

GOULBOURN MIDDLE SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME

1. The organization shall be called Goulbourn Middle School Council, hereafter referred to as the Council.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

1. The purpose of Council is to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents. Council achieves this by:
 - Developing a strong relationship between home, school and the wider community served by the school;
 - Seeking the views and opinions of the school's community on the operation of the school and the programs and services provided;
 - Providing additional resources or people for the benefit of the school and its students;
 - Providing advice to the principal and, as appropriate, to the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and/or its senior staff, to the Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC); and to the Ministry of Education, on the development and implementation of policies, programs and services affecting the school and the education system; and
 - Being an effective voice for promoting and communicating the interests of the school and students, and actively supporting the school in meeting the educational, social and recreational needs of all students in the school.
2. Council maintains a school-wide focus. A Council meeting is not the appropriate forum for discussion of individual teachers or students or specific issues.

ARTICLE III - AFFILIATIONS

1. The Council is a member of the Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC.)
2. The Council may seeks affiliation with other organizations that have similar purposes.
3. Affiliations with other organizations, or any subsequent changes in such affiliation, shall require a simple majority of votes cast by Council members present at any general meeting.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERS

1. Council shall consist of the following members:
 - A minimum of five parents/guardians of students enrolled or registered in the school, who have been elected as voting members of Council (see Article VI)
 - The school Principal (a non-voting member)
 - One teacher from the school elected by members of the teaching staff
 - One non-teaching person employed at the school, elected by persons employed at the school other than the principal, vice-principal or any teacher.
 - One or more community representatives appointed by Council.
2. Parents/guardians shall form the majority of members on Council.
3. If positions become available during the school year, the Council can appoint qualified persons to fill them.
4. If the Council does not have a full complement of members, it may still function as an interim Council for the current school year, as long as parent positions form the majority.
5. A Board employee cannot be a member of Council if he/she works at GMS, but may serve as a parent member if his/her child attends GMS, provided he/she declares employment status prior to election.

ARTICLE V - OFFICERS

1. The officers shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair (or Co-Chair), Treasurer and Secretary. The duties of the officers and the duties of the Principal in relation to the Council, and member so the Council at large, are set forth in Appendix A to this Constitution.
2. The Chair of the Council must be a parent/guardian member and must be elected at the Annual General Meeting. A Board employee may not be Chair or co-Chair of Council.
3. All other officer positions may be held by any member of the Council. The election of all Officers takes place at the AGM or at the first meeting following the AGM. The Chair will be responsible for calling the first meeting of the new School Council.
4. Members may serve several terms as an Officer; however, the maximum term for any Officer in a specific position shall be two consecutive years.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Nomination forms shall be sent home with a notice of the upcoming AGM, and will also be available at the AGM and will be accepted until the beginning of the AGM.
2. Notice shall be given at least 14 days before the date of the AGM to every parent of a pupil who is enrolled in the school. Notice shall be posted on the Council bulletin board in the school, on the website and circulated to parents/guardians in a School Council newsletter. Notice will also be circulated to the feeder schools, encouraging parents/guardians of incoming students to attend.

3. The AGM is held during the first 30 days of each school year, on a date fixed by the Chair or Co-Chair, in consultation with the Principal.
4. At the AGM, election of parent members shall proceed as follows:
 - Nomination forms will be accepted until the beginning of the AGM. A person may nominate him/herself. All nominations must be seconded.
 - All nominees must declare if they are employed by the board. (see Article IV, para 5 above).
 - If a person is not present, his/her written nomination must be delivered to the Chair of the election meeting by the start of the meeting.
 - Quorum for the AGM is equal to the number of parent nominations received by the Chair.
 - The Chair compiles a written list of parent candidates, consisting of all seconded nominations.
 - The list is circulated to all voting parents, who indicate with an X the people they are voting into Council. Voting must be by secret ballot.
 - Voting is open to all parents present at the AGM.
 - A successful candidate is one for whom a majority of voting parents has voted.
 - Only the number of votes cast and the successful candidates are announced.
5. Election of officers shall proceed as follows:
 - From the group of parent members elected to Council, nominations for each officer position will be taken by the Chair.
 - All nominations must be seconded. All persons nominated must indicate their acceptance.
 - Voting is by secret ballot or by show of hands; and only the name of the successful candidate and the total number of votes cast will be recorded.
 - Voting is open to all council members. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
 - For any positions for which only one nomination is received and accepted, the election will be declared to be by acclamation;
 - In the case of a tie vote, names of the tied candidates will be placed in an empty ballot box and the successful candidate will be drawn by the Principal.
6. The term of office begins from the date of election or appointment until the date of the first meeting of the school council after the next AGM. Members may seek more than one term. (See Article V, paragraph 4 above.)
7. The principal will ensure that elections of teaching and non-teaching staff representatives are carried out each fall by each of the constituent groups. The principal also gives notice of the elections to the various electoral groups at least two weeks in advance of the election. Terms of office are as noted in Paragraph 6 above.
8. For any positions that remain unfilled or become vacant following the elections, the council shall make every effort to seek qualified persons to fill such vacancies. Council shall continue to function in the meantime.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

