

Birch Cliff Public School Parent Council SAC By Laws

Preamble

School Councils are legislated bodies, governed by Regulation 612 of the Ontario Education Act. School Council and all of those who attend School Council meetings and activities shall adhere to these regulations, as well as the policies and the procedures of the Toronto District School Board, including but not limited to P031 – Human Rights Policy, P037 – Equity Policy, P034 – Workplace Harassment, Prevention for Non-Human Rights Code Harassment Policy, P051 – Caring and Safe Schools Policy and PR585 – Board Code of Conduct.

Name of School Council

The name of this organization shall be Birch Cliff Public School Parent Council and referred to as the SAC. Please note: the term “parents/caregivers” includes the parents, caregivers, guardians and families of students, as shown on the school registration

Regulation 612/00 of the Ontario Education Act states that “the purpose of School Councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.” A School Council's primary means of achieving its purpose is by making recommendations on any matter to the Principal of the school and to the Board that established the School Council.

Membership

An effective School Council relies on the contributions of the broader school community. The School Council will work to elect/acclaim members who are representative of this school's community. To this end, eligible candidates will be encouraged to seek office regardless of their race, colour, creed, culture, ethnicity, linguistic origin, disability, level of ability, socio-economic class, age, ancestry, nationality, place of origin, religion, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, body image, citizenship, immigration status, family status, marital status or as First Nations, Metis or Inuit. Membership of School Council composition will include:

The Council shall consist of the following members:

- A majority of parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school. (15 to no less than 5)

- The Principal of the school.
- One teacher elected by teachers.
- One non-teaching staff member elected by non-teaching staff.
- Community representatives appointed by the Council.
- Optional student representative (if applicable).

Election of Parent/Caregiver Members

Elections will be inclusive, transparent and accountable, ensuring that all members of the school community are included, welcomed and feel valued.

Elections of parent/caregiver members shall be held during the first 30 days of the school year on a date that is set by the School Council Chair/Co-Chairs in consultation with the Principal. The Principal, on behalf of the School Council, shall give written notice of the date, the time and the location of the election, to every parent/caregiver of a student enrolled in the school, at least 14 days before the date of the election. Any parent/caregiver of a student in the school, who is seeking election, must be nominated or self-nominated in writing. A person is not qualified to be a parent/caregiver member if they are employed at the school. If employed by the Board but not at the school, they must take reasonable steps to inform those qualified to vote in the election of their Board employment status. The election of a parent/caregiver member shall be by secret ballot and neither proxy nor absentee voting is permitted. A person is eligible to vote in an election of parent/caregiver members of a School Council if they are the parent/caregiver of a student enrolled at the school. Elections for teaching and non-teaching staff representatives on the School Council will be held during the first 30 days of each school year. The teaching representative shall be elected by those individuals at the school qualified to be the teacher representative in any method they determine. The non-teaching staff shall be elected by those individuals at the school qualified to be the non-teaching staff representative in any method they determine. Community members shall be appointed by the members of the School Council. When applicable, the student representative shall be elected by the student council, if one exists, or appointed by the Principal. If positions are not filled during an election, the School Council may fill them via appointments throughout the school year.

Nominations

If the number of declared candidates is less than or equal to the number of positions, no vote is required and the candidates will be acclaimed, notified and communicated to the school/community. If the number of declared candidates is higher than the number of positions, then a vote will be held on the date set by the Chair/Co-Chairs, in consultation with the Principal. Elections for the School Council shall be supervised by the Principal (or designate) and at least one parent/caregiver, not seeking election. Nominations will not be accepted from the floor on the evening of the elections. The school (Principal or designate) will receive and file

all nomination forms. Written information (picture not required) about each candidate, supplied by the candidate, shall be made available to the school community at least one week prior to the election. Candidates may not engage in campaigning on or off school property or use any School Council social media or other tools to promote their candidacy

Term of Office

School Council members, elected or appointed, hold office from the latter of they were elected the date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections held in the school year, until the date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections held in the next school year.

