

SMITHS FALLS DISTRICT COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE SCHOOL COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

Reviewed: March 2024

1. MEMBERSHIP

1.1 While all members of the SFDCI School Council are equal partners, parents shall form a majority. The size of the SFDCI School Council, unless vacancies exist, shall not be less than 11.

1.2 SFDCI shall elect a SFDCI School Council that has, at minimum, but not limited to the following members:

Parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school (6)

- a) At least 1 community representative
- b) A student
- c) The school principal
- d) A member of the teaching staff
- e) A member of the school-based support staff

1.3 A person who is employed by the Board cannot be appointed as community representative on the SFDCI School Council unless,

- a) He or she is not employed at the school; and
- b) The other members of the SFDCI School Council are informed of the person's employment before appointment.

1.4 A member of the Board cannot be a member of the SFDCI School Council established by the board.

1.5 If fewer than the required number of parents are willing and able to stand for election, the SFDCI School Council will maintain vacant positions as it begins its work and continue to seek involvement of parents through outreach strategies.

2. ELECTION OF PARENT MEMBERS

2.1 School council election committee. The current SFDCI Advisory Council will establish a school council elections committee. The committee must ensure that a new council is in place within thirty days of the start of the school year in September. The committee should have representation from parents, teaching staff and students.

2.2 Consideration for the school council election process. In any given year, the term of office for all SFDCI Advisory Council positions is one year. Appeals related to the school council election process or results, shall be resolved by the school council elections committee. If the situation is not resolved, the school principal and the chair of the outgoing SFDCI Advisory Council shall jointly make a ruling.

2.3 Election of parent/guardian representatives

- a) Parents/guardians of a student enrolled at the school are eligible both to vote for and to run as parent candidates. Self-nomination will suffice. No additional qualifiers or quotas may restrict eligibility either to vote for or to run as a parent candidate (e.g., child's program, grade, location of home). Candidates should be prepared to summarize their reasons for running for the school

council. They must also declare if they are employed by the school board. U.C.D.S.B. employees cannot serve as chair or co-chair.

- b) Nomination forms shall be filed by all parent-candidates for elected positions on the SFDCI Advisory Council. Parents may nominate themselves or other parents.
- c) Information about candidates shall be made available to the school community at least one week before the election.
- d) If the number of candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, the candidates shall be acclaimed.
- e) No individual campaign literature for school council elections may be distributed or posted in the school.
- f) School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates or groups of candidates.
- g) The election day proceeding shall be publicized by the principal at least fourteen days prior to the election.
- h) The election day proceedings shall be supervised by the principal.
- i) The principal shall conduct a lottery to determine the ballot position for each candidate.
- j) Elections for the SFDCI Advisory Council shall be conducted by secret ballot. Voters must be present at the school on the election day(s) during the preset hours for voting (to include both daytime and evening hours).
- k) All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available. Casting more than the maximum number of votes permitted in the category spoils the ballot.
- l) Ballots shall be counted by the principal in the presence of at least two parents who are not election candidates.
- m) If there is a tie for the final position for the representative on the school council, the winner shall be determined by lot.

2.4 Election of the teaching staff representative

- a) The principal, in consultation with the elections committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching staff representative to be elected.
- b) Anyone assigned to the teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) other than the principal or vice-principal may be a candidate.

2.5 Election of the non-teaching staff representative

- a) The principal, in consultation with the elections committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the non-teaching staff representative to be elected.
- b) Anyone assigned to the non-teaching staff of the school (full or part-time) may be a candidate.

2.6 Appointment or election of the student representative The principal will consult with other members of the SFDCI Advisory Council to determine if there is to be a student representative on the council. If a positive decision is reached, the principal appoints a student representative to the council.

2.7 Selection of community representative All appointments of the community representative to the SFDCI School Council are to be by majority vote at a meeting of the school council.

3. OTHER ELECTIONS

3.1 The elections of the student, teacher and non-teaching staff members shall be held within the first 30 days.

3.2 A person is qualified to vote in the election of the teacher if he or she is a teacher, other than the principal or vice-principal, who is employed at the school.

3.3 A person is qualified to vote in an election of non-teaching staff member if he or she is a person, other than the principal or vice-principal or any teacher, who is employed at the school.

