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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT

Elections

10-02-2021

The criterion for election of School Council members is outlined in [O. Reg. 612/00](#). The designated number of Parent Members elected to the School Council should be defined in your [Election bylaw](#). The majority of the Members of the School Council must be parents/guardians of students at the school. The other Members are the Principal, an elected teacher, an elected non-teaching staff member, an elected student member (secondary school), and one (or more) appointed community representative.

HOW DOES A SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTION WORK?

- Elections must be held within the **first 30 days** of the school year. [O. Reg. 612/00, s. 4 \(4\)](#).
- The Principal must post the date, time, and location of the election (as determined in consultation with the Chair(s)) for the parent community, at least 14 days before the election date
- All parents/guardians of students at the school are entitled to one vote for each Parent Member position
- The Chair(s) is elected from the group of elected Parent Members
- Executive positions, or officers, (as defined in your bylaws) are determined from among the elected Parent Members
- The Principal must post the results of the election (the names of the members elected to the School Council), no later than 30 days following the election
- Term of Office is one full year from the date of election or until the 1st meeting after the election of the following school year (members may seek reelection, as per your bylaws)

WHAT FORMAT OPTIONS CAN BE USED FOR RUNNING ELECTIONS?

Outside of the usual in-person elections typically held, councils have the following virtual options:

- **Hybrid Election – In Person & ZOOM Meeting Election** – In person voting at a safe space in the school for parents who do not have access to virtual platforms. For those with access to virtual platforms, the anonymous polling feature will be used for secret ballot voting during a live ZOOM election meeting.
- **Virtual ZOOM Meeting Election** – Elections can be held during a live ZOOM meeting using the anonymous polling function for voting. Pre-registration is required.
- **Virtual ONLY Voting Using Survey Monkey** – An anonymous ballot can be created and distributed using Survey Monkey. All parents will receive the ballot and vote within a defined time period.

More detailed [instructions HERE](#)

Guide for [Zoom Elections](#) and [Survey Monkey Elections](#)

QUORUM

Quorum is defined as the minimum number of members of council that must be present at any meeting to make the proceedings of that meeting valid. For School Council meeting quorum, a majority (50%+1) of elected members (including parent members, staff, teachers, community reps, and student reps) must be present, and the majority of members in attendance must be elected Parent Members for a meeting to take place.

TIP: Election Planning Committees

Your school may choose to form an Election Planning Committee. Members of this committee could include the Principal, parents not running for election, teaching staff, support staff and, in secondary schools, students. The role of the Election Planning Committee is to plan and hold elections for membership of parents, teachers and support staff representatives.

The responsibilities of the Election Planning Committee could include:

- Establishing time(s)/date(s) and location for the election (must include both daytime and evening hours);
- Preparing and distributing election information and notices to the school community;
- Establishing campaign rules/guidelines.

A TDSB guide for School Council elections can be found [here](#)

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF SCHOOL COUNCIL?

- The number of elected Parent Members as outlined in your School Council Bylaws.
- The Principal of the school (or a Vice Principal designated by the Principal)
- One teacher at the school (elected by their peers)
- One staff member at the school (a non-teaching staff member elected by their peers)
- One student representative, (appointed by the Student Council) where applicable
- One representative from the Home & School Association, if your school has one
- One or more appointed Community Representatives (e.g. from the school daycare or community centre), appointed by the elected Members of Council, as defined in your bylaws

WHAT POSITIONS ARE ON SCHOOL COUNCIL?

- Once the Parent Members of the council are elected, those Members may determine who among them will serve as the Officers or Executive of Council - Try this [survey tool](#)
- Every School Council is required to have a Chair or two (2) Co-chairs (note: the Chair(s) cannot be employee(s) of the TDSB)
- A School Council may also have a Secretary, Treasurer, Ward Representative, Communications Coordinator, and any other positions needed to achieve your goals, serve on [school committees](#), or as defined in your bylaws
- *Who cannot vote on School Council?*
 - The only non-voting member of your council is the Principal
- *Who cannot be elected parent members?*
 - TDSB employees at the same school
 - Trustees of the school board

WHAT IF WE DON'T FILL ALL THE POSITIONS?