Vacancies

A vacancy in the membership of the School Council shall be filled by election or appointment. A vacancy in the membership of the School Council does not prevent the School Council from exercising its authority,

- if an election is held to fill a vacancy in the membership of a School Council, the School Council's elections' process will apply;
- if an appointment is held to fill a vacancy, the School Council may request that interested parents/caregivers submit their name for consideration. The School Council shall then vote to appoint candidates to fill the vacancy/vacancies. Executive vacancies will be opened to nominations from the voting members.

Executive Officers

All members of the Executive must be elected from the voting members of the School Council. School Council will elect:

- a Chair, or
- two (2) Co-Chairs who must be a parent/caregiver and cannot be a TDSB employee. The School Council may also elect other Officer positions (i.e., Secretary (Recorder), Treasurer), as deemed necessary.

Remuneration

No person shall receive any remuneration for serving as a member or Officer of the School Council. Members shall be reimbursed for pre-approved expenses that they incur as members or Officers of the School Council, as per Board procedures.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair or Co-Chair(s)

- arrange for School Council meetings;
- prepare agendas for School Council meetings;
- chair School Council meetings;
- ensure that minutes of School Council meetings are recorded and maintained;
- ensure that the Annual Report is completed;
- facilitate conflict resolution;
- communicate with the Principal on behalf of the School Council;
- consult with senior board Staff and Trustees as required on behalf of the School Council;
- act as Joint Signing Officer; or act as ex officio member(s) of School Council committees/subcommittees and any school committees, including but not limited to School Budget Committee, or School Improvement Plan Committee, School Staffing Committee and Caring and Safe Schools' Committee;
- ensure completion of the School Statements of Needs (SSON) in collaboration with parents/caregivers;
- observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these By-Laws.

Secretary/Recorder

- complete records of all meetings in a timely manner;
- assist the Chair/Co-Chair(s) in the distribution of minutes to all School Council members, ensure minutes, once approved, are available to the parent/caregiver body
- responsible for the upkeep of all School Council social media and communications to the parent/caregiver body (e.g. blog, social media, email, newsletters, etc.);
- may as a Joint Signing Officer;
- observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these By-Laws.

Treasurer

- act as custodian of the funds of the School Council;
- handle receipts and disbursement of School Council monies;

- keep proper records of all financial transactions;
- arrange for verification of the School Council's financial records in June of each year;
- act as a Joint Signing Officer;
- adhere to the financial protocol instructions outlined in the School Council Financial Guide;
- prepare the annual Public-Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) report;
- observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these By-Laws.

Principal (not a voting member)

- promptly distributes materials identified by the Ministry for distribution to School Council members and posts said material(s) in a school location accessible to parents/caregivers;
- attend every meeting of the School Council or delegates this responsibility to the Vice Principal (or designate) if unable to attend;
- act as a resource person to the School Council and shall assist the School Council in obtaining information relevant to the functions of the School Council, including information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies;
- consider each recommendation made to the Principal by the School Council and advise the School Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation;
- solicit the views of the School Council under the Education Act and the regulations, with respect to the following matters:
 1. The establishment or the amendment of school policies and guidelines that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/caregivers, including, 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 pupils in schools within the Board's jurisdiction.
 2. The development of implementation plans for new education initiatives that relate to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/caregivers, including, i) implementation plans for a local code of conduct established under subsection 303 (1) or (2) of the Act governing the behaviour.
- provide input on the School Improvement Plan (SIP), 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;

- observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these By-Laws.
- Parent/Caregiver members of School Council
- solicit the views of other parents/caregivers to share with the School Council;
 - represent the views and the opinions of the parent/caregiver community;
 - attend and participate in all meetings;
 - participate on School Council committees;
 - encouraged to participate in and to facilitate any events that the School Council holds during the school year;
 - observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these ByLaws.

Student, Teaching and Non-Teaching Representatives

- contribute to the discussions of the School Council;
- solicit views from their peers to share with the School Council;
- may participate on any committees established by the School Council;
- communicate information back to their peers;
- observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these ByLaws.