3.4 A person is qualified to vote in election of a student if he/she is a pupil enrolled in the school.

4. TERMS OF OFFICE

4.1 A person elected or appointed as a member of the SFDCI School Council holds office for one year from the latter of:

- a) The date he or he is elected or appointed; and
- b) The date of the first meeting of the SFDCI School Council after the elections held under section 2.0.0, and 3.0.0 in the school year, until the date of the first meeting of the SFDCI School Council after the elections held under 2.0.0 and 3.0.0 in the next school year.

4.2 A member of the SFDCI School Council may be re-elected, unless otherwise provided by the by-laws of the SFDCI School Council.

5. VACANCIES

5.1 A vacancy in the membership of the SFDCI School Council shall be filled by election or appointment in accordance with the by-laws of the SFDCI School Council

5.2 If an election is held to fill a vacancy in the membership of the SFDCI School Council, section 2.0.0 and 3.0.0, as the case may be, applies, with necessary modifications, to the election.

5.3 A vacancy in the membership of the SFDCI School Council does not prevent the SFDCI School Council from exercising its authority.

6. OFFICERS

6.1 The SFDCI School Council shall have a chair or if the by-laws of the SFDCI School Council so provide, two co-chairs.

6.2 A chair or co-chair of the SFDCI School Council must be a parent member of the SFDCI School Council and shall be elected by the members of the SFDCI School Council.

6.3 A person who is employed by the Board cannot be the chair or co-chair of the SFDCI School Council.

6.4 The SFDCI School Council may have such other officers as are provided for in the bylaws of the SFDCI School Council.

6.5 Subject to Section 6.2.0 and 6.3.0 vacancies in the office of chair or co-chair or any other officer of the SFDCI School Council shall be filled in accordance with the by-laws of the SFDCI School Council.

6.6 The Chair or Co-Chair shall prepare the agenda for the SFDCI School Council meeting in consultation with the principal and chair the meetings.

6.7 The Chair or Co-Chair shall consult on behalf of the SFDCI School Council, with senior Board staff and trustees as needed, and arrange for the SFDCI School Council to be represented at related functions and meetings.

6.8 The Chair or Co-Chairs shall provide for regular communications, approved by the SFDCI School Council, among the SFDCI School Council, parents, the community and existing organizations within the school, as well as with other School Councils

7. REMUNERATION

7.1 No financial remuneration is provided for any member of the SFDCI School Council for his or her work as members of the SFDCI School Council.

7.2 The SFDCI School Council members will be reimbursed according to the Board policies and procedures.

8. ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

8.1 The principal of the school may delegate any of his or her powers or duties as member of the SFDCI School Council, to a vice principal of the school.

8.2 In addition to his or her duties under this Procedure, the principal of a school shall perform the duties relating to the SFDCI School Councils that are imposed on the principal by Regulations 298 of the Revised Regulations of Ontario, 1990 (Operations of Schools — General) and amended by Regulation 613 as follows:

1. The principal of a school shall provide for the prompt distribution to each member of the SFDCI School Council of any materials received by the principal from the Ministry that are identified by the Ministry as being for distribution to the members of the School Councils.
2. The principal shall post any materials distributed to members of the SFDCI School Council in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.
3. The principal or designate shall attend every meeting of the SFDCI School Council.
4. The principal of the school shall act as a resource person to the SFDCI School Council and shall assist the SFDCI School Council in obtaining information relevant to its function including information relating to relevant legislations, regulations and policies.
5. The principal shall consider each recommendation made by the SFDCI School Council and shall advise the SFDCI School Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.

6. In addition to his or her other obligations to solicit the views of the SFDCI School Council under the Act and the regulations, the principal shall solicit views of the SFDCI School Council with respect to the following matters:

- i) A local code of conduct established under subsection 303(1) or (2) of the Act governing the behaviour of all persons in the school, and
- ii) School policies or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board under subsection 302(5) of the Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in the schools within the Board's jurisdiction.

7. The development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents, including:

- i) Implementation plans for local code of conduct established under subsection 303(1) or (2) of the Act governing the behaviour of all persons in the school, and
- ii) Implementation plans for school policies or guidelines related to policies and guidelines established by the Board under subsection 302(5) of the Act respecting appropriate dress for pupils in school within the Board's jurisdiction.