1. There shall be one Annual General Meeting open to all of the school's community. Notification must be given 14 days prior to the meeting date (see Article VI, Paragraph 5 above).
2. Regular meetings of the Council shall be held at the school monthly unless otherwise determined by Council, the first meeting within 34 days of the start of the school year. Council shall pre-set specific meeting times and dates. Notice of meetings will be posted on the school's notice board, circulated to all parents/guardians in the Council newsletter and posted on Council's website. In addition, the community at large shall be given notice of meetings and informed of School Council activities via community newsletters and Council's website.
3. Special meetings of Council may be held at the call of the Chair, or on the written request of one half of the Council members given to the Secretary.
4. A council meeting cannot be held unless:
 - A majority of the current members are present at the meeting; and
 - A majority of the members present are parent members; and
 - One school representative is present.
5. Each member of Council (except the Principal who is a non-voting member) is entitled to one vote in votes taken by Council.
6. Meetings of Council shall be open to all of the school's community, and no one shall be excluded from the meeting except for disruptive behaviour. Voting privileges will be restricted to members of the Council.
7. The procedure to be followed to govern the conduct of meetings of Council shall be at the discretion of the Chair. The Council members and any attendees from the school's community shall be personally responsible for their own proper conduct and attendance at meetings. The Chair shall be responsible for maintaining order during the meeting.
8. Minutes of all meetings and sub-committee meetings shall be kept at the school and made available to the public for a period of four years.

ARTICLE VIII - COMMITTEES

1. The Council may establish permanent standing committees, ad hoc or other special purpose committees as deemed necessary from time to time and appoint the individuals thereto. Membership on such committees shall not be restricted to voting members of Council, except that a parent member of Council must be on each committee. These committees will be responsible for organizing meetings and reporting back to Council.
2. Written notice of all committee meetings must be provided by the Principal in the same manner as for general Council meetings.

ARTICLE IX - CONFLICT OF INTEREST

1. In situations where there may be a conflict of interest, the member who is in conflict shall declare his/her position and abstain from participating and voting on the issue.

ARTICLE X - CONFLICT RESOLUTION

1. Ground rules will be established for behaviour and parameters will be established for the discussion.
2. Every school council member will be given an opportunity to express his or her concerns or opinion about an issue, and how the issues has affected him or her, within the ground rules.
3. Speakers will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
4. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
5. The Chair's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among the points of view raised and to set out the joint interests of all members.
6. The Chair is responsible for taking firm and consistent action to maintain or restore order. This can include directing an individual to leave the meeting.
7. If no common ground can be identified, the chair will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
8. The Chair may request the intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution to a dispute.

ARTICLE XI - FINANCIAL AUTHORITY

1. The following Officers of Council shall have financial signing authority:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair or Co-Chair
 - TreasurerAt the discretion of the Chair, the Health Bar Coordinator may also be given signing authority.
2. Expenditure of funds requires two signatures. One signature must be the Treasurer's.
3. The Chair shall be empowered to spend up to \$100.00 of the Council's funds for any singular purpose. Any amount greater than \$100.00 shall require a vote of Council. A report of expenditures will be provided by the Treasurer at the following meeting.
4. Council has approved several standing motions (see Appendix B), for items to be funded on an ongoing basis.

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

1. At the September meeting of Council, the Chair shall strike a subcommittee to review the Constitution and shall bring forth any proposals for amendments to the October meeting. Any amendments shall be discussed and voted on by Council no later than the November meeting each year.
2. The Constitution is amended by a simple majority vote of Council members.
3. Approved, current copies of the Constitution shall be kept by the Secretary along with minutes of Council meetings.