- Vacant positions do not prevent the Council from operating as long as Parent Members are in the majority
- If the bylaws mandate a position not required by [O. Reg. 612](#), and that position is frequently vacant, the bylaws should either be amended or the position should be made an optional one in the bylaws
- Vacancies may be filled by election or appointment, as per your School Council bylaws

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT Bylaws and Operating Procedures

10-02-2021

School Council operations are governed by the Ministry of Education's [Ontario Regulation 612/00](#). School Councils should strive to follow the policies and procedures of the TDSB.

School Council bylaws cannot contradict O. Reg. 612

BYLAWS VS. OPERATING PROCEDURES

Bylaws are formal documents that define the governance (standards & principles) of an organization. Operating Procedures describe the process for that governance - how tasks are carried out. For example, bylaws would state the rules for the number of elected members and how elections are carried out, while operating procedures would outline the process for forming an election committee and list positions/roles of the elected officers ([School Councils: A Guide for Members, section 7](#)). Although it is ideal to separate these, many Councils include operating procedures within their bylaws.

As per reg. 612, School Council bylaws must include the following:

- Conflict Resolution
- Election Procedures & Filling Vacancies
- Conflict of Interest

Your bylaws/operating procedures may include:

- Code of Ethics
- Meeting Norms & Attendance
- Number of Members & Quorum
- Roles & Responsibilities of the Membership
- Requirements of the Signing Officers
- Establishment & Roles of Sub-committees/Working Groups
- Decision Making Process
- Communications Strategy
- Process for storage of and access to council minutes and other records
- Amending bylaws process

For support writing your Bylaws, watch this Bylaws video from the helpful PCEO series:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HdKeeFxlz&feature=youtu.be>

TIP: The following are links to some helpful templates and examples of bylaw and operating procedures:

- [Bylaws Worksheet](#)
- Election Procedures ([Elections Template](#)) ([Ministry to Education Samples](#))
 - [Sample Nomination Form](#)
 - [Sample Self-Nomination Form](#)
- Filling Vacancies ([Bylaw Template](#)) ([Ministry of Education Samples](#))
- Conflict of Interest ([Bylaw Template](#)) ([Ministry of Education Samples](#))
- Conflict Resolution ([Bylaw Template](#)) ([Ministry of Education Samples](#))
- Code of Ethics ([Template](#)) ([Ministry of Education Sample](#))
- Membership ([Bylaw Template](#))

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT Running Effective Meetings

10-02-2021

School Councils are required to hold a minimum of four (4) public meetings per year - the first of the year to be held within the first 35 days of school, after the election. These meetings are run by the parent(s) elected as Chair(s). All meetings of the School Council, including "Executive" and Sub-committee meetings, are open to the public. The school is required to provide meeting space free of charge for all School Council meetings.

Setting dates and posting a clear agenda in advance encourages attendance. Planning the annual meeting schedule should take into account the schedules of the parents in your community, as well as the availability of staff. Providing child-care for families attending the meeting will increase participation. If your meetings are held at dinnertime, consider providing food for your families.

Running effective meetings strengthens a council's effectiveness. A defined purpose/mandate gives the reference point for all council actions and for discussion at meetings. Set annual goals with your parent members & school staff, based on your School Council mandate.

TIP: Make your meeting worth attending

- Define a meeting's purpose
- Send enough information in advance for people to prepare for meeting
- Allow all attendees to participate
- Address each item on the agenda, staying on schedule & on topic
- Assign action items and follow them up each meeting

Use and refer to your council [bylaws and operating procedures](#) to clarify council processes, e.g. purpose of the council, how you make decisions (consensus, voting), minute taking, conflict resolution, etc. Check out the [School Councils: A Guide for Members](#), section 8, for more ideas.

GET THE BIG PICTURE

- Consider having a Ward Representative position on your council:
 - Attends your [Ward Council meetings](#) & reports back to your school on broader issues
 - Shares your school's information and concerns with the community
- Connect with your Ward's [PIAC Representative](#) for support and resources

EQUITY ON SCHOOL COUNCILS

How do you know that your council is representative of your school community? It is not about who shows up. It is about whether council has provided every parent the ability to participate in decision-making and priority setting. Consider surveying your families. Consult your Principal about the School Profile to learn more about your school community. [Consider these tips](#)

School Councils are encouraged to seek translation of key engagement documents (in any language suggested by the school admin), including election information, minutes, and any surveys. The board provides written translation of School Council materials free of charge. Ask your Principal about accessing this service.