8. School action plans for improvement, based on the Education Quality and Accountability Office's reports on the results of tests of pupils, and the communication of those plans to the public. The matters on which the principal may solicit the views of the school council are not limited to section 8

9. ADVISORY AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COUNCILS

9.1 The SFDCI School Council shall communicate regularly with the parents and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to advice being provided by the SFDCI School Council, and to report the activities of the SFDCI School Council to the community.

9.2 In addition to its other obligations to solicit the views of the SFDCI School Council under the Act, the Board shall solicit the views of the SFDCI School Council as outlined in Regulation 612.00

9.3 In addition to items cited in section 9.1, the SFDCI School Council may make recommendations to the principal of the school or to the Board on any matter.

9.4 In addition to its advisory responsibilities the SFDCI School Council:

1. May organize information, orientation and training sessions for members as needed.
2. Shall promote the best interest of the whole school community.

9.5 Under the "Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act" (1989) the SFDCI School Council cannot access information on individual students and staff. Council's should not be involved in issues relating to the performance of individual staff members. Individual members of the school community shall deal directly with the staff members and/or principal to resolve specific concerns.

10. ADVICE TO BOARD AND DUTY OF BOARD TO RESPOND

10.1 The Board that established the SFDCI School Council shall consider each recommendation made to the Board by the SFDCI School Council and shall advise the SFDCI School Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.

- 10.2 Advice to the Board can be provided through existing Board procedures:
1. The SFDCI School Council can request that the Principal bring its advice to the attention of the appropriate supervisory office.
 2. The SFDCI School Council can put its advice in writing to the Chair of the Board through the secretary (i.e. the Director) of the Board.
 3. The SFDCI School Council can request in writing an opportunity to make a presentation to the Board.
 4. The SFDCI School Council can communicate directly with a school trustee.
 5. The Board may seek advice from the SFDCI School Council on relevant topics.

11. CONSTITUTION AND/OR BY-LAWS

- 11.1 The SFDCI School Council shall establish a constitution and by-laws that govern the conduct of its affairs. The following by-laws are required:
- i) A by-law that governs election procedures and filling of vacancies in the membership of the SFDCI School Council.
 - ii) A by-law that establishes rules respecting participation in the SFDCI School Council proceedings.
 - iii) A by-law that, provides for a conflict resolution process for internal SFDCI School Council disputes.

11.2 The SFDCI School Council shall review its constitution, by-laws at least every two years.

12. MEETINGS

12.1 There shall be a minimum of four scheduled meetings during the school year.

12.2 The first meeting shall be within the first 35 days of the school year, after the elections on a date fixed by the principal of the school in consultation with the chair.

12.3 A meeting of the SFDCI School Council cannot be held unless,

- i) A majority of the current members of the SFDCI School Council are present at the meeting;
- ii) A majority of the members of the SFDCI School Council who are present at the meeting are parent members.

12.4 All meetings of the SFDCI School Council shall be open to the public.

12.5 The SFDCI School Council is entitled to hold its meetings at the school.

12.6 All meetings of the School Council shall be held at a location that is accessible to all public.

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

12.8 The notice required, may be given by: i) A notice to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent; ii) Posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.

13. COMMITTEES

13.1 The SFDCI School Council may, in accordance with its by-laws, establish committees to make recommendations to the SFDCI School Council.

13.2 Every committee of the SFDCI School Council must include at least one parent member of the SFDCI School Council.

13.3 A committee of the SFDCI School Council may include persons who are not members of the SFDCI School Council.

13.4 All meetings of the committee shall be open to the public.

13.5 The committee is entitled to hold its meetings at the school.

13.6 All meetings of the committee shall be held at a location that is accessible to all the public.

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

13.8 The notice may be given by;

- 1) a notice to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent; and
- 2) posting the notice in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.

13.9 Sections 12.4.0 to 12.8.0 apply, with necessary modifications, to committees of the SFDCI School Council.

14. MINUTES AN FINANCIAL RECORDS

14.1 The SFDCI School Council shall keep minutes of all of its meetings. Financial records shall be kept as outlined by the PSAB.

