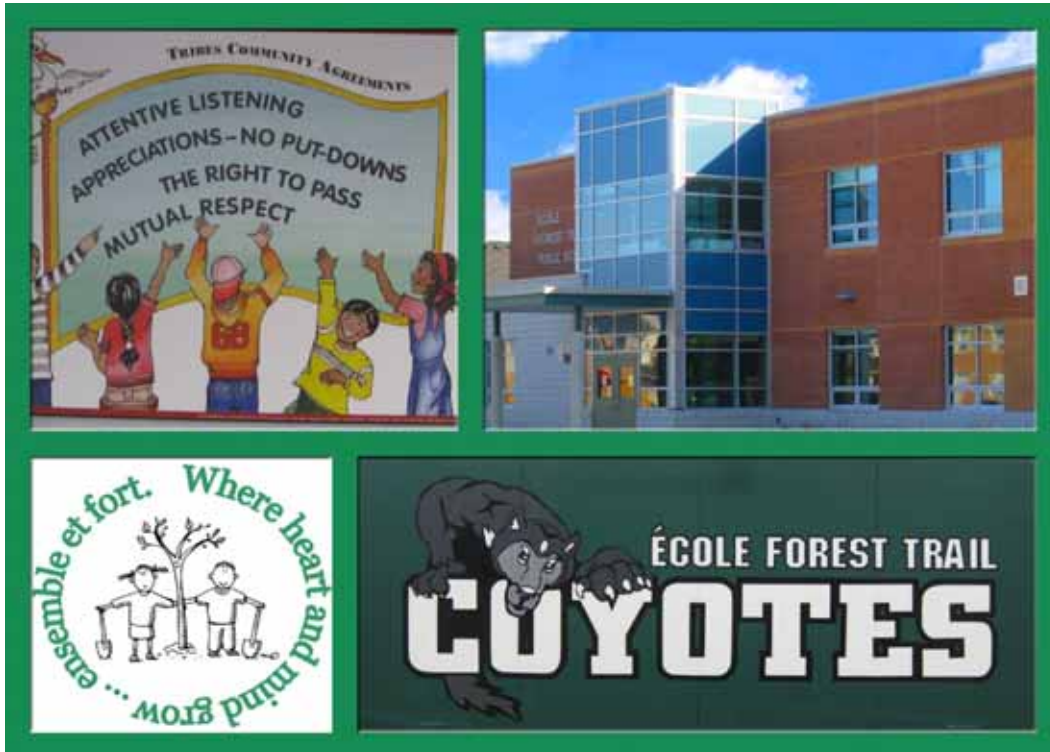




École Forest Trail Public School



School Council Constitution and Bylaws

" Ensemble, Discover, Succeed, Citoyen Mondial "



History of the École Forest Trail Public School

Opening

École Forest Trail Public School is located at 1406 Pine Glen Road, Oakville, Ontario and first opened its doors on September 4, 2007. The school was built as a Grades 1 to 8 - 550 student school to accommodate French Immersion students in Northwest Oakville. Many students came from École Pine Grove – south of the QEW, where they had been bussed for a number of years. New students came from the areas west of Sixteen Mile Creek and North of the QEW. The first Principal and Vice Principal of the School are Catherine Briggs and Loui Silvestri.

The Name

The name École Forest Trail was chosen after the public was invited to submit potential names for the school. As a Tribes school, the school believes in inclusion, collaboration and developing positive relationships as we follow the Tribes model. The concept of the forest represents the commitment to fostering a healthy active lifestyle and respect for the environment. The image of a trail weaving through a forest embraces the excitement of the adventure of discovery and learning.

School Mascot / Team Names

We are the École Forest Trail Coyotes. This name garnered more than 50% of the votes of students and is not only bilingual but the spelling does not change from English to French.

Vision, Mission, Beliefs of École Forest Trail Public School

Vision

At École Forest Trail Public School we are committed to the development of the whole child. Our vision is succinctly stated with these words: Ensemble, Discover, Succeed, Citoyen Mondial.

Mission

At École Forest Trail Public School, we inspire students to learn and succeed to achieve their full potential in a safe environment. As a community, we engage students through inclusion, collaboration and purposeful participation. We value the whole child and the development of global citizenship.

School Beliefs

École Forest Trail Public School – where heart and mind grow ... ensemble et fort.

At École Forest Trail Public School we believe:

- Excellence is achieved by developing potential
- Celebrating efforts and successes promotes growth
- Learning is a collaborative, co-operative activity
- Education prepares students for global citizenship



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Introduction

1.1 Purpose

School Councils are established in each school to encourage and facilitate the involvement of parents, guardians, staff and community members in providing a quality education for students. Research has shown that the involvement of parents and guardians in their children's education has a positive impact on improved student learning and helps to create a sense of community at the school. The support of the community has also proven to be an enhancement to that positive learning environment. By working together as partners, we can encourage greater academic achievement and prepare our students for success as responsible, participating citizens of the global community.

