

# **Ecole Elizabeth Barrett School School Council Operating Guidelines Approved - May 16, 2018**

## **1. Definitions**

In these Operating Guidelines:

- A. "School" means Ecole Elizabeth Barrett School (EEBS);
- B. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- C. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child attending an educational program at the School;
- D. "Regulation" means the School Councils Regulation under the School Act;
- E. "School Community" means persons other than parents (as defined in 1C above) who have, in the opinion of the majority of the members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the School.

## **2. Authority**

The EEBS School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically *Section 22 of the School Act*, and the School Councils Regulation, which supports it.

## **3. Vision Statement & Belief Statement**

### **Vision Statement**

At EEBS, our community of learners will be empowered in a safe environment on their "Learning for Life" journey. Each individual's personal and academic growth will be challenged and supported. A strong partnership will exist between children, parents, staff and community which enhances communication and promotes collaboration and teamwork. All members of the school community will endeavour to respect the diversity that students and adults bring to the English and French Immersion programs. Ongoing professional development, planning and implementation of the curriculum will lead to the pursuit of teaching and learning excellence. A multi-faceted, technology enhanced environment will provide learning connections to the future.

### **Belief Statement**

We believe that:

- Our school reflects the unique needs of the community it serves
- Each student, parent and staff member is a unique and valued member of our school community
- Personal excellence is promoted in an environment that encourages individuals to do their best

- Mutual respect and support enhance learning
- Everyone is a thoughtful and reflective learner and everyone is a teacher in the lifelong process of learning
- Student learning and personal development is maximized in a learning environment that is safe, caring and respectful
- Students need to be actively involved in their own learning
- A child-centered, inquiry approach promotes meaningful learning of the curriculum for students
- Teachers and parents work together to provide connections and continuity in learning for students
- A caring, committed staff is important to the development of the 'whole' child
- All staff are mentors and models and have an impact on student learning
- A staff that values teamwork is effective
- Ongoing professional development promotes excellence in teaching and learning
- Learning in a community is enhanced when there is shared responsibility between parents, students and staff.

**The EEBS School Council supports the Vision and Belief Statements of EEBS.**

#### **4. Goals/Purpose**

The goals of the School Council, in keeping with the School Act and the School Councils Regulation, are to:

- A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the principal and the board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, vision and belief statements, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
- B. Develop special events which will foster participation and well-being of the school community;
- C. Develop a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders;
- D. Consult with other school councils and provincial organizations;
- E. Advise school boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;
- F. Encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- G. Stimulate continuous improvement and meaningful involvement by all members of the School Community;

- H. Facilitate collaboration among concerned participants of the School Community;
- I. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively and, wherever possible, at the School and classroom level;
- J. Facilitate the achievement of a common vision for the School;
- K. Facilitate a formal performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of the evaluation to the school board and the School Community;
- L. Support the School in its efforts to focus teachers' time and the School resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning;
- M. Facilitate communication with educational stakeholders and the general community;
- N. Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the school board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous school year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30th;
- O. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics

## **5. Governance and Membership**

EEBS School Council uses a Town Hall Operating Style.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
  - 1. All parents of students enrolled in the School
  - 2. The principal of the school
  - 3. All teachers and staff of the School
  - 4. Others (Community Members) as decided by the School Council (optional)
  - 5. RVS Trustee
- B. The voting members of the School Council shall consist of: the parents listed in 1C
- C. The non-voting members of the School Council shall consist of: Principal, Teachers and Staff, Students, Community Members and Trustee
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

## **6. Decision Making**

Decisions at School Council meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible.

- A. A decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.
- B. If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved and passed by the majority of the School Council voting members. No votes will be accepted by proxy.

## **7. Quorum**

- A. A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the School Council is 50% of the elected executive members in addition to the principal or designate.
- B. In the absence of a quorum:
  - 1. No motions may be considered or approved.
  - 2. If a majority of parents and School Council Members at the meeting agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council will continue the meeting for purposes of discussion of issues, but point B1 above will continue to apply.

## **8. Executive Committee and Terms of Office**

The positions of the Executive Committee shall consist of: 2 Co-Chairpersons, 1 Secretary and 1 Treasurer.

- A. All Executive Committee positions must be filled by parents as defined in 1C above;
- B. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive Committee position on the School Council;
- C. The terms of office are from the Annual General Meeting to the following Annual General Meeting. Any elected member may serve 5 (five) consecutive terms in the same position;
- D. The Executive Committee of the School Council will be elected by parents attending the Annual General Meeting or will be sought at subsequent meetings after the Annual General Meeting;
- E. The Executive Committee, through the Chairperson and in consultation with the principal, will provide the agenda for all meetings and circulate minutes of the same;
- F. The Executive Committee will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

## **9. Duties of the Executive Committee Members**

### **A. Co-Chairpersons (2 positions)**

It is expected that the School Council Chairpersons will be parents of a student(s) attending the school. Unless otherwise delegated, the Co-Chairs of the School Council will:

1. Chair all meetings of the School Council;
2. Coordinate with the principal to establish meeting agendas;
3. Communicate with the principal on a regular basis;
4. Call regular School Council meetings;
5. Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
6. Follow existing School Council operating guidelines;
7. Ensure that minutes are recorded and maintained;
8. Have general supervision of all activities of the School Council;
9. Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
10. Ensure there is regular communication with the school community, beyond those who attend meetings;
11. Stay informed about school board policy that impacts School Council;
12. Have signing authority on any financial accounts together with the treasurer;
13. Submit an annual report in conformance with the Regulations;
14. Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the school Council ([http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?pafe=P06P5.cfm&leg\\_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779762507](http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?pafe=P06P5.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=9780779762507));
15. Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the fundraising society or other parent groups within the School.

