

GRIFFITH WOODS SCHOOL

SCHOOL COUNCIL BYLAWS

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ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of this association is Griffith Woods School Council, hereinafter referred to as the “GWSC”.

ARTICLE II - MISSION STATEMENT

The Griffith Woods School Council is committed to working together to support the goals of Griffith Woods School. Our membership facilitates this by engaging our School community in promoting student leadership, academic and personal achievement and active citizenship. Council works to develop and strengthen ties between the school, the home and the community.

ARTICLE III - PURPOSES

3.1 Mandate

The GWSC will:

- Provide ideas and opinions to assist the Principal in making decisions that affect the school
- Consult with the school administration on issues regarding school philosophy, educational programs, and any other issues related to regulations that would come under GWSC responsibilities as defined by the Calgary Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as the “CBE”) and the Alberta Education policies. These responsibilities are included in Appendix B.
- NOT deal with personal and/or confidential issues which affect individual staff members, students or GWSC members
- Respect the roles of the school staff, each of which has professional and legal responsibilities in accordance with the school system
- Consult with administration before initiating any activities

3.2 Objectives

- To promote communication between parents and school staff and to provide an effective forum for discussion of school philosophy, educational programs, and issues of parental or staff concern
- To provide opportunities for parents to become aware of current educational trends, topics and issues
- To support the school in its efforts to focus on teachers’ time and school resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning
- To encourage a sense of community fellowship among parents, staff and students
- To encourage and provide appropriate support for special programs operating within the school
- To initiate and carry out programs designed to enhance the social or educational programs of the school in consultation with administration and staff
- To develop and implement fundraising ideas

- To be ambassadors for the school and to encourage parental and staff involvement within the GWSC
- To prepare an annual report on GWSC activities for the Principal, for inclusion in the Annual School Report and School Improvement Plan, and for the CBE.
- To promote a common vision for Griffith Woods School (GWS)

3.3 Responsibilities of the School Council

- To work with and provide advice to the school Principal regarding matters related to the school
- To perform any duty or function delegated to GWSC by the CBE in accordance with the delegation
- To make policies and/or participate in processes for conflict resolution arising from an Executive decision or action (See guidelines in Article VII)
- To manage the activities of the GWSC in accordance with the School Act and these bylaws

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP AND MODEL OF GOVERNANCE

4.1 Membership

GWSC membership includes all parents, guardians or legal custodians of students enrolled at Griffith Woods School, and all teachers and staff of the school. An Executive Council (as listed in Article 5.1) shall be elected to operate the affairs of the GWSC.

4.2 Model of Governance

The GWSC shall use a town hall model of governance where all members of the GWSC shall have voting privileges at any GWSC meeting.

4.3 Decision Making Process

In recognition of a commitment to consensus building, the decisions of GWSC shall be made as follows:

- Every concerned participant of the School community shall be given the opportunity and responsibility of initiating and then leading the discussion in the direction of a decision that needs to be made. The responsibility of speaking ensures that all will benefit from the thinking of each other, but accepting the responsibility to speak implies accepting the responsibility to listen.
- After real dialogue about a particular issue has taken place and everyone has been given legitimate opportunity to state their case and be listened to, the Chair will bring closure on the discussion by calling a motion to be made upon which members shall vote. The motion shall then be deemed to be a motion under Robert's Rules of Order with the usual rights for discussion and amendment and the requirement of a seconder.
- Voting on a motion shall be on the basis of one vote for each member actually in attendance and the majority of votes shall prevail. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. Voting shall be by show of hands unless a ballot is requested by five (5) members.
- The member chairing the meeting shall cast a vote only when it is needed to break a tie.

ARTICLE V - EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

5.1 Executive Council

The Executive shall meet a minimum of six times per school year to conduct GWSC business. This body shall represent the entire GWSC in the absence of all members. For emergency decisions, one half (½) of the Executive must be apprised of the situation and be in verbal agreement. The membership will be informed of these decisions at the next meeting. Two people may share a position. Teacher representatives may attend the meetings on a rotating basis.

The members of the Executive are as follows:

- Chairperson(s)
- Vice-Chairperson(s)
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Communications Director

5.2 Duties and Responsibilities of Executive Members

- a) Outgoing Executive members are required to pass on any records and relevant material to the new Executive at the Annual General Meeting ("AGM").
- b) All members of the Executive shall attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the GWSC or let the secretary know that they cannot attend. If an Executive member does not attend three consecutive meetings, they may be asked to resign their position.
- c) A description of the specific duties and responsibilities of each Executive member is in Appendix A.

5.3 Meetings

- a) An AGM shall be held at the school no later than June to elect the new Executive, review Executive responsibilities and establish meeting times. These times may be amended at any GWSC meeting.
- b) The new Council Executive will hold a pre-planning meeting, no later than the end of August, for the upcoming school year.
- c) All GWSC meetings are general meetings and will be held at GWS unless the GWSC Executive advises otherwise.