1.2 Preamble

A School Council is an advisory body functioning under Ministry of Education Regulation 612/00 and respective board policy. The Council's role, in collaboration with the broader school community, is to provide input and advice with regard to school goals and to enhance learning opportunities, through various activities, for the benefit of all students in the school.

École Forest Trail Public School Council, hereafter known as ÉFTSC, will operate within the parameters of the Education Act, Ontario Regulation 612/00 and Halton District School Board (hereinafter known as the HDSB) policies and agreements.

1.3 Name

The organization will be known as École Forest Trail Public School Council, hereinafter referred to as "ÉFTSC".

1.4 Definitions

The following standard definitions will be used throughout this document:

- HDSB (hereinafter used to refer to the Halton District School Board)
- ÉFTSC (hereinafter used to refer to the École Forest Trail Public School - School Council)
- School (from the "Ethics" section forward used to refer to École Forest Trail Elementary School)
- Regular meetings (refers to required attendance to monthly Council meetings, as well as, attendance to scheduled committee and subcommittee meetings).



2 Role of Council

2.1 Ministry of Education / HDSB Direction

The Education Act requires school boards to “establish a school council for each school operated by the board” section 170 (1), paragraph 17.1. Ministry of Education Ontario Regulation 612/00 sets out the mandate of school councils and the minimum requirements for their composition and operation.

School councils are advisory bodies; they may provide advice to the principal and, where appropriate, to the school board. They are composed of parents, who form the majority, as well as the principal, a teacher, a non-teaching staff member, a student (mandatory at the secondary level, optional at the elementary level), and community representatives.

Parents, student, and staff members are elected by the groups they represent. The council appoints community members.

2.2 Strategic Responsibilities of School Councils

School councils are advisory bodies and will provide advice to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the school board on any of the matters which the council has identified as priorities, including, but not limited to:

- Development, implementation and review of the school plan for continuous improvement through involvement in matters such as:
 - Quality Programming - curriculum and program goals and priorities
 - Safety and Well Being – school code of behaviour
 - Parent Engagement – inclusion of parents as strategic partners and volunteers to achieve goals
 - The responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs;
 - Financial Responsibilities - school budget priorities and allocations;
- Support for school, family and community partnerships that assist parents in the education of their children through involvement in matters such as:
 - School-based services; partnerships with agencies, associations, and
 - Communities related to social, health, recreational, and nutritional programs;
 - Local coordination of services for children and youth;
 - Local school/community communication strategies.
- Preparation and review of the school profile through involvement in matters such as:
 - Developing criteria to assist in the selection of local School Principal/Vice Principal.
- Other matters which an individual school council may consider important, such as:
 - Local school year calendar;
 - Extra-curricular activities in the school;
 - Development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level;
 - Local capital-improvement plans;
 - Methods of reporting to parents and the community.



- Field trip practices;
- Local school safety procedures
- Community use of school facilities.

2.3 Fundraising

ÉFTSC may engage in fundraising activities if they are to raise and spend funds for a purpose approved by HDSB or authorized by any applicable policies established by the HDSB. All fundraising for ÉFTSC must be done under the direction of the ÉFTSC.

Fundraising must follow the guidelines set out by the HDSB in their "Financial Policies and Procedures for School Councils" contained in the School Council Handbook on the HDSB web site.

2.3.1 Bereavement

Should the life of a student currently enrolled at Ecole Forest Trail be lost, School Council will donate a sum of \$50 to a charity of the deceased's choice or pay \$50 towards flowers for the family.

2.4 Finance

At the first General Meeting (September) a year-end report from the previous year will be presented. At the third General Meeting (November) a financial plan for the current year will be presented. The financial plan will include an Operating Budget, a detailed plan for fund-raising initiatives, and a recommended carry-forward balance for the next year. Decisions made will involve input and participation by the School Council and the École Forest Trail Community.

The Treasurer will have a current financial statement available for presentation at each General Meeting. With 48 hours notice given, these statements will be made available to any parent who requests them. All grant applications, guidelines and supporting documentation should be given to the School Council's Treasurer and made available for public and Council review at the school office. The fiscal year end is July 31 of each year as set by the HDSB.

Expenditures outlined in the accepted Operating Budget may be authorized by the School Council. Cheques will be signed by a) one of either the treasurer or co-chair(s) **AND** b) one of either the Principal or Vice Principal.