### **B. Secretary**

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

1. Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure the minutes accurately reflect the directions agreed to at the School Council meeting;
2. Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents;
3. Maintain a dated record of all the members of the School Council in attendance at each meeting who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
4. Distribute notices of meetings and other School Council events as required;
5. Ensure all materials relating to the School Council including resources (Alberta School Council Resource Manual), all meeting minutes and any relevant documents are available to the public in an accessible location in the School and/or on the website. In the absence of the secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording secretary for the meeting.

### **C. Treasurer**

Unless otherwise delegated, the Treasurer of the School Council will:

1. Keep accurate records of all financial transactions;
2. Ensure that records are available upon request of the school board or public;
3. Be responsible for the deposits of all monies paid to the School Council in whatever bank, trust company, credit union or treasury branch the School Council may order; 4. Have signing authority on any financial accounts together with the Co-Chairpersons and School Administration;
5. Present a full, detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the School Council whenever requested by the School Council and prepare the financial statements for the annual report.

### **D. Past Chairperson (Optional)**

The Past Chairperson of the School Council will:

1. Serve in an advisory capacity to the new School Council;
2. Act in the absence of both the Co-Chairpersons.

### **F. Members at Large / Classroom, Grade or Division Representatives / Community Members / Fundraising Association Liaison**

These individuals will be key members of School Council who:

1. Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience with other School Council members;
2. Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;3. Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the school community;
4. Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
5. Have a clear understanding of the School Council's goals and purpose;
6. Respect confidentiality;
7. Attend School Council meetings;
8. Identify possible topics for agendas;
9. Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility/expertise.

## **10. Vacancies**

Any vacancies of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Elections for vacant positions will be held at the next regular meeting of School Council until the position is filled.

## **11. Meetings**

### **A. Regular Meetings**

A minimum of five (5) regular School Council meetings will be held per school year or as called by the Executive Committee. It will be decided at the Annual General Meeting, by the Executive when these meetings will take place. The meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised.

### **B. Special Meetings**

1. The School Council Executive Committee may at any time give notice of a Special Meeting of the School Council. Written notice will be given at least 5 days before the meeting. The notice will state the time, date and place of the meeting, and describe the matters to be dealt with.
2. At any Special Meeting all parents in attendance at the Special Meeting shall have the right to vote.

### **C. Annual General Meetings**

Where the School Council hasn't been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with Section 3 of the School Councils Regulation, otherwise an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place, once each school year.

1. The Annual General Meeting of the School Council shall be held in May and will be advertised throughout the school and the community at large at least five (5) days in advance of the meeting.
2. All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible for election.
3. All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting.
4. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
  - a. the election of Executive Members;
  - b. financial statement of the previous year.
3. And may also include:
  - c. plans and budget for the upcoming year;
  - d. discussion of any major issue in which all parents should have input such as: changes to the Vision or Belief Statement; school policy; or other major changes in the school program or focus;
  - e. any formal evaluation of the School Council;
  - f. any amendments to the Operating Guidelines.

## **12. Meeting Agendas**

The Co-Chairpersons will work in partnership with the principal to establish the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Co-Chairs, who will, if necessary, consult with the Executive and principal as to the appropriateness of the item requested.

### **13. Committees**

Committees will be determined by the School Council and will make decisions or recommendations according to the mandate the School Council gives them as deemed necessary from school year to school year.

- A. Committee members shall consist of participants from the school community.
- B. Standing committees (ie. Healthy Lunch, Volunteer/ Social) will operate on an ongoing basis with specified lengths of terms for members and submit a written report at the AGM.
- C. Ad hoc committees will be formed as necessary and will work within a specified time period and submit a written report at the conclusion of the committee activity.

### **14. Policies**

Subject to any provincially or board mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement policies in the school that the School council considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The School Council may develop policy for the duration of their term.
- B. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and it's term.
- C. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Fundraising, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

### **15. School Council Fundraising**

Subject to any provincially or board mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may raise funds that do not require incorporation to obtain (i.e.: not casinos, bingos, raffles, etc.).

- A. The School Council will, where possible, encourage the fundraising society to do the fundraising for the school and the school community.
- B. If the School Council does fundraise, any funds raised will be kept in a School Council bank account or given to the school to track on behalf of the School Council.
- C. Any School Council funds given to the school will be subject to the school board's policy on School Council fundraising and/or school generated funds.

