

Austin Elementary School
PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL
CONSTITUTION
(Revised March 2019)

SECTION I – ORGANIZATION

1. The name of the organization shall be Austin Elementary School Parent Advisory Council (APAC), hereafter “Council,” operating in view of Pine Creek School Division Procedures “2.08 Parent Advisory Councils”.

SECTION II - MISSION STATEMENT

1. APAC is dedicated to the education and the well-being of the child. APAC’s primary mandate is to promote effective communication between the home and school. APAC shall encourage parents to participate in meaningful educational activities and decision-making to strengthen the role of families in education and schooling and to foster meaningful parent participation.

SECTION III - OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the organization shall be:

1. To enhance communication between the parents, community, the students, school staff and administration.
2. To advise the principal on school matters as they pertain to school improvement, policies, organization and activities. For example:
 - School policy and procedures
 - Curriculum and programs
 - Cultural and extracurricular activities
 - Student discipline and behaviour management
 - Facility and equipment
 - Learning resources
 - Budget recommendations
 - Annual school plan
 - School fundraising
3. To provide recommendations to the school board with respect to the process of hiring and assigning a principal.
4. To participate in the school reviews and receive feedback on action taken.
5. To promote community interest, understanding and involvement in the school and its governance.
6. To establish ongoing communication with parents and with community members. The Council is representative of their priorities and concerns.
7. To promote cooperation between the parties involved in providing for the education of the children.
8. To contribute to the effectiveness of the school by promoting the involvement of parents, community members and other relevant resources.

SECTION IV – MEMBERSHIP

1. All parents and guardians of students registered at Austin Elementary School (AES), school administrators, staff, or adult community members living in the catchment area are eligible to attend council meetings, as non-voting participants.
2. All parents and guardians of students registered at AES, and adult members of the community living in the catchment area, are eligible to vote at the AGM.
3. All parents and guardians of students registered at AES, staff (teaching and non-teaching) and adult members of the community living in the catchment area, are eligible to be elected to Council.

SECTION V – COMPOSITION OF COUNCIL

1. The Council shall consist of the following voting members: a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 12.
2. At least 2/3 of the positions on the Council must be filled by parents/guardians whose children attend AES.
3. Up to 1/3 of the positions on the Council may be filled by community members who live within the school catchment area but do not have children in AES.
4. Up to 1/3 of the total number of positions on the Council may be filled by teachers and other staff who work at AES.
5. The principal is entitled to attend Council meeting as an ex officio (non-voting) member.
6. Council members must be elected at the Annual General Meeting by those in attendance who are parents of children attending AES, or community members in the school catchment area. Any other attendees may participate in discussion, but not vote.
7. The terms of office for Council members shall be one year and begin upon election.

SECTION VI – DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

1. CHAIRPERSON

- Shall convene and preside at all membership, Council, and special meetings.
- Shall in consultation with the school administration ensure that an agenda is prepared and presented.
- Shall be one of the signing officers for the Council
- Shall appoint committees where authorized to do so by the Council or membership.
- Shall be the official spokesperson for the organization.

2. VICE-CHAIRPERSON

- Shall assume the responsibilities of the chairperson in the chairperson's absence.
- Shall accept extra duties as required.
- May be called upon to attend meetings to represent the Council as required.
- Shall chair the Nominating Committee.
- May be one of the signing officers for the Council.

3. SECRETARY

- Shall record the minutes of membership, Council, and special meetings.
- Shall submit minutes to the Pine Creek School Division office and to the AES office to be posted on the school website.
- Shall issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the organization.
- Shall be one of the signing officers for the Council.

4. TREASURER

- Shall be responsible for and reports on the accounts of the organization.
- Shall be one of the signing officers for the Council.
- Shall prepare a financial report for publication the Annual General Meeting.

5. PARENTS AT LARGE / COMMUNITY MEMBER AT LARGE

- Shall attend all regularly scheduled meetings of the council
- Assume such duties and responsibilities as Council may direct

SECTION VII - COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council shall hold regular meetings that are open to parents, students, school staff and community members.

1. Council meeting times are set by the chairperson.
2. Council meetings are limited to 1 hour unless members agree to extend.

If a council member is unable to attend a council meeting, the member must notify the chairperson as soon as possible.