2.5 Annual Report

ÉFTSC shall submit a written report on its activities to the Principal of the school and to HDSB in accordance with article 3.3.4

The Annual Report shall include a financial report.

The Principal shall, when requested, make available a copy of the Annual Report to any parent/guardian of a pupil enrolled in the school.



3 Membership

3.1 Composition

The composition of the ÉFTSC shall at all times be consistent with the Education Act and Regulations. It should be noted that typically any member who wishes to be considered for the ÉFTSC should be willing to provide a minimum of 10 hours a month or approximately 100 hours per school year. Members of the ÉFTSC will include representatives from each of the four (4) following categories:

Parents/Guardians

- The number of parent/guardian members specified for ÉFTSC shall ensure that parent/guardian members constitute a majority of the total members of ÉFTSC.
- A person is qualified to be a parent/guardian member of a school council if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school.
- HDSB employees are eligible to run for ÉFTSC as parent/guardian representatives if they are parents/guardians of a student enrolled in the school, provided they do not work at the school. Such employees must disclose their employment with HDSB at the time of their nomination, and such information must be supplied to all voters.

Principal

- The Principal of the school will be a designated non-voting member of ÉFTSC and will participate in all meetings.
- Alternatively, the Vice-Principal of the school can be designated by the Principal to act on behalf of the Principal at ÉFTSC meetings.

Teacher Representative

- One (1) teacher who is employed at the school, other than the Principal or Vice-Principal, will be a member of ÉFTSC.
- The Teacher representative will be elected by the teaching staff of the school. The election of the Teacher representative shall be held in the first 30 days of each school year.

Community Representative

- ÉFTSC may appoint one (1) community representative.
- A person who is employed by the HDSB can be appointed as a community representative on the ÉFTSC if he or she is not employed at the school; and
- Other members of the ÉFTSC are informed of the person's employment before the nomination and acceptance of the appointment.

3.2 Organization

Officers of an ÉFTSC shall be elected at the beginning of the first meeting opened by the outgoing chair(s) subsequent to the yearly ÉFTSC elections having taken place.



ÉFTSC shall have the following positions of defined responsibility:

- One (1) chair or two (2) co-chairs. A chair or co-chair must be a parent/guardian member of ÉFTSC, and shall be elected by the voting members of ÉFTSC;
- One (1) vice-chair, to be elected by the voting members of ÉFTSC, if only one chair is in place
- Secretary; and
- Treasurer
- Member At Large

See Appendix A for Organization Chart

Each candidate for the officer positions outlined above must be nominated and seconded at the meeting before proceeding to a vote. Before a vote can commence, a motion to close nominations must be moved and seconded. This must be done for each position separately. Officer positions will be filled in the order listed above: Chair(s), Vice-Chair (if required), Secretary, and Treasurer. The election can be by secret ballot or by a show of hands at the discretion of the ÉFTSC members present.

An ÉFTSC member who was nominated for one position but was not successful may be nominated for any of the other positions. Candidates are elected by a majority of the votes cast by the ÉFTSC voting members present.

3.3 Member Responsibilities

3.3.1 École Forest Trail School – School Council

ÉFTSC shall:

- Consult with parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by ÉFTSC
- Develop election procedures to fill vacancies
- Detail conflict of interest and conflict resolution requirements
- Keep minutes of meetings and records of financial transactions available at the school for a period of seven years, for examination without charge by the staff of ÉFTSC and parents/guardians of ÉFTSC students.
- Produce an annual written report of the ÉFTSC activities, including financial activities, to be submitted to the Principal and the HDSB.

The members of the ÉFTSC are accountable to the parents/guardians they represent and **MUST**:

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues
- Regularly attend ÉFTSC meetings
- Be willing to participate in information and training programs
- Act as a link between the ÉFTSC and the community
- Encourage the participation of all parents/guardians within the school community
- Participate on sub-committees and assist with tasks of the ÉFTSC



3.3.2 ÉFTSC Chair / Co-Chair

A chair/co-chair must be a parent/guardian member of ÉFTSC who will:

- Call ÉFTSC meetings
- Prepare the agenda for meetings in consultation with the Principal, ensuring the agenda is issued at least 4 days prior to the meeting taking place
- Chair the meetings
- Ensure that the minutes of the meetings are recorded, maintained and accessible
- Communicate with the Principal
- Facilitate collaborative decision-making within a democratic framework
- Ensure that there is regular communication with the community (e.g. Monthly School Council newsletter)
- Manage incoming and outgoing correspondence, ensuring appropriate communication to ÉFTSC and transfer to the Secretary to maintain
- Consult with senior HDSB staff and trustees, as required
- Ensure ÉFTSC fundraising practices meet HDSB policies
- Ensure the ÉFTSC Constitution is reviewed annually
- Co-ordinate the day-to-day activities of ÉFTSC
- Prepare an annual report on the activities of ÉFTSC
- Assume or make arrangements for the assumption of ÉFTSC positions as appropriate and as required in times of absence of those members of ÉFTSC