SETTING YOUR AGENDA

The Chair works together with the Principal to set the agenda. What should be on your agenda each meeting? Use this [checklist](#) to stay on top of monthly agenda items. [School Councils: A Guide For Members template 8.4.](#)

Example agenda:

MICHAEL ST. HIGH SCHOOL COUNCIL AGENDA – November 16, 2018

Welcome and Introductions	7:00 – 7:05pm
Approve Minutes	7:05 – 7:10pm
Follow-up Items	7:10 – 7:15pm
School Improvement Plan – discussion	7:15 – 7:30pm
Principals Report*	7:30 – 7:45pm
Teachers’ Report	7:45 – 7:55pm
Treasurer’s Report	7:55 – 8:00pm
Committee Reports	8:00 – 8:30pm
● Student Council–Gord	
● Ward Update–Mary	
● Equity Committee–Joanne	
Other Business	8:30 – 8:45pm

*Work with your Principal to focus his/her meeting content and timing.

ENDING A MEETING

- End on time
- Thank all members for attending
- Summarize decisions made to avoid misunderstandings later
- Review actions items handed out to council members
- Ensure members know when next meeting is
- Follow up with minutes shortly after the meeting (a draft of meeting minutes may be made available to the school community shortly after the meeting takes place, with approval of those minutes happening at the following scheduled meeting)

MAKING DECISIONS

There are 2 common ways for your council to make decisions: reaching consensus or voting. Your bylaws may outline the process your council chooses.

N.B. School Council decisions cannot contradict O. Reg. 612

1. Consensus Decision Making

- Consensus is an effective and inclusive way for councils to reach a decision. Consensus provides room for discussion and allows all sides to express their opinions before reaching an agreement on an issue
- It doesn’t need to be everyone’s first choice

2. Voting Process

- Voting can be a more direct method of deciding, using group discussion, followed by a formal motion, then the vote. Simple majority rules
- For more advice refer to “[Robert’s Rules of Order](#)” & [School Councils: A Guide for Members](#) section 8.8

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT E-Communications

10-02-2021

One of a School Council's main roles is to share information with parents/guardians and to seek their ideas about matters under consideration by the council. School Councils can use a variety of methods to reach out to their families, including electronic communications. The TDSB provides technology tools to support School Councils. To avoid confusion and mis-use, it is wise for your council to have a [by-law or Operating Procedure](#) that outlines your usage of social media, broadcast and email communications. Please follow the [TDSB Online Code of Conduct](#) in your e-communications.

TDSB SCHOOL COUNCIL EMAIL ACCOUNTS

The TDSB has established transferable School Council email accounts for School Council Chairs. This universal email can be activated at any time by your Principal and is re-activated annually with a new password, allowing for your address to pass seamlessly from one Chair to the next.

You should use this account even if your council has an established external email, as it gives access to several essential resources. This email account can also be accessed from your mobile device. For security reasons, you can no longer forward this account.

This account gives you access to:

- notices and updates from the school board, Trustees, and advisory groups including PIAC
- TDSB resources and files that require a log-in (including posted grant opportunities)
- School Messenger digital communication platform
- Zoom virtual meeting platform ([PIAC's Best Practices & Tips for Zoom](#))
- a non-personal account to manage communication with your school community
- protection under the **TDSB Acceptable Use of information Technology Policy P.088**

Here is the Principal's Guide to set up your account: **How to Create School Council Chair/Co-chair TDSB E-Mail Account** https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8U_nFD4spg0TXZLSkE5RnhmRWM/view Chairs will get an email account under their name that they will use to get into the permanent School Council account. For Chair guidance & information on how to use your TDSB email, go to:

<https://sites.google.com/tdsb.on.ca/schoolcouncil>

or contact John.Manalo@tdsb.on.ca for account support.

SCHOOL MESSENGER FOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

School Messenger is a web-based communication tool that provides the School Council Chair(s) with the ability to send one-way communications to the parents/guardians of their school community using the same data base that principals use to broadcast to the school community. This is a useful tool for distributing a School Council monthly newsletter. Chairs have access to School Messenger through their TDSB School Council email account.

As an official TDSB School Messenger user, council communications must adhere to the applicable TDSB policies and procedures and be CASL (Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation) compliant. See the [TDSB School Messenger protocol](#) for full details.

