

Penhold Waskasoo Middle School Council Operating Procedures

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "School" means Penhold Waskasoo Middle School;
- B. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- C. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at the School;
- D. "School Staff" means the Principal, Vice-Principal, teachers, support and administration staff of the School;
- E. "Division" means Chinooks Edge School Division;
- F. "Fundraising Society" means Penhold Waskasoo Middle School Parent Society;
- G. "Regulation" means the School Councils Regulation as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- H. "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 students and the School;
- I. "Operating Procedures" means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

2. AUTHORITY

The School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically *Section 55* of the Education Act, and the School Councils Regulation, which supports it, hereinafter referred to as "legislation."

3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

The School Council will provide the opportunity for all Parents to connect with the School, School Staff and Division. The School Council will maintain a working partnership with those entities and will undertake discussions and activities to enhance student learning and foster the well-being and effectiveness of our School and School Community.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the School Council, in keeping with the legislation, are to:

- A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the Principal and the School Division on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
- B. Foster a positive, collaborative environment with a variety of opportunities for meaningful engagement by members of the School community;
- C. Support special events that will support and enhance student learning, encourage participation and promote the well-being of the School community;
- D. Facilitate a performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of this evaluation to the School Division and the School community;
- E. Develop a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders;
- F. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics;
- G. Consult with other School Councils and provincial organizations;
- H. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively;
- I. Advise School Division, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;

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5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

The School Council uses a **Town Hall** Operating Style and/or Model of Governance.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
 - 1) All parents, as defined in 1c above
 - 2) The Principal of the School
 - 3) One or more teachers and staff of the School, elected or appointed by the teachers
 - 4) The Division Representative for the School
 - 5) Residents of Penhold with a vested interest (i.e. Town Council Representative)
 - 6) Others as decided by the School Council (optional)
- B. The voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: any Parent (as defined in 1C);
- C. The non-voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: School Staff, Division Representative, Penhold residents, and any other members;
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent Members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, 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, seconded, and passed by the majority of School Council voting Members present at the meeting at which the vote was taken.

7. QUORUM

- A. Quorum will be attained when the majority of voting Members present at any School Council meeting are parents as defined in 1C above, and the Principal or designate is present.
- B. In the absence of a quorum:
 - 1) If the Parents and School Council Members present agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council may continue for the purposes of discussion of issues.
 - 2) No motions shall be considered or approved.
 - 3) No decisions by consensus shall be reached.

8. EXECUTIVE and TERMS OF OFFICE

The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice-Chair (or Co-Chair), Secretary and Treasurer (if required).

- A. All Executive positions must be filled by Parents as defined in 1C above.
- B. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the School Council.
- C. The terms of office are from the close of the Annual General Meeting to the close of the following Annual General Meeting.
- D. Any elected member may serve unlimited consecutive terms in the same position, as long as they fulfill the requirements of a Parent, as defined in 1C.
- E. The Executive of the School Council will be elected by parents attending the Annual General Meeting or in the event of vacancies after the Annual General Meeting, elected by the voting Members present at a subsequent School Council meeting.
- F. Any Executive member may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Chair and Principal.

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- G. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the School Council will be served.
- H. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

It is expected that the School Council Chair will be a parent of a student enrolled in the School.

Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair 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) Ensure that School Council Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- 7) Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- 8) Ensure that there is regular communication with the whole School community;
- 9) Stay informed about School Division policy that impacts School Council;
- 10) Have signing authority, if required, on any financial accounts together with the Vice-Chair and/or the Treasurer;
- 11) Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the School Division 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 October 15th;
- 12) Have general responsibility for all activities of the School Council;

B. Vice-Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the School Council will:

- 1) In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities;
- 2) In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- 3) Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
- 4) Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
- 5) Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;
- 6) Keep informed of relevant School and School Division policies;
- 7) Prepare to assume the position of Chair in the future;
- 8) Have signing authority, if required, on any financial accounts together with the Chair and/or the Treasurer;
- 9) Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair if required.

C. Secretary

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

- 1) Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;

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- 2) Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;
- 3) Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
- 4) Distribute, as determined by the School Council, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;

In the absence of the Secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

D. Treasurer (if required – see 15. School Council Fundraising clause)

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 Division, public or School community;
- 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 Chair and/or Vice-Chair;
- 5) Present a full, detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the School Council as required by the School Council, and prepare the financial statements for the annual report;
- 6) Supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the financial committee.