### **16. Fundraising Society and Other Groups of Parents**

The School Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of other groups of parents striving to support and enhance the educational opportunities in the School.

- A. The School Council will communicate regularly with the fundraising society and/or other groups of parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities.
- B. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open and transparent relationship with the fundraising society and/or other groups of parents.

## **17. Code of Ethics**

All School Council members shall:

- A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;
- B. Be guided by the visions and beliefs of the school and School Council;
- C. Endeavour to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
- E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community;
- F. Declare any conflict of interest;
- G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- H. Apply democratic principles;
- I. Consider the best interests of all students;
- J. Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- K. Not disclose confidential information;
- L. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole;
- M. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- N. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community;
- O. Accept accountability for decisions;
- P. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

## **18. Conflict Resolution**

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the school board's policies and regulations. If none exist, the School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Guidelines.

- A. If at any time, ten (10) parents, or fifty percent (50%) of the Executive Committee members of the School Council are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a written request signed by them to all School Council members, and the following will apply:

1. The Co-Chairs will call a Special Meeting of the School Council.

2. The Secretary will provide a minimum of five (5) days written notice to all parents and School Council members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special Meeting.
3. At the Special Meeting, all parents and School Council members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
4. If the combined majority of parents and School Council members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon the resolution.

*Board Policy:*

*The Board of Trustees believes that concerns of the public should be addressed and encourages stakeholders to bring them forward so that they can be resolved as close to their origin as possible. The steps to be followed by stakeholders to address concerns should be in the following order:*

- a) *The classroom teacher (parent concern)*
- b) *The School Principal (unresolved parent concern/school-wide concern)*
- c) *The Associate Superintendent of Schools (appeal of decision by Principal)*
- d) *The Superintendent of Schools (appeal of decision by Associate Superintendent)*
- e) *The Board of Trustees (appeal of decision by Superintendent)*
- f) *The Minister of Education (appeal of decision by Board)*

*The Board of Trustees encourages stakeholders to provide input relative to Board policies and the administration of Board policies. The Board wishes to resolve concerns fairly and expects that interested persons will be given the opportunity to express their complaints expeditiously. In the interests of fairness, members of staff will be informed about the nature and source of the complaint.*

*Guidelines:*

1. *Stake holder concerns must be expressed in person or in writing to the person or persons involved.*
2. *Normally parental complaints concerning school operations are resolved locally at the school with parties involved. On occasion, however, the Superintendent, or a Trustee, may receive a request from parents to intervene in school affairs. In this event the complaint will be resolved according to the following:*
  - 2.1 *The Superintendent will, as appropriate in the circumstance, refer a complaint or request for intervention to the local school, engage in mediation, or conduct an inquiry.*
  - 2.2 *The Superintendent will ensure, in cooperation with the local schools, that parents are provided with the opportunity to express their complaints and be heard fairly by school-based administrators and/or by Divisional Administration.*
  - 2.3 *The Trustee, upon receiving a complaint, will refer the parent to the school, and will either inform the Superintendent or the school. The Trustee will receive confirmation that the concern has been addressed.*

## **19. Privacy**

The Elizabeth Barrett School Council shall use all reasonable means to comply with the Personal Protection Act (PIPA).

To help facilitate compliance with PIPA, the following guidelines are in place:

- A. As per sections 9A and 9B of the operating guidelines, the Co-Chairs and Secretary are responsible for personal information:*
- B. The EBSC shall collect only personal information that is required to fulfill its role as a school council to communicate with parents or guardians of students enrolled at EB.*
- C. The school council shall indicate the purpose for which the information is being collected and how it will be used when acquiring consent.*
- D. Personal information shall be used only for the purpose stated when it was collected unless consent is obtained for an alternate use.*
- E. The EBSC shall disclose an individual's personal information, held by the school council, to that individual upon request.*
- F. The school council shall ensure that all personal information is accurate, protected from unauthorized access, and destroyed safely once it is no longer needed.*

## **20. Dissolution**

As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may establish an advisory committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next school year. The Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) school days after the start of the next school year.

## **21. Reviews and Amendments**

Subject to any provincially or board mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make any changes to these Operating Guidelines deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The Operating Guidelines must be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually, by the School Council Executive Committee or a committee established expressly for that purpose.*

B. Notice of proposed changes to the Operating Guidelines will be provided to the School Community no less than 5 days before the meeting

C. The Operating Guidelines of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting members present at any scheduled Regular, Special or Annual General meeting of the School Council.

**These Operating Guidelines have been accepted by a majority of the members entitled to vote at a Regular, Special or Annual General meeting of the School Council.**

Date: May 16 2018

Co-Chairperson's Name: Lisa Preston

Co-Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Co-Chairperson's Name: Susan Lowry

Co-Chairperson's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Treasurer's Name: Jennifer Rennie/Susan Lowry (shared position)

Treasurer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Secretary's Name: Renata Lambden

Secretary's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Name: Susan Parker

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_