

# **James Mowat School Council**

## **Bylaws/Procedures/Code of Ethics**

Approved May 2017

James Mowat School Council consists of two separate committees:

### **James Mowat Parent Council**

This body exists for school administration to share information regarding what is happening at the school, provide an open dialogue with the parent community and listen to any comments or concerns.

### **James Mowat Parent Advisory Association**

This body exists for parents of the school to plan and administer activities that foster and enhance student learning at the school.

### **MISSION**

The mission of the Council is to foster the well-being and effectiveness of our school community and to enhance student learning.

### **VISION**

James Mowat is “A Caring School”

- a) Students are made to feel like they belong and cared for as a unique individual.
- b) Staff provide an excellent learning environment so students have a personalized education to achieve their best, and guidance so that they can take responsibility for their learning and behaviour.
- c) Each member of the school community feels welcome in the school and is respected as a partner in the teaching/learning process.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the Council, in keeping with the School Act and the School Council Regulations, are as follows:

- a) To provide advice (input) to the staff and Principal on issues of importance such as the school philosophy, mission and vision, school discipline policies, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs.

- b) To stimulate continuous improvement in meaningful involvement by all members of the school community and to facilitate collaboration.
- c) To facilitate the development of a common vision for our school.
- d) To keep the school board informed – in cooperation with the Principal – of the needs of the school.
- e) To support the school in its efforts to focus teachers' time and school resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning.
- f) To facilitate communication with all educated stakeholders and the community.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the Council shall consist of the following:

- a) Parents and guardians of students enrolled in James Mowat School
- b) The Principal of the school
- c) Teachers of the school
- d) School Trustee(s)
- e) Members of the community

For the purpose of voting at the general meeting, voting members must be parents of students enrolled in the school.

## **OFFICERS**

The executive committee will elect from its membership the following officers: a Chair/President, a Vice-President, a Secretary and a Treasurer.

- a) Any parent of the school is eligible to run for any of the positions at the May meeting.
- b) The officers will be elected for a one-year term at the May Year-End Review Meeting.
- c) The terms of office shall run from the Year-End Review Meeting to the next Year-End Review Meeting.

## **DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICERS**

### **THE PRESIDENT/CHAIR**

**The President/Chair shall be responsible for:**

- a. Planning the agenda for meetings
- b. Facilitating the meetings
- c. Being present and presiding at all executive and general meetings
- d. Acting as a spokesperson for the Council

- e. Generally supervising the Council
- f. Preparing the annual report for the school board

The Chair shall not vote at any meeting in less there is a case of a tie vote. In that instance, the Chair shall have the tie-breaking vote.

#### **THE VICE-PRESIDENT**

**The Vice-President shall:**

- a) Be present at all meetings
- b) Assist the Chair with duties as assigned
- c) Assume the duties of the Chair in their absence

#### **THE SECRETARY**

**The Secretary shall:**

- a) Be present at all meetings
- b) Be responsible for keeping accurate minutes and records of the meetings
- c) Keep a record of all the members of the association and their email addresses and send all notes of various meetings as required, while maintaining the privacy of the members

In the absence of the Secretary, the duties of the Secretary shall be completed by such officer as may be appointed by the Executive.

#### **THE TREASURER**

**The Treasurer shall:**

- a) Be responsible for keeping all financial transactions of the Council
- b) Present an account of the funds to the members
- c) Provide open communication regarding all financial matters, including access to financial documents upon request of any member of the council.
- d) Prepare the account for auditing. The books shall be audited in the fall of each year by two members of the Council without signing authority for submission to the Board.

#### **THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The executive committee will carry out the day-to-day operations of the association.

## **VACANCIES**

The Council may appoint qualified persons to fill vacancies until the vacancies can be filled by the appropriate person or are elected at the next annual school committee general meeting.

## **COMMITTEES**

The Council may appoint committees consisting of members and others from the school community with either delegated or advisory responsibilities to meet the objectives of the Council.

## **MEETINGS**

- a) The first meeting of the Council shall be held within 30 days of the first instructional day of the school year. Members shall be notified by newsletter through the school or by email prior to the date of such meeting.
- b) The Council shall meet at least seven times during the school year.
- c) Regular meetings will be held on a specified day of each month as is established at the September meeting.
- d) Special meetings of the school council may be called by the Executive or at the written request of 10 parents of the school community.

## **VOTING PROCEDURES**

- a) Decisions at the council meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible. The decision made by the consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.
- b) If a vote is taken, the motion must be moved and seconded and passed by at least 51 percent majority.
- c) The Chair of the Council shall not vote at any meeting in less there is a case of a tie vote. In that instance, the Chair shall have the tie-breaking vote.
- d) Only parents are eligible to vote on matters relating to School Council.
- e) The quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the School Council shall be set at 50 percent of the Executive Committee,
- f) The Principal or designate must be present.
- g) The Principal shall have veto power on any motion or decisions made by School Council.

## **CODE OF ETHICS**

The Council shall promote meaningful involvement, build positive relationships with the school, parents and community; and work in an inclusive respectful manner, demonstrating high ethical standards. They shall abide by the Council Code of Ethics.

## **ANNUAL MEETING**

- a) The annual meeting of the Council shall be held in May.
- b) The meeting will be advertised throughout the school and the community.
- c) Election for the representatives of the parent community will take place at the annual meeting.
- d) All parents of students attending the school are eligible for election. The officers elected shall serve until successors are elected and installed.
- e) All parents of students attending the school are eligible to vote at the annual meeting.
- f) The business of the annual meeting shall include:
  - a. The election of representatives
  - b. Financial statement of the previous year
  - c. Annual report availability
  - d. Discussion on plans and budget for the upcoming year, proposed bylaw amendments, and parents input into changes at the school.

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

- a) In accordance with Council regulation, the Council, through the Chair, must prepare and provide the school board with an annual report which includes:
  - a. A summary of council's activities for the year
  - b. A financial statement
  - c. Copies of the minutes of each meeting
- b) The Council shall make the report available to all concerned members of the school community.

## James Mowat Parent Council Code of Ethics

As a school council, advocating for student learning and school improvement at James Mowat School, we shall strive to:

*Abide* by the legislation that governs school council.

*Be guided* by the mission statement of the school and our school council.

*Endeavour* to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.

*Practice* the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth.

*Recognize* and *respect* the personal integrity of each member of the school community.

*Apply* and *adhere* to democratic principles.

*Declare* any conflict of interest.

*Foster* a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.

*Consider* the best interests of all students in our decisions and deliberations.

*Respect* the confidential nature of some school business and *respect* limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.

*Never disclose* confidential information.

*Limit* discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.

*Use* the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

*Promote* high standards of ethical practice within the school community.

*Accept* accountability for school council decisions.

Accept no payment for school council activities.