E. Members at Large/Community Members/ /Others as decided by the School Council

These Members will:

- 1) Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
- 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 objectives;
- 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.

10. VACANCIES

With the exception of the School Council positions filled by the Principal, Division and Teacher representative, any vacancy of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Elections for a vacant position will be held at subsequent meetings of the School Council Annual General Meeting to fill the vacancy. In the event the position is not filled at the subsequent meeting, School Council may appoint School Council members and/or School Community members to fill vacancies until the election at the next Annual General Meeting.

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11. MEETINGS

A. Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with legislation, 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 will be held in the month of September or at an appropriate time during the School year as determined by the School Council. The meeting will be advertised throughout the School and the community no less than 2 weeks beforehand in the newsletter, email, and social media and will state the business to take place at the Annual General 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 School Council Executive Members
 - b. any proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures;
- 5) And may also include:
 - a. plans and budget for the upcoming year;
 - b. discussion of any major issue in which all parents should have input such as changes to the Vision or Mission of the School or School Division, School policy or other major changes in the School program or focus;
 - c. any evaluation of the School Council.

B. Regular Meetings

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

C. Special General Meetings

The School Council Executive may at any time give notice of a Special General Meeting of the School Council. Notice will be given at least 5 days before the meeting via newsletter, email and social media. The notice will state the time, date and place of the meeting, and describe the matters to be dealt with. At any Special General Meeting, all parents in attendance shall have the right to vote.

Any School Council member may be suspended or expelled for the duration of the School year from attendance at any Regular School Council meetings, if, upon a majority vote of voting Members present at Special General Meeting called for that purpose, it is determined to be in the best interests of the School Council to do so.

12. MEETING AGENDAS

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

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13. COMMITTEES

The School Council may appoint committees that consist of School Council Members and/or School community members. Committees meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the School Council and present a report of their activities at School Council meetings.

14. POLICIES

Subject to any provincially or School Division-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. 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 its term.
- B. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Elections, 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 School Division-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may raise funds that do not require incorporation to obtain (e.g., not casinos, bingos, raffles).

- A. Should the School Council choose to fundraise, funds may be given to the School to track and record, given to the Fundraising Society or deposited in a bank account operated by the School Council.
- B. School Council funds given to the School will be subject to the School Division'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, where possible, encourage the Fundraising Society, as defined in 1F, to do the fundraising for the School, the School Council and School Community.
- 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 mission statements of the School and School Council;
- C. Be familiar with, and act in alignment with, the mission, vision and strategic goals of the School, and uphold the values and policies of both the School and the Division;
- D. Understand and follow the School Council's policies and procedures;
- E. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
- F. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School community;

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- G. Declare any conflict of interest and withdraw from any discussion or vote on such matters;
- H. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- I. Apply democratic principles to all matters in the Council;
- J. Consider the best interests of all students in every decision;
- K. Respect the confidential nature of student, staff and School business and acknowledge any limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- L. Refrain from disclosing confidential information without authorization;
- M. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School community as a whole;
- N. Use appropriate communication channels when raising questions or concerns;
- O. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School community;
- P. Accept accountability for decisions and any actions taken on behalf of the School Council;
- Q. Not accept payment for School Council activities;
- R. Remain professional, courteous and constructive in all forms of communication- verbally, written or electronically;

All members must adhere to the School Council code of ethics as outlined above, or be subject to suspension and/or expulsion as outlined in Meetings (11).

18. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School Division'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 Procedures.

- A. If at any time, ten (10) Parents, or five (5) Parents and fifty percent (50%) of the Executive 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 signed written letter to all Executive Members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following will apply:
 - 1) The Chair will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council.
 - 2) The Secretary will provide a minimum of five (5) days written notice meeting via newsletter, email and social media to all parents and School Council Members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special General Meeting.
 - 3) At the Special General Meeting, all Parents and School Council Members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
 - 4) All decision making will follow the Decision-Making guidelines, as defined in section 6B, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
 - 5) If the majority of voting Members present vote in favor of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it.

19. PRIVACY

The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA), and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

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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 choose to 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 School Division-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually by the School Council Executive or by a committee established expressly for that purpose.
- B. The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting Members present at any scheduled meeting of the School Council.
- C. Notice of proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School community no less than two weeks before the next scheduled meeting.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted by a majority of the Members entitled to vote at a General meeting of the School Council.