School Council E-Communication Tips:

School community emails are a valuable resource to communicate directly and effectively with the parents of your school. To remain effective as a communication tool, email-based communications should be used conservatively and with respect for the list members – either through School Messenger, or your council’s distribution list.

- Be respectful of inbox clutter by limiting the number of messages sent
- Give clear information
- Include a way for parents to contact you (School Council email address)
- If sending a link, provide a short summary about the relevance of that link
- Strive to make your communications Accessible ([AODA](#) compliant)

WEBSITES

Online resources are a convenient way for parents to access information about your council on their own schedule. While some School Councils may choose to set up a website of their own, all School Councils have a section on their school’s TDSB website. Your Principal can arrange for School Council information, like events, minutes, Annual Reports and council contact details to be posted on the school website.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a great way for School Councils to communicate timely information to your school community. It can be a useful tool for connecting with diverse school groups and engaging your families in community experiences. Social Media usage should enhance council communication with your community and positively engage parents/families. Check out this School Council [sample](#) guide for social media.

Posting Recommendations

- Define who can post on behalf of your council
- Posts should be relevant, positive
- Respect the law – don’t post copyrighted material unless you have the copyright
- Only include pictures of students who have a signed media release

Examples of Posts

- School Council Communication (election results, meetings, updates, newsletters, etc.)
- Student Work (art, poems, stories, etc.)
- School and Community Events (Fun Fair, Word on the Street, Poetry Cafe, etc.)
- People for Education Reports and Fact Sheets
- Toronto Public Health Info and Tip Sheets

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT Minutes and Record-Keeping

10-02-2021

Ontario [Regulation 612](#) outlines the records that schools and School Councils are required to keep. The TDSB also requires certain documents of School Councils. Accessible records provide the base for accountability and communication with your school community.

MINUTES

- Minutes must be recorded for every meeting of a School Council (including sub-committees/working groups). Most School Councils have a Secretary as part of the Executive officers to record minutes
- The school must retain School Council minutes (including sub-committees/working groups) for a minimum of 4 years and make them available to all parents free of charge

TIP: School Council minutes must be accessible to the parent community. Hard copies of minutes can be stored in a binder or file at the school office. Minutes can also be stored digitally on the school and/or School Council website.

See: [School Councils: A Guide for Members](#), template e.g. 8.5

What should your minutes contain?

- Date of the meeting
- List of who attended/was absent
- Brief summary of what went on at the meeting
- Motions and decisions or votes of the council
- Financial decisions of the council
- Action items/follow-up items

ANNUAL REPORTS

- Responsibility of the Chair(s) to ensure the annual report is done
- Responsibility of the Principal to distribute the report to all parents of the school. This can be done several ways, including sending a paper copy home to each family, posting it in an accessible area of the school, uploading to the school's website, or emailing the parent body.
- Include financial statement of Council's fundraising and spending efforts
- Responsibility of the Principal to ensure financial records are kept and available to all parents. The school must store & retain reports for a minimum of four (4) years (Recommended to retain financial records for 7 years, in case of audit)

For more information check out the [School Council Guidebook](#) e.g. 10.1, fin. e.g. 10.3

What should your annual report contain?

- List of elected members of Council – names & positions
- List of meeting dates
- List of Council accomplishments
- Financial statement
- Thank yous

OTHER REPORTING REQUIRED BY THE TDSB

- Fundraising Plan ([School Generated Funds Financial Plan and School Needs Assessment Form](#)) is a living plan that can be adjusted throughout the year
 - Submitted annually (end of October) through your Principal, as either a separate School Council report or as part of the school's SGFFP (School Generated Funds Financial Plan)
 - Plan is created by the School Council in consultation with the Principal
 - List of expected expenditures & fundraising events for the year with anticipated incomes
 - See TDSB School Councils: "[School Council Funds](#)"
- School Statement of Needs (SSoN)
 - Submitted annually to the Superintendent (end of October)
 - Lists what makes your school community unique
 - Used by the Superintendent when there is a change of administrator in your school
 - See PIAC's [SSON Parent Guide](#) and [SSON template](#)
- PSAB board accounting (Public Sector Accounting Board) Reports
 - Financial semi-annual report & year-end report required by the TDSB
 - Submitted as a separate School Council document or as part of the school's PSAB report
 - PSAB due 2nd week of September; Semi-Annual Report due in March.
 - See TDSB School Councils: "[School Council Funds](#)"

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT The Role of the Principal

10-02-2021

The Principal is your partner in School Council. The Principal is the leader of your school community and an important member of the School Council. The Principal's duties regarding School Councils are laid out in O. Regs. 298 & 613, as well as O. Reg. 612. The TDSB also requires Principals to include parents in several additional ways, for example, consultation on matters that affect student learning.