3.3.3 Secretary

The secretary will:

- Ensure activities of the ÉFTSC meetings are documented and maintained in the form of minutes, with the minutes being distributed to all ÉFTSC members when complete
- Ensure minutes from the preceding ÉFTSC meeting are distributed to all ÉFTSC members at least one week prior to the planned date for the next ÉFTSC meeting
- Ensure approved minutes of all ÉFTSC meetings are made available to the school community
- Ensure formal documentation and correspondence from ÉFTSC is completed and sent in proper fashion in conjunction with council officers
- Maintain a file of all incoming and outgoing correspondence, minutes of ÉFTSC meetings, agendas, reports and by-laws to be available to the school community upon request
- Maintain a current membership and contact list of all ÉFTSC members
- Keep records of ÉFTSC incoming and outgoing correspondence, resources and minutes of the last seven (7) years in files and binders in the school library

3.3.4 Treasurer

The treasurer will:

- Comply with the financial guidelines set out by the HDSB in their "Financial Policy and Procedure for School Councils" contained in the School Council Handbook on the HDSB Website
- Ensure that the ÉFTSC has a copy of the HDSB Financial Policy and Procedures for School Councils



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- On a monthly basis, prepare and maintain updated annual budgets which include totals up to the end of the preceding month. An updated monthly budget will be presented at every monthly school council meeting for council members to review and approve
- Ensure all financial transactions are recorded in HDSB supplied accounting software following HDSB required accounting format
- Ensure all financial transactions are documented and records maintained following HDSB operational procedures
- Ensure all cheques have a minimum of two authorized signatories
- Ensure all grant guidelines and deadlines for disposition of grant funds are followed
- Ensure financial records are complete and kept up to date
- Ensure financial records are retained in the school for a period of seven years
- Prepare and present monthly financial reports and bank reconciliations to the Principal for verification and subsequent submissions for the HDSB. Copies will be made available to all ÉFTSC members upon their request given 48 hours notice
- Prepare an annual report reflecting a July thirty-first year end following HDSB annual reporting operational procedures for submission to the HDSB Accounting Department by August thirty-first of each year
- Make a year end financial summary report available to for all parents/guardians of the school by posting it on the school council website

3.3.5 Principal

The Principal of the school will:

a. Communicate;

- Provide for distribution to each member of ÉFTSC any materials received by the Principal from the Ministry of Education or HDSB for ÉFTSC
- Help ÉFTSC communicate with the school community
- Give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the ÉFTSC meetings to every parent/guardian
- Ensure that copies of the minutes of ÉFTSC meetings are kept at the school and accessible by all parents/guardians
- Forward a copy of the ÉFTSC Annual Report to the HDSB School Superintendent
- Make a copy of the ÉFTSC Annual Report available to any parent/guardian that requests it
- Give written notice at least fourteen days before the date of election of parent members, of the date, time and location of the election to every parent/guardian of a student enrolled in the school
- Ensure that the ÉFTSC Constitution is readily available to the school community
- Review all printed material from ÉFTSC distributed through the school
- Distribute key event/proposed calendar for year to council for council planning purposes

b. Consult;

- Facilitate the establishment of ÉFTSC and assist in its operation
- Seek input from ÉFTSC in areas for which it has been assigned responsibility (see Section 2 – Role of Council)
- Consider recommendations made by ÉFTSC
- Advise ÉFTSC of the action taken in response to any recommendations, including the rationale for such decisions



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- Act as a resource and assist in obtaining information on laws, regulations, and policies
 - Advise ÉFTSC when they are not in compliance with HDSB policies and procedures
 - Review and sign all financial reports
- c. Support;
- Attend all ÉFTSC meetings unless unable to do so due to illness, other priority commitments, or other cause beyond his/her control
 - Support and promote ÉFTSC's activities
 - Encourage the participation of parents/guardians and others in the school community
 - Along with a parent/guardian officer, is one of the required signing authorities on the ÉFTSC bank account

The Principal **will not have a vote at ÉFTSC meetings**. The Principal may delegate any of his/her powers or duties as a member of ÉFTSC to the Vice-Principal or designate of the school.

