constitution made, and the constitution will be voted on at this time.

#### **ARTICLE XIII DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Any internal disputes within the Harriet Tubman School Council will be resolved as per the DSBN board policy.