PRINCIPALS ARE REQUIRED TO SUPPORT SCHOOL COUNCILS BY:

- Ensuring the school has an elected School Council
- Attending all School Council meetings *O. Reg. 613, s.16*
- Giving notice of School Council meetings (date, time, location) to all parents of the school *O. Reg. 612, s.12 (7)*
- Ensuring School Council elections are held in accordance with Ministry regulation (Reg. 612, s.4):
 - Elections must be held within the first 30 days of the school year *O. Reg. 612, s.4 (4)*
 - Principal must post the date, time, and location of the elections for the parent community, at least 14 days before the election date *O. Reg. 612, s.4 (6)*
 - Principal must post the results of the election (the names of the members elected to the School Council), no later than 30 days following the election *O. Reg. 425/98, s.1*
- Distributing School Council information to the parent body:
 - School Council records (minutes, annual report) must be held in the school, accessible to any parent, for minimum of four (4) years *O. Reg. 612, s.16 (2) & s.24 (3)*
 - Materials intended for School Councils from the Ministry of Education to School Council members & post them in an accessible location *O. Reg. 613, s.1*
- Seeking parent input on matters affecting student learning *O. Reg. 613, s.19*
- Seeking parent input on school committees, including but not limited to, school budget, School Improvement Plan (SIP), staffing, and Caring & Safe Schools ([School Committees Guide](#))
- Seeking parent input on any school dress code *O. Reg. 613, s.19*
- Considering & reporting back on any recommendation of the School Council *O. Reg. 613, s.18*
- Act as a resource for School Council on laws, regulations, and board policies. *O. Reg. 613, s.1 (3)*

OTHER WAYS THE PRINCIPAL CAN SUPPORT COUNCIL

- Give access to the school website and/or newsletter for School Council information sharing
- Activate the TDSB School Council email account
- Arrange for the provision of school &/or board resources to support operation of the council
- Involve School Council in the development of the School Profile (*SC Guide 3.6*)
- Access the Ministry of Education School Council and Parent Outreach funds provided to School Councils through the TDSB (GL 41500)
- Work with school staff to support the election of staff representatives for council
- Assist in purchasing TDSB insurance for School Council, if your council needs additional insurance coverage beyond the Board's. ([TDSB School Council Insurance](#)) ([School Councils: A Guide for Members, 5.9](#))
- Consult on any fundraising plan of the council
- Apply for event and meeting permits (including those for regular council meetings)
- Determine acceptable avenues and resources for fundraising (TDSB [Advertising Policy P006](#), [Fundraising Policy P021](#), and [Distribution & Display of Materials Policy P041](#))

WHAT THE PRINCIPAL DOES NOT DO

- Have a vote on council
- Run School Council meetings or set meeting agendas (Chair(s) should consult Principal on agenda items)
- Appoint Council Members
- Spend or approve spending of School Council funds without the approval of the voting Members of School Council

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT Funds and Fundraising

10-02-2021

Fundraising is an optional activity that many School Councils engage in. School Council fundraising should be done in collaboration with school staff and your Principal and should follow the TDSB's [Policies and Procedures](#) for fundraising and advertising, as well as the [guidelines for fund management](#). Parents may not fundraise for supplies or curriculum materials that are provided by the Ministry of Education ([Fundraising Guidelines](#)) and are encouraged to use vendors and suppliers vetted by the TDSB. The TDSB has produced the following reference guides: [Guide for School Generated Funds](#) and the [Fundraising Guide](#).

All School Councils receive funding from the Ministry of Education. These funds are intended to be spent each year and are replaced annually with fresh funds. School Councils decide how these funds are spent (see #1 and 2 below).