3.3.6 Members at Large

School Council Members At Large will:

- Commit to regular attendance, (monthly basis not including sub-committee) attend meetings and ensure the proper School Council procedures are followed.
- Offer their services for office and/or one committee. Apart from regularly scheduled meetings, members are expected to be available as required for committee undertakings and responsibilities.
- Work together as a team to create an atmosphere of mutual trust, openness and collaboration both within the School Council and the school community .
- Recognize that all other members of the school community must have a voice within the democratic process of the School Council's operation, and will encourage their participation
- Be visible in supporting council activities and/or events

3.4 Committees

ÉFTSC may establish and dissolve committees, for specific or general purposes, as it deems appropriate to the achievement of its mandate, to make recommendations to ÉFTSC. The committees may include: (See Appendix A)

- Parent Engagement
- Fund-Raising
- Communications
- Constitution/Policy & Governance
- Finance Committee (ÉFTSC Executive)
- Safety and Wellbeing

The committee may only act in accordance with the authority provided to them by the ÉFTSC. Such authority is to be clarified in the Terms of Reference / Committee Charters for the Committee, as approved by ÉFTSC.

All committees will have a minimum of a Chair, or Co Chair(s) and/or Vice Chair and at least two other members where one member will have to present a report to each ÉFTSC meeting (nil reports required) on the status of all committee projects and activities, and shall respond to



questions. Minutes must be taken at each committee meeting of the ÉFTSC. The committee must report all decisions made and the results of each vote taken.

Committees of ÉFTSC may include persons who are not members of ÉFTSC. Every committee of ÉFTSC will be chaired by at least one parent/guardian council member of ÉFTSC.

Committees will meet as required. All Committee meetings are open to the staff of ÉFTSC and parents/guardians of ÉFTSC students and minutes will be taken and copy of those minutes forwarded to the ÉFTSC Secretary for future reference.

3.5 Code of Ethics

ÉFTSC will operate as a non-profit organization, without financial gain for its members. Any profit to ÉFTSC will be used in promoting its purposes. An ÉFTSC member shall not receive any non-financial remuneration for serving as a member or officer of ÉFTSC. ÉFTSC will strive to establish positive working relationships amongst all ÉFTSC members. ÉFTSC will seek to reach a consensus in the decision-making processes of ÉFTSC and all members shall speak positively about the school at all times while on school property. Each member will sign that they have read the Constitution at the beginning of each council year when taking office.

See Appendix B for detailed Code of Ethics

3.6 Conflict of Interest Guidelines

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

Should an issue or Agenda item arise during an ÉFTSC meeting where an ÉFTSC member is in a conflict of interest situation, he or she shall declare a conflict of interest immediately, and refrain from participating in discussion of or voting on the issue or resolution.

As ÉFTSC may deal with internal conflict and other difficult matters, the following actions should prevail and be taken as best practice:

- Be proactive. Positive interpersonal relationships are critical to an effective organization. Most issues can be resolved if they are brought forward and addressed early;
- Gather as much information about the situation as possible;
- If the conflict is between two members of ÉFTSC, the Chair(s), Vice-Chair, or Principal will encourage them to talk about the differences and act as facilitator as necessary. Most situations can be resolved at this point through dialogue and co-operation amongst those involved. The Principal may also be able to clarify policy or legislation and offer other assistance or direction;
- If the conflict involves a number of members on ÉFTSC, then the issue is placed on the Agenda and given sufficient time for everyone to present their viewpoints in an effort to come to some resolution; and
- Speaking to the local HDSB School Trustee at any time should be encouraged, but not used in exclusion to the above-recommended process.



4 Elections

4.1 Elections Overview

All ÉFTSC elections must be held within the first 30 days of the new school year. The date of the election is to be fixed by the outgoing Chair/Co-Chairs of ÉFTSC after consulting with the Principal of the school. To ensure that the interests of all members of school councils are represented in a balanced manner:

- That the ÉFTSC consist of a recommended maximum of 18 parents with the current School Council Executive Committee and Nomination Committee reviewing the nominations.
- Board employees can be elected as parent representatives, or appointed as community members, at their child's school, unless they are also employed at that school;
- Board employees cannot serve as parent/community members in the school where they work;
- Prior to being elected as parent members – or appointed as community representatives – in the school where their children attend, school board employees must notify the parents of the school community of their employment with the board;
- Board employees cannot serve as chair or co-chair of a school council; and
- Trustees cannot serve on a school council in the board where they are a trustee.