SECTION VIII - AD HOC COMMITTEES

1. Committees are responsible to the Executive.
2. Council members may be appointed annually to committees by the Chairperson (after consultation with the Executive).
3. Ad Hoc Committees can be formed at the discretion of the Council to assist in special projects and may include parents, teachers and community members with special expertise to help the Council make informed decisions.

SECTION IX - ELECTIONS

1. An Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Council shall be held on or before the second Friday in October; Council members will be elected at this time.
2. Terms begin immediately upon election and continue until the next AGM.
3. Parents and guardians of children who attend Austin Elementary School and community members who attend the AGM are entitled to vote only for elections.

SECTION X - NOMINATIONS

1. At its discretion, the Council may name a Nominating Committee at its final meeting before the AGM each year. The Nominating Committee will consist of a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 3 participants.
2. The Nominating Committee will be responsible for accepting nominations for Council positions at the AGM.
3. Nominations may be accepted from the floor at the AGM subject to consent of person being nominated, if present, or by written acceptance of the nomination if absent from the meeting.
4. Elections at the AGM may occur by secret ballot
5. Chair of the nominating committee shall preside over elections at the AGM and may appoint scrutineers to assist in counting ballots.
6. Upon completion of election, ballots shall be destroyed upon motion of the chair or the nominating committee.

SECTION XI – VACANCIES ON COUNCIL

1. A member may resign from the Council, chair or vice chair position, by tendering a letter of resignation to the chair and/or principal
2. A Council member, chair, or vice chair may be deemed to have resigned from the Council or office if three meetings are missed without reason.
3. In the event of a vacancy on the Council, the chair shall, at the direction of the Council:
 - Call a by-election to fill the vacancy
 - Or, will fill the open position by consensus of the council, as an acting position until the next AGM
4. If any Executive member (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) resigns during a term of office, the Council may appoint a member of the Council to fill the vacancy until the next elections.

SECTION XII – CONSTITUTION AMENDMENTS

1. Amendments to the Constitution of the Council may be made at the Annual General Meeting, providing:
 - Notice of the meeting has been given to all Council members, a minimum of 14 days in advance.
 - The notice of the meeting includes notice of the specific amendments proposed.
 - A 2/3 majority vote of those members present at the meeting will be required to amend the Constitution.

SECTION XIII – QUORUM

1. For any AGM or special meeting of the members, a voting quorum shall be 60% of the members present.
2. For any regular meeting of the Council, a voting quorum shall be 50% plus one of the members of council.

SECTION XIV - PROCEDURE

1. Meetings will be conducted efficiently and with fairness to all.
2. Recommendations will be determined by consensus whenever possible.
3. Financial procedures will be in accordance with Pine Creek School Division Procedures “2.08 Parent Advisory Councils”
4. If procedural problems arise, "Robert's Rules of Order" – Newly Revised will be used to resolve the situation, unless they are in conflict with the guidelines in this Constitution.

SECTION XV– FINANCIALS

1. All funds for the Council shall be accounted for in one bank account.
2. The Fiscal Year shall run from July 1 to June 30.
3. Complete and accurate records for all receipts and disbursements must be maintained by the appointed Treasurer.
4. The Parent Council must have three to four designated officers authorized to sign cheques. (Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer)
5. Accounts require two signatures on all cheques. No cheque will be made out to a signatory of that cheque. The pre-signing of blank cheques is prohibited
6. The updated bank account information, including the signing authority, is to be communicated annually to the school Principal and when any changes have been made to the banking arrangements. The Principal will maintain this information on file in the school office.
7. At the close of each fiscal year, the complete financial and business records, including meeting minutes and original bank statements will be retained at the school, in the care of the school Principal, for the period of time as required by the Records Management procedure.

SECTION XVI - DISSOLUTION

1. In the event of dissolution, and following payments of all outstanding debts, disbursement of the remaining funds will be decided upon by the membership at the final AGM
2. All records of the organization shall be placed under the jurisdiction of the principal/PCSD for safekeeping.

SECTION XVII – CODE OF CONDUCT

1. The Council is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents or other individual members of the school community.
2. The Council is not a problem-solving process for individuals; problems involving individual school personnel, students, parents or other individual members of the school community should be addressed via the proper channel and as per school divisional policies in place.

Approved October 2, 2019.