SOURCES OF SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDING

1. **The Ministry of Education via the TDSB:** (\$1.25/full-time student; min. \$300 - max. \$1000) for School Council operations (school budget line GL 41500)
2. **The Ministry of Education (Parent Involvement Policy):** \$500 per school annually for Parent Outreach activities (school budget line GL 41500)
3. **TDSB Continuing Education:** Supplementary funding from the Ministry of Education is available for Parent Workshops through the TDSB Continuing Education department. Your Principal can apply for parent workshop funds by contacting belkis.romero@tdsb.on.ca
4. **Parent Reaching Out Grants:** PRO annual Grants from the Ministry of Education are for parent engagement activities. Grants are distributed directly to school boards.

FUNDRAISING PLAN

Schools and School Councils that fundraise are required to create and submit an annual financial plan using the TDSB's form ([School Generated Funds Financial Plan and School Needs Assessment Form](#))

- Submitted each October as either a separate School Council report or as part of the school's SGFFP (School Generated Funds Financial Plan)
- Plan is created in consultation with the Principal
- Includes a list of planned fundraising activities and expenditures for the year
- This is a living plan that can be adjusted throughout the year

HOW DO WE DEVELOP OUR FINANCIAL PLAN?

- *Identify the fundraising goal(s) or school need.* School Council goals should be identified using the School's Improvement Plan (SIP) or need for resources identified by staff and parents.
- *Ensure that your activities comply with Ministry of Education guidelines* for acceptable spending and TDSB policies regarding food & product sales, games of chance, and advertising.
- *Determine the amount of money or resources to be raised* for each activity and in total.
- *Spend the money on the intended targets.*
 - Funds must be spent within 2 years of being raised and the spending reported to the TDSB and the school's parent community.

- Funds raised for a capital project that is pre-approved by the TDSB (e.g. a large piece of equipment) may be held until the funding goal is reached.

CASH DONATIONS OR DIRECT DONATION FUNDRAISING

- Monetary donations of cash or cheques may be eligible for a tax receipt (over \$25) and can be processed by your school office administrator.
- Monetary donations can also be processed using the School Cash Online system (<http://schoolcashionline.com>) under the TDSB Online Donations Module.
- Direct donations are deposited into the school's bank account as "non-board funds". School Council should record and track these funds to make sure they are used for their intended purpose.

WHAT CHOICES DO SCHOOL COUNCILS HAVE FOR BANKING?

If a School Council receives funds, through any fundraising activity, it is responsible for the management and financial accounting of those funds, including records of signing authorities on accounts, records of cash counting, banking transactions, reimbursements (with receipts), monthly bank statements, and an up-to-date fundraising and expense budget. You will probably want a Treasurer to handle the many accounting tasks associated with School Council banking.

School Councils have three main options for holding funds in a bank account:

1. **The school's account (recorded as Non-Board Funds):** Funds are held by the school under "non-board funds". Deposits and money handling are the responsibility of the Council and must align with the [TDSB's guidelines](#). Although the school administers the funds, only the Council can authorize spending of the School Council funds; payments are processed with the help of the Principal and/or office administrator.
2. **PACE Credit Union Account:** PACE CU is the bank used by the TDSB. School Councils may open a PACE account that is separate from the school's account. The benefits include secure, in school pick up of deposits rather than parents carrying money off-site, no requirement for a minimum balance, and no fees for regular banking transactions. The Principal is a required signing authority (co-signature) on a PACE account.
3. **Outside Bank Account:** The TDSB currently allows Councils to maintain bank accounts at accredited financial institutions in Canada. Council bank accounts should have multiple signing officers (recommended that the Principal be one of the signing authorities). Bank accounts should not allow access to bank machines or use debit transactions. Councils must maintain all the documentation and submit required reports on the funds as outlined in TDSB fund management guide.

BUDGET AND ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE

School Councils that raise funds may want to use a spreadsheet (e.g. Excel or Google Sheets) or basic budgeting software (e.g. Quicken Starter, YNAB, Mint, etc.) to track income and spending. Budgeting software offers automated setup and calculations but may come with annual fees and limit access to one person/computer. Spreadsheet options like Google Sheets provide free, flexible record keeping that allows shared access with School Council Members however require more independent setup.