14.2 The minutes and records shall be available at the school for examination by any person without charge. Sections 14.1.0 and 14.2.0 do not apply to minutes that are more than four years old and financial records that are more than seven years old.

14.3 The principal of the school shall be one of the signatories of the account.

15. ANNUAL REPORT

15.1 The SFDCI School Council shall annually submit a written report on its activities to the principal of the school and to the board. This report is due prior to June 15 each year.

15.2 If the SFDCI School Council engages in fundraising activities, the annual report shall include a report on those activities.

15.3 The principal shall, on behalf of the SFDCI School Council, give a copy of the report to every parent of a pupil who, on the date the copy is given, is enrolled in the school.

15.4 Section 15.3 maybe complied with by: i) Giving the report to the parent's child for delivery to his or her parent; or ii) Posting the report in the school in a location that is accessible to parents.

16. INCORPORATION

16.1 The SFDCI School Council shall not be incorporated.

17. DECISION MAKING/VOTING

Decisions shall be made as follows:

17.1 The Chair shall allow for participation in discussion by all members of the SFDCI School Council in attendance.

-The SFDCI School Council shall operate in a non-judgemental manner, respecting individual rights and confidentially, employing no-fault discussions.

-Decisions should be reached by consensus through compromise wherever possible. In the event that consensus cannot be achieved, the decision may be reached by taking a vote.

17.2 Subject to section 17.1 each member of the SFDCI School Councils are entitled to one vote.

17.3 Subject to section 17.1 each member of a committee of the SFDCI School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the committee.

17.4 The principal of the school is not entitled to vote.

17.5 The SFDCI School Councilmembers will identify all agenda items and/or issues with which they have a conflict of interest.

17.7 The SFDCI School Councilmembers will focus on school-wide issues and on what is best for the school and its students.

18. FUNDRAISING

18.1 The SFDCI School Council may engage in fundraising activities to raise funds to benefit the school.

18.2 The SFDCI School Council shall not engage in fundraising activities unless the activities are conducted in accordance with any applicable policies and procedures established by the Board; and

18.3 The SFDCI School Council shall ensure that the funds raised by it are used in accordance with any applicable policies and procedures established by the Board.

19. INSURANCE FOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

19.1 The Board recognizes that the SFDCI School Councilmembers are volunteers, and, as such, are covered by the Board's liability insurance as long as they are acting within the scope of their duties on behalf of the Board, as sanctioned by the principal.

19.2 The SFDCI School Council should be aware of the liability and insurance coverage issues outlined in the Ontario School Board's Insurance Exchange (OSBIE) Advisory of April 2001 and review their activities annually based on this Advisory.

20. ROLE OF TRUSTEES

20.1 The SFDCI School Council may work with trustees in broadening consensus around the purpose of public education and improving student learning.

20.2 Trustees can facilitate and support the working of the SFDCI School Council in many ways.

- i) They can support the work of the SFDCI School Council in the community.
- ii) They can provide assistance in establishing contacts in the community.
- iii) They can be a resource to the SFDCI School Council by the sharing and discussion of ideas and proposals.
- iv) They can be available for consultation and advise on Board policies or on drafting a recommendation for the Boards consideration.

21. SCHOOL COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE

21.1 The board shall establish a School Council Liaison Committee.

21.2 The membership of the School Council Liaison Committee is to include:

- i) A representative Council member from each School Council by Trustee Ward. The representative from the School Councils shall be selected annually from School Councils in a Trustee Ward
- ii) The Director and/or designate.
- iii) Other Board staff as required as resource.

21.3 A meeting of the School Council Liaison Committee shall be called at the discretion of the Director of Education or upon the written request of three members of the School Council Liaison Committee

22. RECOMMENDATIONS

22.1 Recommendations and decisions of the SFDCI School Council that are Broader in scope than the local school, may be referred to the Board or the appropriate Committee of the Board through the Supervisory Officer.

22.2 Recommendations and decisions that are specifically related to the school should be referred to the school principal.

22.3 Should the Board wish further clarification of the recommendations/decisions received, it may from time to time invite representatives from the SFDCI School Council to speak on behalf of the recommendation/decision.