Community Representative

- contribute to the discussions of the School Council; represent the community's perspective;
- may participate on any School Council committee;
- help to build partnerships and links between the school and the community;
- observe the School Council's and/or the Board's Code of Conduct and these By-Laws.

Norms of Engagement

The Birch Cliff Public School SAC is committed to maintaining a positive, inclusive, and respectful environment for all members of our school community.

We agree to:

1. **Create and maintain a climate of understanding and respect** — listen with empathy and curiosity.
2. **Support those targeted by discrimination or harassment** — speak up and stand with others.

3. **Assume positive intent** — recognize that all members are volunteers striving for the same goal: supporting our students.
4. **Encourage collaboration and shared leadership** — seek consensus whenever possible.
5. **Value transparency and accountability** — communicate decisions clearly and follow through on commitments.
6. **Keep student interests first** — every discussion and decision should enhance student well-being and success.
7. **Maintain confidentiality** — respect privacy of students, families, and staff when sensitive matters arise.
8. **Engage respectfully** — challenge ideas, not people; use constructive language in meetings, emails, and online platforms.

Consultations

The School Council shall consult with parents/caregivers of students enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the School Council.

Meetings

The first meeting of the School Council will take place within the first 35 days of the start of the school year after the election, on a date set by the Principal, in consultation with the Chair/Co-Chair(s). A School Council shall meet at least 4 times in the school year. The dates for School Council meetings will be set at the first meeting, in consultation with the Principal. The Principal, on behalf of the School Council, will give written notice of the dates, the times and the location(s) of the meetings to every parent/caregiver of a student enrolled at the school. An official meeting of the School Council cannot be held unless a majority (51%) of the current members of the School Council are present at the meeting, including the Principal or their designate. The majority of those present must be parents/caregivers. A member of a School Council who participates in a meeting by phone or virtually shall be deemed to be present at the meeting. Council will provide babysitting for meetings. Students of the school with their Babysitting Certificate can provide babysitting services to the Council meetings at a rate of \$20 per babysitter from 6:30pm-8pm. Two babysitters per meeting when possible is preferred.

Meeting Protocols

Should a member of the School Council miss two (2) consecutive meetings without sufficient notification to the School Council, the Chair/Co-Chair(s) may call a meeting with the member to determine the member's interest in the School Council and whether the member has vacated the position. If a teaching, non-teaching staff, or student member misses two (2) consecutive meetings, the Chair/Co-Chair(s) will consult with the Principal about their continued participation and/or representation. Meetings of the School Council and

committees/subcommittees may be virtual, in-person or a combination of the two. All in-person School Council meetings shall be held at the school or in a location that is accessible to the public in alignment with school or Board policies and procedures. If at the school, the space will be reserved by the Principal. School Council meetings shall be open to the public. Virtual meetings will be held using the TDSB-approved virtual platforms (Zoom, Google Meet). Meeting platforms must include a call-in option to ensure access for all parents/caregivers. Recognizing that not all parents/caregivers will have access to these platforms, the School Council will ensure that the minutes are available electronically and in hard copy (translated when appropriate). School Council shall pass a resolution each year to determine whether School Council meetings are electronically recorded and posted on the school's website. Meeting attendees will be notified of recordings and offered options for participation (i.e., phone in, camera-off, communication via chat box, etc.). Virtual meetings shall be accessible to the public through registration.

Voting

Each member of the School Council is entitled to one vote in votes taken by the School Council. Each committee/subcommittee member is entitled to one vote in votes taken at the committee/subcommittee level. All School Council votes/decisions will be recorded in the School Council minutes. The Principal is not entitled to vote in votes taken by the School Council nor by a committee/subcommittee of the School Council. Voting cannot occur outside of official School Council or committee/subcommittee meetings.

Minutes and Financial Records

School Council shall keep accurate minutes of all meetings and accurate financial records/transactions for four (4) years on the school premises and in a G Drive. Minutes and financial records shall be available at the school for examination by any person, without charge.

Quorum

An official meeting of the School Council cannot be held unless a majority (51%) of the current members of the School Council are present (in-person or virtually) at the meeting and a majority (51%) of the members who are present are parents/caregivers of students who attend our school.