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SCHOOL COUNCIL TOOLKIT

School Council Monthly Checklists

2021

SEPTEMBER	TO DO	✓
School Council Election	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Election Committee reviews plan and ensures Principal notifies the parent community of SC Election scheduled within the first 30 days of school 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Send out election notices and SC information/welcome letter to parents 	
First SC Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare agenda (Chair & Principal) 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hold elections within first 30 days 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hire babysitters for meeting 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set dates for SC meetings (at least 4 required each school year) 	
After SC Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Principal should share School Profile, EQAO results, any staffing updates/changes, school budget 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update communications (SC and/or school website, bulletin board, newsletter, email etc.) with new meeting dates and new council member list 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask the Principal to update chair name on school website 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Principal to request teaching & non-teaching reps for council membership 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact new Council Members and provide information or guidance they may need to begin working in their new roles 	
SC Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update financial signing authority 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Give meeting dates to babysitters and confirm availability 	
SC Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure Principal activates your TDSB SC email account ● The Chair uses TDSB SC email account to gain access to SC Zoom account and School Messenger for council ● If you have a separate distribution list, plan to get parent email addresses via sign-up form or sign-up sheet at events (e.g. curriculum night, interviews) 	
Parents Reaching Out (PRO) Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check with PCEO/PIAC for this year's grant information 	
Ward Forums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check with your Trustee for scheduled Ward forum dates and share with parents 	
Curriculum Night	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up SC information table for parents and have them sign-up for email list 	
PSAB (financial report)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete form and submit to Principal by due date (usually mid-September) 	
Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check online school budget to see SC allocation of government funds 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Begin research for Fundraising Plan if you are planning to fundraise 	
Police Record Checks (PRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get PRCs for new regular, on-going volunteers submitted ASAP 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offense declaration completed for returning volunteers 	
School Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Caring and Safe Schools team should be established by the Principal and include one parent 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check with the Principal to see if you need to solicit parent reps for other school committees (e.g. SIP committee, Staffing, Eco-schools committee) 	

Other happenings this month: Back-to-school BBQs, set-up milk program and special lunches (pizza, sub etc.), Parks and Recreation registration for fall/winter programs (pass along dates to parents)

OCTOBER	TO DO	✓
School Council Insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form and letter should be forwarded by the Principal and is due by the end of October 	
School Statement of Needs (SSoN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents should complete form each year, indicating school community needs when/if a new Principal needs to be hired. Submit to Superintendent 	
School Improvement Plan (SIP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Principal develops the SIP in consultation with staff and parents. The school committee can include parent rep(s). The annual SIP should be shared and discussed with SC by Principal 	
SC Goal Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss what plans your council has for the year to fulfill your mandate, using information collected from the SIP, School Profile, parent/staff surveys Plan your budget for the year, including use of SC government funds. Write an Annual Plan for reference. Communicate plans with your parents 	
SC Fundraising Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan includes expected fundraisers and spending. Ask Principal for SGFFP template form. Due at the end of October to the Principal 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Principal should consult with SC about any Fundraising Plan 	
Specialized Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass along information about Specialized Program information nights and application processes (e.g. Cyber Arts, IB, AP, Elite Athlete, various Arts and Tech programs) 	
Bylaw Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good time to perform or schedule annual review of council's Bylaws 	
Movie License Renewal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If SC is planning movie nights, check with the Principal to make sure school license covers events outside school hours and find out which movies are covered 	
Student Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite newly elected Student Council Chair (if applicable) to future SC meetings 	

Other happenings this month: Gifted testing begins (for ALL grade 3 students), IEP's should be completed (maybe pass special education information/links to parents who are new to the process)

NOVEMBER	TO DO	✓
Early French Immersion (SK)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind parents of online application due date 	
Progress reports and Parent-Teacher Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass along tip sheets to parents and/or links to find out more information about progress reports (TDSB or Ministry website) Set up SC information table for parents, collect parent emails 	
PIAC Parent Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually held in November. Posters and information should be mailed/emailed to schools. Share information with all parents This event is free for all TDSB parents 	
Transition to Grade 9 High School Information Nights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grade 8-to-9 transition information night should be set up in middle schools by the Principal, if not, council should request one 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite high school SCs to attend transition information session to connect with parents who will be new to their school next year Check for local Open House dates (TDSB website) and share with parents Consider hosting a myBlueprint session for parents 	

Other happenings this month: Planning winter events (Winterfest, potluck etc.)