5.4 Finances

- a) A spending limit of no more than \$500 for the council year can be disbursed at the discretion of the signing authorities. Any disbursements over \$500 shall be approved by the members at a regular meeting.
- b) Should GWSC committees raise funds, GWSC will hold those funds in its bank account and dedicate them to committee uses.

- c) GWSC will present an annual budget for approval each year at the AGM, which will provide guidance on the operational expenses required for the next school year. Operational expenses will include any known expenses or annual committee budgetary items. Any additional requests for funding throughout the school year must be approved by members at a general meeting.

ARTICLE VI - ELECTION PROCEDURES

6.1 Elections

- a) Elections shall be held at the GWSC AGM, to be effective at the end of June.
- b) The GWSC shall advertise the AGM through digital media and email.
- c) The term of office shall be two years.
- d) Any member of the Executive may extend their current position past two years, providing that person is re-nominated and they are re-elected. A member may serve up to a four-year maximum term in any one position (except that of the school representatives, which may be longer).
- e) Whenever possible, Executive positions should represent alternate communities.
- f) GWSC positions may be elected by acclamation where not more than one person expresses an interest in a position. If necessary, a Nominating Committee of three members, chaired by the Chairperson or any appointed alternate, shall be formed and carry out the following duties:
 - 1. Call for nominations for all positions through a notice in the school newsletter at least one week prior to the AGM.
 - 2. Contact potential candidates to fill any vacancies on the Executive.
 - 3. Prepare a slate of candidates for all positions and present it at the AGM.
- g) Nominations from the floor shall be taken at the AGM for all Executive positions held by parents.
- h) Voting procedures shall be as follows:
 - 1. Voting is conducted by a show of hands.
 - 2. Votes are counted by two members not standing for an office.
 - 3. Positions are elected by a majority vote.
 - 4. The Chairperson votes only if there is a tie vote.
 - 5. Members must be present to vote (no voting by proxy).
 - 6. Only GWSC members (Article 4.1) are eligible to vote.

6.2 Appointment of Community Representative(s)

- a) Where possible, the GWSC may approve the appointment of a Community Representative, who is either a member of the community or representative of a business that has a link with the school.
- b) Any Community Representative may be re-appointed by the GWSC.

6.3 Disqualification

An Executive member shall be disqualified if that person no longer meets the qualifications of the School Act or these bylaws.

6.4 Withdrawal

An Executive member may withdraw from their position by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the Chairperson and the Principal. If the member withdrawing is the Chairperson, the notice must be given to the Co-Chairperson and the Principal.

6.5 Removal

The Executive may, for any reason, remove a member of the council at a special meeting called for that purpose, and by Resolution of not less than two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the Executive members (excluding the member who is the subject of the Resolution), providing that member has been notified twenty-one (21) days in advance of the meeting and is given the opportunity to be heard at the meeting.

6.6 Vacancies

Vacancies occurring among positions of the Executive members will be filled, for the balance of the term of the vacated position, through appointment by the GWSC. When necessary, nomination and voting procedures will be followed.

ARTICLE VII - QUORUM FOR SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETINGS

7.1 Transaction of Business

The quorum for GWSC meetings shall be one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of the Executive for the transaction of business.

7.2 Lack of Quorum

If a quorum is present at the start of a meeting, the meeting may continue even if a quorum is not maintained throughout. Any GWSC meetings for which there is not a quorum may be rescheduled by the Chairperson(s).

7.3 Amendments to the Bylaws

The bylaws remain in effect from year to year unless amended at an Amendment of the Bylaws meeting.

- The Amendment of the Bylaws meeting may take place at a general meeting or at a special meeting.
- Notice of motion to amend the bylaws and the proposed amendment shall be made available to members of the GWSC by the Executive a minimum of one week prior to the date of the amendment meeting.
- The bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of those present at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII - CONFLICT RESOLUTION

These guidelines are designed to assist the Executive with any conflict which cannot be resolved by the GWSC that results from an Executive decision or action.

Each party will prepare a written statement (on a form provided by the secretary of the GWSC) of their position to be given to the Chairperson. In consultation with the Principal, the Chairperson will decide on a strategy for resolution, such as:

- Providing a mediator (who is agreeable to all parties) to facilitate in resolving the conflict
- Setting up a meeting between the parties in conflict and the mediator, with the mediator documenting the discussion
- Establishing a committee of individuals agreeable to all parties to arbitrate a solution to the conflict
- Referring the conflict to the CBE for resolution, if agreement cannot be reached

ARTICLE IX - THE COMMITTEES

9.1 Forming Committees

Committees may be formed at the discretion of the GWSC. Committees shall be appointed from members and shall act in an advisory capacity to the Executive Committee and GWSC.

9.2 General Procedures

The Committee Chairperson calls committee meetings. The powers of the committee may be exercised by a meeting of the committee at which a quorum is present. Each committee shall have the authority to fix its quorum and regulate its procedure.