A person is qualified to vote in an election of ÉFTSC if he or she is a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in the school. The following guidelines will apply:

- A nominating committee should be formed at the last ÉFTSC meeting of the school year to assist the Principal with nominations and elections
- No one on the nominating committee can run for ÉFTSC for the upcoming year
- Any parent/guardian of an ÉFTSC student will be eligible to run for council (also see note above re: HDSB employees)
- All candidates must complete an ÉFTSC Candidate Declaration Form (CDF)
- The school office must receive the CDF at least 12 days before the election
- All information on the CDF, with the exception of the address and phone number, will be shared with the parent/guardian community of the school at least seven (7) days before the election
- Any parent/guardian of an ÉFTSC student will be eligible to vote, but must be in attendance to do so

The notice of election will be given by:

- notice in writing to the parent's/guardian's child for delivery to his or her parent/guardian; and
- posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents/guardians or to the school website AND school council website

The election of parent/guardian members shall be by secret ballot

- Each ballot will list the first and last name of each parent/guardian candidate and the total number of positions available
- The listing on the ballot will be by alphabetical order, according to last name, then first name



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- The election shall take place on one day with volunteers available from 7:30 a.m. until 7:30 p.m. for parents/guardians to cast their ballots. Each voter shall receive a ballot.
- The ballot shall be placed in a sealed ballot box large enough to hold the ballots until the ballots are officially counted upon closing.
- A witness is required when counting ballots
- The candidates with the most votes will form the next ÉFTSC

A ballot will be spoiled, as deemed by the parties responsible for counting, if:

- A parent/guardian votes for more parent/guardian candidates than positions available
- A parent does not clearly mark the ballot indicating their vote
- A parent destroys their ballot

The names of the successful candidates and the total number of votes cast will be announced. In the case of a tie vote, the tied candidates will participate in a mutually agreed process to determine the election. The principal of a school shall, at least 14 days before the date of the election, on behalf of the school council, give written notice of the date, time and location of the election to every parent/guardian of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.

The elections of other members (teacher and staff) of ÉFTSC shall also be held during the first 30 days of each new school year.

4.2 Term of Office

A person elected as a member of ÉFTSC holds office from the date of the first meeting of ÉFTSC after the elections have been held. The first meeting of the new ÉFTSC must occur within the first thirty-five (35) days of the school year, after the elections being held, on a date fixed by the Principal of the school.

The Principal is a designated member of the ÉFTSC, and thus, is a member of the ÉFTSC as long as he/she is employed as Principal of the school.

All ÉFTSC members shall serve a term of one year, terminating at the start of the first meeting after completion of the election process during the subsequent school year, or earlier if no longer qualified to hold office.

Elected members may seek additional terms of office, with no limit on consecutive terms to be served. It should be noted that typically any member who wishes to be considered for the ÉFTSC should be willing to provide a minimum of 10 hours a month or approximately 100 hours per school year.

4.3 Removal of a Council Member

If ÉFTSC perceives that the conduct of one of the ÉFTSC parent/guardian members is such that ÉFTSC has lost confidence in that person and wishes to terminate his/her remaining term of office, then this may only be done "In-Camera" after a motion is made and seconded by members of ÉFTSC, and receives the support of two-thirds (2/3) of the remaining ÉFTSC members.



“In-Camera” means that the discussion is confidential and all guests (non-voting members of Council) must leave the room while the conversation is occurring. Resolutions arising from in camera discussions shall not appear in regular Council Minutes but are to be recorded in separate “in camera minutes” and not posted or otherwise publicly available. The regular Council Minutes will reflect only that an in-camera discussion was held.

Such a motion and action requires prior notice to council members of two (2) weeks. École Forest Trail Public School Council Constitution Revised: 20 May 2014 Page 15 of 22 Grounds for Loss of Confidence (with the exception of medical leave) will be one or more of the following:

- Failure of an ÉFTSC parent/guardian member to conduct himself/herself in a manner appropriate to the Mission of ÉFTSC.
- Failure of an ÉFTSC parent/guardian member to fulfill his/her respective duties.
- Failure of an ÉFTSC parent/guardian member to attend three (3) meetings.

4.4 Vacancies

Vacancies can occur through the resignation of a member, the removal of a member, or in the event an ÉFTSC parent/guardian or community member becomes an employee of the school. Should a vacancy come open during the middle of a term of council, an election for that position will be held. The process to be followed accordingly is as outlined in Article 4.1 of the Constitution.



5 Meetings

5.1 Meeting Protocol

ÉFTSC shall at a minimum meet eight (8) times during the school year. ÉFTSC will strive to meet monthly, recognizing the minimum compliance requirements. The first meeting of ÉFTSC must occur within the first thirty-five (35) days of the school year, after the elections being held, on a date fixed by the Principal of the school.

A meeting of the ÉFTSC cannot be held unless,

- a majority of the current members of ÉFTSC are present at the meeting; and
- a majority of the members of ÉFTSC who are present at the meeting are parent/guardian members.