School Council Social Media Accounts

- may utilize any social media (Twitter; Facebook; Instagram etc.) platform that will assist in fulfilling its purpose. School Council understands that not all parents/caregivers will be familiar with platforms and will provide ongoing instruction in their use;
- should discuss the creation of Social Media accounts with the Principal or assigned designate;
- may be shut down by the Chair/Co-Chair(s) and the Secretary, in consultation with the Principal and with notification to the School Council;
- will not post any photos, videos or recordings of Staff nor parents/caregivers, unless consent is provided;
- will ensure that the Student Media Release Consent Form is signed prior to posting any photos, videos or recordings of students;
- will adhere to all TDSB policies and procedures, including but not limited to the TDSB Advertising and Distribution of Materials Policy, anti-spam legislation, school and Board Code of Conduct, Online Code of Conduct, TDSB Equity, Human Rights Policy and all other relevant policies and procedures;
- will not compromise the privacy of any parent/caregiver, student, Staff or School Council member;
- will not use as a tool nor justification to promote, share nor distribute hate information or material, nor isolate or exclude parents/caregivers who do not have access to such tools;
- will be respectful of all Staff, students and parents/caregivers and the community;
- monitor sites and remove inappropriate posts and users.

Finances

All expenditures of the School Council require prior approval of the School Council and will be reported in a financial statement to be made available at each School Council meeting. Funds will not be used to support staff appreciation events or gifts. The School Council will not borrow funds nor enter into any financial commitment for which funds are not already in hand. The School Council budget includes the funds provided to School Councils by the Board and the Ministry of Education, as held in the school's non-board accounts. School Council will consult with the Principal to access and to confirm funds and usage of funds held in the school's non-board accounts assigned to the School Council provided by TDSB (\$1.25 per student to a minimum of \$300 and to a maximum of \$1000) and the Ministry of Education (\$500, Parent Engagement funds). All expenditures from the School Council account must be approved by School Council prior to disbursing the funds. All School Council collections and all

disbursements should be captured in their financial statements. The financial statements should be shared with School Council members and the Principal and should be presented at each School Council meeting.

The School Council may maintain a bank account. The Chair/Co-Chair(s), Treasurer and/or other School Council Executive shall act as approved signing officers of the School Council bank account. Each cheque must be signed by two authorized bank signatories. Funds collected must be independently counted by two people, logged in the deposit voucher and deposited promptly. All funds must be securely kept in the school's secure safe until the funds are counted and deposited into the bank.

Finances

School Councils may not enter into long-term agreements, loan arrangements nor other contractual agreements under the name of the school or the School Council.

Fundraising

All proposed School Council fundraising activities will take into consideration the ability of our families to contribute and/or to raise funds. As per P037 – Equity Policy, events will reflect the ideas, traditions, cultures and strengths of the parents/caregivers represented in the school. Monetary and non-monetary contributions will be valued equitably. The School Council may fundraise and must adhere to the P021 - Fundraising Policy and PR508 - Fundraising Procedures. School Councils shall not engage in fundraising activities unless the activities are to raise funds for a purpose approved by the Principal or authorized by any applicable policies established by the TDSB. The School Council is required to:

- consult with the Principal;
- include a list of planned fundraising activities and expenditures for the year;
- Fundraising activities may include but are not limited to, funfair events, product sales, requests for donations from parents/caregivers, grant applications, donations (in-kind or monetary) and sponsorships. Fundraising proceeds must not be used for expenses required for completion of the curriculum nor for capital infrastructure improvements funded through renewal grants from the Ministry of Education. School Council must use the Board-approved vendors when available to ensure compliance with health and safety. Where approved vendors are not available, School Councils shall work with the Principal to find an appropriate substitute. The School Council can access the up-to-date list of approved fundraising and fun fair vendors at: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/Howto-Get-Involved/Fundraising/Fundraising-Guide>. All School Council disbursements must comply with the Boards' P017 - Purchasing Policy and must be approved by the school Principal and the School Council in advance of incurring the expense.