ARTICLE XIII - CODE OF ETHICS

1. A member shall consider the best interests of all students.
2. A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.
3. A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of a school council, as identified by the school's operating guidelines, the school board, and the Ontario Ministry of Education.
4. A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices (documented in the Student Agendas) and act in accordance with them.
5. A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.
6. A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.
7. A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
8. A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
9. A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.
10. A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.
11. A member shall not disclose confidential information.
12. A member shall limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern of the school community as a whole.
13. A member shall use established communications channels when questions or concerns arise.
14. A member shall promote high standards to ethical practice within the school community.
15. A member shall declare any conflict of interest.
16. A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

GMS COUNCIL CONSTITUTION RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

- Accepted October 1996
- Amended June 1997
- Amended October 1998
- Amended November 2000
- Amended June 2001

February 2002 Amendments

Approved by Council at meeting held: June 13, 2002

Article/Paragraph	Change	Reason
II, 1	Council purpose reworded	Updated to reflect new ministry regulations; text from Ministry
II, 2	Addition: Council's school-wide focus	Board specification
IV, 1	Minimum required members specified	Board/Ministry requirements
IV, 4	"interim" added	Specified by ministry
IV, 5	Addition: restrictions applying to Board employees	Ministry regulation
VI	Renamed	Clarification
VI, 1, 2, 3	Deleted	Redundant; covered under Article IV
VI, 1 (renumbered)	Changed "sign up forms" to "nomination forms"	Clarification
VI, 2 (renumbered)	Added "to every parent"	Ministry requirement
VI, 3 (renumbered)	New paragraph re: timing of AGM	Ministry requirement
VI, 4, 5 (renumbered)	New sections	New election procedures
VI, 6 (renumbered)	Added new term of office	Ministry wording
VI, 7, 8	New paragraphs	Ministry requirements

VII, 2	Specified timing of first Council meeting Added "unless otherwise determined by Council"	Ministry requirement Minimum 4 meetings per year; we usually do monthly
VII, 4	Redefined quorum	Ministry wording plus suggestion for inclusion of one school rep for quorum
VII, 5	Redefined voting rights	Ministry regulation
VII, 6	Addition: voting rights restricted to council members	Clarification
VII, 7	Added Chair responsibility for maintaining order	Clarification
VII, 8	New paragraph re: retention of minutes	Ministry regulation
VIII, 1	Added "parent member"	Ministry requirement
VIII, 2	New paragraph regarding notification of meetings	Ministry requirement
IX	New Article, Conflict of Interest, existing text pulled from previous location	Ministry requirement
X	New Article, Conflict Resolution; text from "School Councils: A Guide for Members"	Ministry requirement
Appendix A	Added notes regarding new Principal responsibilities; Added position description for Volunteer Coordinator; Added tally verification to Treasurer's responsibilities	Ministry regulation (re: Principal); new position on Council (Volunteer Co-ordinator); clarification of duties (Treasurer)
STANDING MOTIONS	Deleted Pizza for lunches for MVPs (no longer done); Clarified there are 2 Grade 8 English awards and 2 Grade 8 Francais awards; Established maximum for assignment report award;	Updates to reflect and clarify all of Council's standing motions

	added staff appreciation lunch	
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Other Changes from June 13 meeting of Council:

- Association of School Councils changed to Assembly of School Councils (2 places)
- Her/her changes to his/her (Vice or Co-Chair responsibilities)

APPENDIX A - ROLLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES GMS COUNCIL MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Council Members:

- Participate in Council meetings
- Participate in information and training programs
- Participate on standing committees, ad hoc or special purpose committees
- May be called upon to chair a standing committee, ad hoc or special committee
- Act as a link between the school Council and the community
- Encourage the participation of parents and other people with the school community

Principal:

Note: Ministry regulations in effect for the 2001-2002 school year add new responsibilities to the Principal, particularly in terms of notification to the school community regarding Council meetings, elections, etc. See Revised Regulation 298 for details.

- Facilitates the establishment of the school Council and assists in its operation
- Supports and promotes the Council's activities
- Seeks input from the Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility
- Acts as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies and collective agreements
- Obtains and provides information required by Council to enable it to make informed decisions
- Communicates with the Chair of the Council on a regular basis
- Ensures that copies of the minutes of Council meetings are kept at the school
- Assist the Council in communicating with the school community
- Encourages the participation of parents and of other people within the school community, in the life of the school and the activities of the school Council

The Chair:

- Calls School Council meetings
- Prepares and circulates the agenda for Council meetings
- Ensures that the minutes of the Council meetings are recorded and maintained
- Participates in information and training programs
- Communicates with the school Principal on a regular basis

- Ensures that there is regular communication with the school community
- Consults with senior Board staff and trustees, as required
- Prepares the annual report of the Council for the Director of Education
- Shall have signing authority along with the Vice Chair/Co-Chair and Treasurer
- Shall be involved in the formation of standing, ad hoc and special purpose committees