9.3 Reporting

All committees must report regularly to GWSC for approval of their plan(s) to reach their objectives.

9.4 Standing Committees and Non-Executive Members

The GWSC establishes these Standing Committees:

- a) Social Committee
- b) Fun Lunch Committee
- c) Teacher Appreciation Committee

The GWSC establishes these Non-Executive Members:

- a) Volunteer Coordinator
- b) Key Communicator

9.5 Ad Hoc Committees

Additional ad hoc committees may be formed in September at the first general meeting based on priorities for the upcoming year as established by the Executive Committee, and on an ongoing basis as required.

ARTICLE X - GENERAL

- a) No member of GWSC receives payment for his/her services as a member.
 - a) Reasonable expenses incurred while carrying out duties of the GWSC may be reimbursed upon approval of the Executive Committee.
 - b) Executive Committee members holding office on GWSC do so in accordance with the protection from the CBE. The CBE does not protect any Member for acts of fraud, dishonesty or bad faith.
 - c) No member is liable for the acts of any other members. No member is liable for any loss due to an oversight or error in judgement, or by an act in his/her role for the GWSC unless the act is fraud, dishonesty or bad faith.

APPENDICES TO THE BYLAWS OF THE GRIFFITH WOODS SCHOOL COUNCIL

APPENDIX A - Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive

1. Chairperson(s) 2. Vice-Chairperson(s)

In consultation with each other, these executive members will fulfill the following duties:

- Act as Chairperson of all GWSC general meetings
- Prepare, in consultation with the Principal, and distribute an agenda for the meetings
- Be an ex-officio member of every committee
- A minimum of 2 members will be signing officers
- Distribute a copy of the bylaws and addendums to members of the Executive after their election
- At the end of the school calendar year, prepare an Annual Report, which includes the activities of the GWSC and a financial statement relating to money handled by GWSC
- Ensure the Principal has a copy of the GWSC Annual Report (by the end of May) for inclusion in the Annual School Report
- Complete insurance renewal documentation
- Act as Chairperson of nominating committee if necessary

3. Secretary

- Record the minutes of all meetings and distribute minutes of each meeting to the Executive
- Requires an alternate if unable to attend meeting
- Take care of any correspondence in liaison with the Chairperson(s)
- Ensure a printed copy of the minutes of each GWSC meeting are kept in a binder located in the GWS office

4. Treasurer

- Be a signing officer
- Assist Chair(s) and Vice-Chair(s) in the creation of an annual budget
- Keep accurate records of all financial transactions
- Be responsible for the deposits of all monies paid to the GWSC
- Ensure all debts owed by GWSC are paid in a timely manner
- Ensure a fundraising coordinator has made record of funds for deposit prior to those funds being forwarded to the Treasurer
- Prepare written financial statements for all meetings and an annual financial report for the AGM

- Ensure that the books and records are audited by two members of the GWSC before the books are handed over to the newly elected Treasurer
- Provide the necessary documentation for transferring signing authority to the newly elected signing officers by the end of June
- Provide the Chair(s) with a copy of the year-end financials for the Annual Report

5. Communications Director

- Ensure a copy of the GWSC minutes of each meeting is posted to the school website for membership access, in a central digital file location for executive access.
- Maintain an updated record of all GWSC Executive and sub-committee members' contact information
- Liaise with Community Associations to strengthen community ties and facilitate the transfer of information between parties

APPENDIX B - Responsibilities of the GWSC

As defined by the CBE and the Alberta Education policies, it is the responsibility of the GWSC to:

- Actively seek the views of the school community. Continually seeking input from the school community is the only way Councils can accurately formulate goals and expectations for the school that will meet community needs.
- Actively represent the views of the school community. School Councils have a responsibility to make the views of the school community known to the Principal, School Board, Alberta Education or other education partners, where applicable.
- Inform the school community. School Councils must keep the community well informed of the council's roles, functions, projects and decisions (along with the reasons behind them).
- Involve the school community. The GWSC will need to make a special effort to bring all parents into the education circle to ensure decisions reflect the interests of all children in the school.
- Encourage all forms of parental involvement and support. The GWSC is only one way for parents to participate in the life of the school. Parent volunteers play an important school role, and parents and school alike benefit from direct parental involvement and support.
- Work within the policies of the local school board. GWSC members will be guided by the mission statement of their school district and must work within district policies and guidelines.
- Become well informed. GWSC members must be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them. It is important for GWSC to take advantage of sessions designed to increase their understanding of the principles of teamwork, consensus building, school-based decision making and other issues that affect the work of GWSC.
- Focus on the best interests of all students. The GWSC must ensure all students' needs are expressed, considered and addressed. No individual or group can be allowed to promote its own agenda or self-interest at the expense of others.

- i) Maintain high ethical standards. The GWSC must limit discussions to matters of concern to the school community as a whole. The confidential nature of individual student learning and behavior must be respected. The GWSC must handle financial matters in an accountable manner.