DECEMBER	TO DO	✓

Other happenings this month: Charity drives (food, coats, mittens etc.), Winter Events (Winterfest, potluck etc.), school concerts (bake sale, raffle), school skating days (may need parent volunteers)

JANUARY	TO DO	✓
Extended French and Middle Immersion programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check online (TDSB website) for registration dates and pass along information to parents. 	
High School Course Selection and Post-Secondary Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite Guidance Dept. to present to parents on course selection and post-secondary planning • Consider hosting a myBlueprint session for parents 	

Other happenings this month: Grade 9 EQAO testing (for first semester math courses), spring event planning (e.g. Fun Fair)

FEBRUARY	TO DO	✓
Staffing Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elementary staffing models are developed at this time of year. Parents should be involved. 	
TDSB Excellence Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications usually come out this month. Complete form if your SC wishes to nominate a staff member 	
TDSB Budget Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend sessions (at Ward forum or community consultation – see TDSB website for dates and locations) to learn more about next year’s Board budget 	
Report Cards and Parent-Teacher Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pass along information/links (e.g. from TDSB or Ministry website) to parents to help them understand report cards • Send out parent tips for P/T interviews (e.g. People for Education) • Set up SC information table for parents, collect parent emails 	
Elementary Academies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check TDSB website for registration information (e.g. Health & Wellness Academies, Vocal Academies, etc.) to pass to parents 	
Kindergarten Registration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide SC information for registration information package. Set up SC table to give out information and collect email addresses 	

Other happenings this month: Go over plans made earlier in year to make sure they are on track (e.g. parent workshops/speakers are completed or booked, fundraising and budget are going as planned)

MARCH	TO DO	✓
TDSB Long Term Program & Accommodation Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check TDSB website or contact your Trustee for new report to see if any consultations re school closings, program changes etc. are scheduled for your school/Ward 	
OSAP (post secondary tuition assistance program)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check for application info online (www.osap.gov.on.ca) to pass along to parents of students who will be graduating this year. 	

Other happenings this month: Grade 9 Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) (provide information to parents), Parks and Recreation spring/summer registration begins (pass along information to parents)

APRIL	TO DO	✓
Open Houses for gifted and French programs (immersion/extended)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out dates (usually in May) and share information with your parents 	
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals should have staffing numbers for next year and should share and discuss this with SCs 	
EQAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade 9 math (for second semester or full-year courses) and elementary (grades 3 & 6) testing occurs in late May/early June. Ask parents if they want an information night and ask the Principal to set one up if required 	

Other happenings this month: Planning for final spring events (e.g. graduations)

MAY	TO DO	✓
Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check budget to make sure all board and Ministry SC funding is spent before end of the school year. These monies cannot be rolled over into next year's budget 	
Student Activity Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal should discuss next year's proposed student activity fees with the council 	
Summer School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check TDSB website for information about summer school opportunities and pass along information to parents 	
Parents as Partners annual Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free TDSB event for all parents, usually held in May. Share information with parents 	
Back-to-school notices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss with the Principal and prepare any information that your council would like to include in the September back-to-school package (e.g. email list sign-up form, School Council welcome letter etc.) 	

Other happenings this month: Primary (Grade 3) and Junior (Grade 6) EQAO testing (reading, writing, mathematics) (help provide breakfast/snack for students on testing days), plan staff appreciation event

JUNE	TO DO	✓
PRO Grant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make sure all funds are spent by year's end (August 31) ● Complete report back form as required 	
New School Calendar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Next year's calendar (with PA Days and Holidays) should be posted online http://www.tdsb.on.ca/AboutUs/Calendar - use it for planning next year 	
Final Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare for PSAB report (due in early September). ● Archive all financial files, bank statements, receipts etc. (should be kept for 7 years) 	
Annual Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare SC Annual Report, as per O. Reg. 612 (Principal to share with all parents), which includes a list of all activities done by SC the past year 	
SC Annual Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review SC efforts from the year and assess areas for improvement ● Send out survey to parents to find out what they thought about this year and what they'd like to see in future 	
Police Record Checks (PRC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you have new parents signing up to volunteer in regular, on-going positions next year, have them submit their PRCs now so they'll be ready before the school year begins 	
School Council Election Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Form Election Planning Committee for the Fall SC election ● Meet with the Principal to plan election date, nomination forms, procedures etc. (as per your Council by-laws and O. Reg. 612) 	

Other happenings this month: Grade 9 EQAO testing (for second semester and full-year math courses), begin planning for next year (how to recruit new parents, goals for next year, how to improve, welcome back BBQ etc.)

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