Vice-Chair or Co-Chair:

- Shall perform the duties of the Chair in the absence of the Chair
- Assists the Chair in any of his/her roles and responsibilities as may be delegated from time to time
- Shall have signing authority along with the Chair and Treasurer

Secretary

- Ensures that notice of meetings and previous minutes are circulated to all members in advance of Council meetings
- Maintains a full and accurate account of all Council meetings, especially a record of all motions passed. Ensures the minutes are signed by the Chair following their adoption by Council
- Prepares correspondence as required
- Ensures the safe-keeping of Council records at the school
- Provides for inspection of the minute book and records of the Council to any member of Council or members of the school's community, upon request
- Takes attendance at Council meetings

Treasurer

- Takes charge of finances and financial records of Council
- Maintains a bank account for Council maintained in the name of Goulbourn Middle School Council
- Receives and deposits promptly the funds of Council in Council's bank account
- Shall have signing authority along with the Chair and Vice Chair/Co-Chair
- Shall maintain a record of all financial transactions
- Shall present a current financial report at each Council meeting and the Annual General Meeting
- Completes the tally verification on Health Bar Teller Procedures and provides a copy to the Chair

Health Bar Co-ordinator

- Prepares, distributes, collects order forms for Health Bar items
- Orders milk, soup, pizza
- Recruits and schedules volunteer workers

- Counts money received and prepares a tally according to "Goulbourn Middle School Health Bar Teller Procedures" (see Council minutes, June 1999)
- Provides money to Treasurer for deposit
- Provides a monthly report on Health Bar activities to Council

Publicity Co-ordinator

- Prepares articles about GMS activities for publication in local newspapers
- Produces Council newsletter and distributes to parents
- Maintains Council's bulletin board at the school
- Provides notice of upcoming Council meetings to local newspapers

OCASC Representative

- Shall be the liaison between OCASC and Goulbourn Middle School
- Attends monthly OCASC meetings and/or keeps informed about OCASC activities and events
- Reports to Council monthly about OCASC activities and events, highlighting issues of concern to GMS and co-ordinates response from GMS to OCASC (surveys, concerns, questions, etc)

Volunteer Co-ordinator

- Works with Principal to manage the volunteer program at the school level
- Acts as key contact for the program, for volunteers, staff, OCRI
- Organizes and participates in orientations session(s) and training for volunteers
- Established and maintains volunteer roster
- Co-ordinates collection of volunteer statistics and reports to Council and staff
- Initiates education and recognition activities, modifying the program as required
- Initiates publicity to recruit volunteers as needed

**STANDING MOTIONS FOR ONGOING YEARLY FUNDING
GMS COUNCIL**

ITEM FUNDED	TIME OF YEAR REQUIRED	AMOUNT	NOTES
Power of Positive Photos	September	\$500.	(1)
Athletic Equipment	money available in Jan	approx. \$300.	(1) From Milk Marketing Board Rebate
Refreshments for Grade 8 Graduation Ceremony	June	\$100.	(1) Lemonade and cookies provided
Grade 8 History/Geography Award	June (graduation)	\$20.	(2) Two awards given yearly Plaque purchased June '00
Subsidy for Needy Students	Ongoing (field trips, athletic events etc)	approx \$300.	(3) In past years this money came from GST rebate from Health Bar operations. Rebate is no longer available from the government
OCASC annual membership	October	\$25.	Approved June 13, 2002
OCASC annual conference (3 participants)	April (?)	\$45.	Approved June 13, 2002
Grade 8 English Award	June	\$25. X 2 = \$50.	(4) Keeper trophy plus engraving
Grade 8 Francais Award	June	\$25. X 2 = \$50.	(4) Keeper trophy plus engraving
Grade 8 Award: Perfect Assignment Reports	June	\$250. (maximum)	(4) Chapters gift certificates plus engraving
Volunteer Appreciation Lunch (parent volunteers, classroom & Health Bar)	May	\$120.	(4) Note: name changed from "Health Bar Appreciation" to "Volunteer Appreciation", June 13, 2002
Health Bar Appreciation Lunch (student volunteers)	May	\$50.	(4)

Teacher retirements	May	\$50. each	(4)
Staff Appreciation Lunch	May/June	\$200.	Approved June 13, 2002
TOTAL: (not including rebate from Milk Mtkg Board)		\$2080	

NOTES:

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| (1) | Approved September 23, 1999 | (3) | Approved October 26, 2000 |
| (2) | Approved June 8, 2000 | (4) | Approved during 2000-2001 school year |