All meetings of EFTSC shall be open to the public and no such member may be excluded from the meeting except for disruptive behaviour or when council is required to meet "in Camera" concerning such matters as legal advice and removal of members.

The principal of the school shall, on behalf of ÉFTSC, give written notice of the dates, times and locations of the meetings of ÉFTSC to every parent/guardian of a pupil who, on the date the notice is given, is enrolled in the school.

The meeting notice will be given by,

- notice in writing to the parent's/guardian's child for delivery to his or her parent/guardian;
- posting to school council and school website

Agenda items for presentation and discussion will be established, published and communicated at least 4 days prior to a scheduled meeting. New items raised which were not previously documented and communicated in the Agenda, may be introduced at the meeting and raised for information only. Such items must be recorded for action at the next meeting, unless otherwise determined by the members.

Any vote at a meeting requires quorum of no less than two-thirds of the School Council with parents in the majority. If this quorum is not present the motion will be deferred until the next meeting, and included on that meeting's agenda. A motion may be deferred only once due to lack of quorum and must be voted on at the next meeting regardless of attendance. At the final meeting in June a quorum will not required for motions to be voted on. Issues raised at any meeting which are not on the agenda may be discussed, but any requiring a vote, may at the discretion of the chair, be deferred to the next meeting

All members of ÉFTSC, excluding the Principal or his/her designate, have equal privileges and voting rights, including the chair, who may vote with the other members.

5.2 Rules of Order

Official rules have been recognized in the adopted use of Robert's Rules of Order. The following simple rules, which are not inconsistent with those formal procedures, are recommended as standard practices:



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- An individual must be recognized by the chair before obtaining the floor to make a motion.
- Once an individual has the floor, he or she may make a formal proposal, or motion, beginning with the statement, "I move...". All motions must be recorded and submitted on the ÉFTSC Motion form available from the Secretary.
- Another individual must second the motion, by saying, "I second the motion". This indicates that he or she agrees that the proposal should be discussed.
- Once a motion is made and seconded, the chair states the question so everyone is clear on what is being proposed. From this point, until the motion has been voted on, all discussion must focus on the question.
- If any person in attendance wishes to discuss the motion, the chair opens debate. Each participant may speak to the question twice, but no one may speak the second time until everyone has had a chance to speak once.
- Up until the time that the chair states the motion, the person making the motion may change it (requires approval of the seconder, or withdrawal of the seconder and a new seconder for the revised motion).
- When discussion is complete, the Chair asks the ÉFTSC if they are ready for the motion.
- After stating the proposed motion, the Chair proceeds with a vote. The vote may be conducted by a show of hands, by standing, or by ballot.
- The majority needed to pass the motion should be a majority plus one (e.g. 51%). In the case of a tie, the motion is lost.

5.3 Electronic Voting

Electronic voting may be used as a provisional procedure for time-sensitive issues that must be voted on between scheduled council meetings. Electronic voting must adhere to the following guidelines in order to ensure transparency and fairness in addition to full inclusion of all council members as representatives of the School Council.

- The issue voted on must be an informed vote in that the issue must have been discussed in whole or in principle at a regular open meeting.
- All members must be contacted via email as to the nature and particulars of the issue being voted on and must be allowed some input via electronic means (for example, but not limited to questions regarding the motion and requests for more information).
- All council members must be informed of the vote to be held. The voting members on the issue must make up the required quorum of a regular meeting (specifically, two thirds of the parents on the council).
- The principal and teachers sitting on the council must be informed of the vote and the particulars regarding the issue and be allowed to raise concerns and request clarification on specifics prior to the vote or given a reasonable time-span to do so via electronic communication to all members.
- The vote of each member must be carbon-copied (CC'd) to all other members of the council when forwarded to the chair for tally.
- The decision passed by majority must be sent to each council member including parent/guardian members, representing principal(s), representing teacher(s) and the representing student. Further, the tally of the vote including the outcome decision must be entered into the opening minutes of the scheduled meeting immediately following the electronic vote.
- The electronic voting options are as follows: yes, no, and abstention. The decision will be carried by a majority vote of the entire council.