Committees of School Council

Recognizing that committees/subcommittees are an effective and inclusive means of investigating and implementing School Council objectives, the School Council will establish committees/subcommittees to make recommendations to the full School Council as needed.

The School Council may establish committees/subcommittees to make recommendations to the School Council. All committees/subcommittees must include at least one (1) elected/appointed parent/caregiver member of the School Council. These committees/subcommittees may include persons who are not members of the School Council. All committees/subcommittees will meet as required throughout the year to carry out the School Council's activities. They will make recommendations to the School Council for approval and will report to the School Council on its activities. School Councils may determine if committee/subcommittee meetings may be open by invitation and accessible to the public. Committee Chairs/Co-Chair(s) will consider the comfort levels of parents/caregivers when choosing meeting locations.

Conflict of Interest

School Council shall make rules respecting participation in School Council proceedings in cases of Conflict of Interest.

Each School Council member shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and the vision of the School Council and personal or vested interest that may arise in connection with their duties as a School Council member. Should an issue or an agenda item arise during a School Council meeting where a School Council member is in a conflict of interest situation, they shall declare a conflict of interest immediately and decline from the discussion and the resolution.

Conflict Resolution

School Council shall establish a Conflict Resolution process for internal School Council disputes that is in accordance with any applicable policies established by the TDSB. General Principles

- it is in places of conflict that the potential for change exists. Conflicting ideas, beliefs and values may provide great learning and growth opportunities for everyone within an environment that nurtures respectful dialogue;
- there are many forms of oppression that are not always easy to recognize, therefore, it is imperative that we acknowledge and take responsibility for the biases, conscious and unconscious and the expectations that we hold;

- we all bear a responsibility in upholding a safer space and we are all accountable to each other. We are not here to exclude each other nor abandon each other. If we are willing to learn, we are here to help each other through the process of unlearning oppression and changing any structures which perpetuate it;
- this process is intended to work in tandem with existing TDSB policies, including the Human Rights Policy, Equity Policy and shall not supersede any policies, or procedures of the TDSB;
- School Council shall have the authority to enter conflict resolution with any member from School Council using the outlined procedure;
- in instances of discrimination or harassment, School Council members in consultation with the Principal or Superintendent, shall pursue resolution using Policy P034 - Workplace Harassment, Prevention for Non-Human Rights Code Harassment rather than the internal conflict resolution process with these By-Laws.

Conflict Resolution Process

Conflicts and disputes that occur within the School Council will be facilitated by the following:

- conflict between the Chair/Co-Chair(s) and School Council, will be facilitated by an Executive Officer (Secretary/Treasurer) of the School Council;
- conflict with the Principal and the School Council, will be facilitated by the Superintendent in collaboration with the Chair/Co-Chair(s);
- conflict between the Chair/Co-Chairs(s) and the Principal, will be facilitated by the Superintendent;
- conflict among the Executives (Chair/Co-Chairs(s), Secretary, Treasurer etc.) will be facilitated by the Principal in consultation with the Superintendent;
- if the conflict occurs at a School Council meeting (attendee becomes disruptive during a meeting), the Chair/Co-Chairs(s), after three attempts of unsuccessfully asking for order, shall seek School Council approval for removal of the conflicted parties from the meeting, citing reasons for the request. This does not prevent the conflicted School Council member(s)/attendees from participating in future meetings of the School Council. The incident shall be recorded and submitted to the Superintendent within one week of the meeting, by the Principal. The School Council Chair/Co-Chair(s), in collaboration with the Principal, shall request that the disputing member(s) participate in a private meeting, the purpose of which will be to arrive at a mutually acceptable resolution to the dispute. Such a meeting will be a private meeting and shall not be construed as a meeting of the School Council. The meeting will result

in clear steps to be taken by each party to resolve the conflict. The Chairs/Co-Chair(s) will provide an update of the resolution at the next formal meeting of the School Council; if a resolution was not possible, the Chair/Co-Chairs(s) may call for a special meeting of the School Council to review the conflict/dispute and to explore options that may include suspension of the member/attendee. Conflicts and disputes that occur within the School Council will be addressed using the following steps:

- the parties to a dispute must attempt to resolve the dispute between themselves within 5 days after the dispute has come to the attention of each party;
- if the parties to the dispute are unable to resolve the dispute between themselves within the time required, any party to the dispute may start the conflict/dispute
 - process by giving written notice to the relevant facilitator of the conflict outlining the parties to the dispute and the matters that are the subject of the dispute;
 - within 10 days after the facilitators have been given the notice, a meeting must be convened by the appropriate facilitator to consider and to determine the dispute;
 - the facilitator must give each party to the dispute, written notice of the meeting at least 3 days before the meeting is held. The notice given to each party to the dispute must state:
 - when and where the committee meeting is to be held; and
 - that the party may attend the meeting and will be given a reasonable opportunity to make written and/or oral submission to the committee about the dispute. At the meeting at which a dispute is to be considered and determined, the facilitator must;
 - give each party to the dispute a reasonable opportunity to make written and/or oral submission to the committee about the dispute;
 - give due consideration to any submissions;
 - determine the dispute;
 - give each party to the dispute written notice of the committee's determination and the reasons for the determination, within 7 days after the committee meeting at which the determination is made;
 - a party to the dispute may, within 5 days after receiving notice of the committee's determination, give written notice to the facilitator accepting the recommended resolution or requesting the appointment of a mediator;

- if a mediator is requested by one or more of the disputants, or the facilitator deems a mediator is required, the facilitator will secure a mediator and each party to the dispute is a party to the mediation;
- the appropriate facilitator will secure a mediator who may be a Board official or independent party identified by the Board and be mutually agreed on by the parties involved in the dispute;
- if a mediator is not supported by one of the disputants, another mediator will be secured;
- if a disputant fails to participate in the mediation called by the facilitator, the disputant will adhere to all recommendations of the mediator. The mediation process must entail the following:
 - the parties to the mediation must attempt, in good faith, to settle the matter that is the subject of the mediation;
 - each party to the mediation must give the mediator a written statement of the issues that need to be considered at the mediation at least 3 days before the mediation takes place;
 - in conducting the mediation, the mediator must: give each party to the mediation every opportunity to be heard; and allow each party to the mediation to give due consideration to any written statement given by another party; and ensure that natural justice is given to the parties to the mediation throughout the mediation process.
 - the mediator cannot determine the matter that is the subject of the mediation;
 - the mediation must be confidential and any information given at the mediation can be used in other proceedings that take place in relation to the matter that is the subject of the mediation;
 - the costs of the mediation are to be paid by the party or parties who appointed the mediator;
 - the recommendation of the mediator is final and cannot be appealed.

Suspension of a School Council Member

If the School Council is unsuccessful in its attempt to resolve a conflict that is impacting the effective operation of the School Council or is impeding the safe and the healthy engagement of all members using the Conflict Resolution process and/or the Suspension Process or is unable to use either of the processes, the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent or Executive Superintendent may suspend a member(s) of School Council who:

- violates the school/School Council's or the Board's Code of Conduct, the Ontario Human Rights Policy and/or the TDSB's P031 - Human Rights Policy and any other relevant policies and procedures of the school and of the Board;

- chooses not to participate in a resolution meeting or a resolution mediation;
- participated in a resolution meeting or a resolution mediation process but failed to change behaviour(s);
- acts detrimental to the interests of the School Council.

Annual Report

School Council will annually submit a written report of its activities to the Principal and include any fundraising activities. The Principal will, on behalf of the School Council, give a copy of the report to every parent/caregiver of a student who is enrolled in the school, either by giving the report to the student for delivery to their parent/caregiver and/or posting the report in the school in a place that is visible to parents/caregivers and/or online.

By-Laws' Amendments School Council will review these By-Laws every three to four (3-4) years to ensure that they reflect the current makeup and the needs of the school community.

Date

Birch Cliff Public School Parent Council SAC By Laws were created on (yyyyy/mm/dd)