6 Other

6.1 Amendments

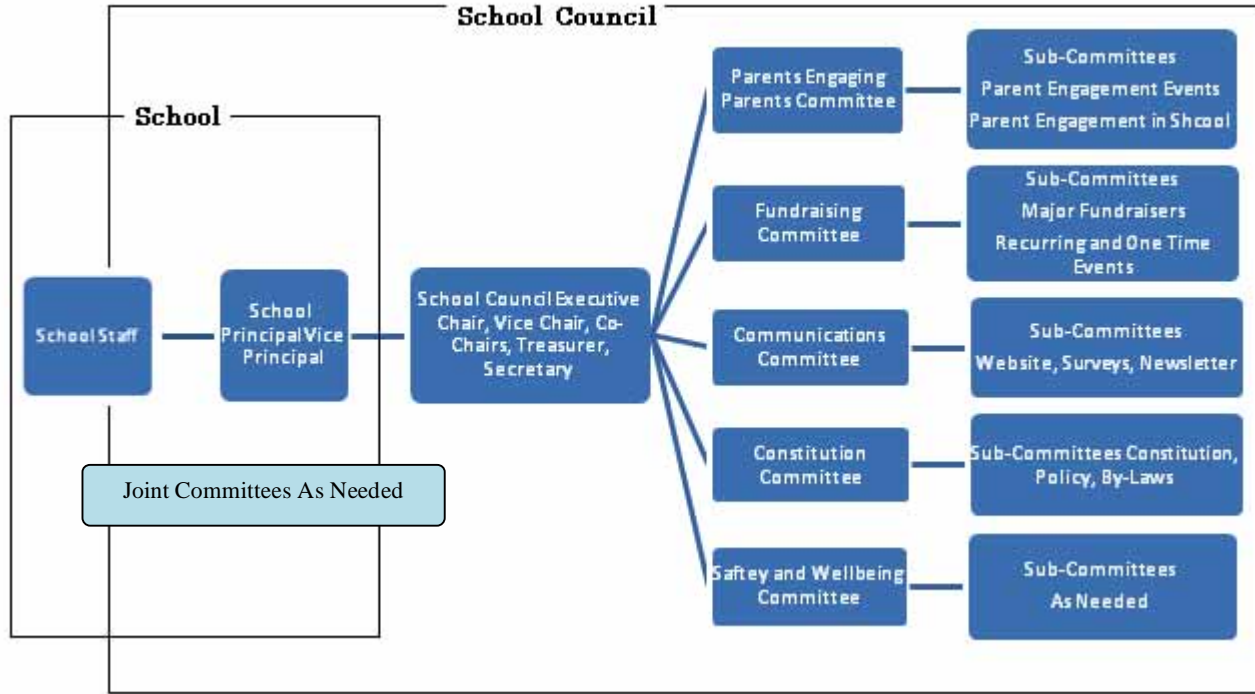
This constitution may be amended by approval of a motion by a two-thirds majority of voting members of council present at a meeting called for that purpose, provided that at least 30 days notice is given for such a motion and details of the proposed amendment are circulated to all members with that notice. This meeting shall be held with prior notice of not less than 30 calendar days given to the Council.

6.2 Reference Sources

- Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO) – www.eqao.com
- Ministry of Education School Council Documents – www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/
- Ontario Parent Council (OPC) – www.ontarioparentcouncil.org
- Ontario Regulation 612/00 (School Councils) – http://192.75.156.68/DBLaws/Regs/English/000612_e.htm
- School Council: A Guide for Members Handbook, 2001 – www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/updates.pdf
- The Education Act, 1998, s. 170 (1), 17.1 and 170 (3)
- School Council Regulation and Ontario Regulation 613/00,
- Halton District School Board – Parents & Community Section - <http://www.hdsb.ca>



7 Appendix A – Org/Flow Chart



School Council will work closely with the School Administration (Principal and Vice Principal) and Staff (Teacher Representative) to achieve the mutual vision / goals of the school. For strategic initiatives or special events / projects, joint committees will be formed (including administration / staff / parents) to develop and deliver these initiatives, events and projects.



8 Appendix B – Code of Ethics

8.1 Responsibility

A member shall consider the best interests of all students.

A member shall be guided by the school's and the school board's mission statements.

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.

A member shall become familiar with the school's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.

A member shall become familiar with the School Council's Constitution and act in accordance with it

8.2 Democracy

A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.

A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.

A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.

A member shall limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.

A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

8.3 Integrity

A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.

A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.

A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.

A member shall speak positively about matters of the school at all times while on school property.

8.4 Confidentiality

A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.

A member shall not disclose any confidential information as it relates to people or matters of the school.

8.5 Conflict of Interest

A member shall declare any conflict of interest.

A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

9 Appendix C - Amendment Proposal



École Forest Trail Public School Council Constitution

I _____ a member in good standing with the École Forest Trail School Council wish to submit an amendment for consideration to the current constitution dated _____ at the next constitutional review to be held in _____,

The following amendment or addition to Article _____ is requested to be added/changed;

Dated this _____ day of _____ 20 _____

Name (Printed)

Signature

.....
EXECUTIVE USE ONLY:

Date Received: _____

Received By: _____

Placed on Agenda: _____