

# JAMES WHITESIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

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## CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

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### SECTION 1 - NAME

1. The name of the organization shall be JAMES WHITESIDE PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (the "Council"), as per the School Act- Bill 67-Division 2-Section 8 (1).
2. The Council will operate as a non-profit organization with no personal financial benefit accruing to members.
3. The business of the Council will be unbiased in respect of ethnicity, religion, gender, politics, sexual orientation, and physical or mental ability.

### SECTION 2 - MISSION STATEMENT

- 2.1 To promote harmony and enthusiasm in our children for lifelong learning by working cohesively with the administration and by supporting and empowering the parents and teachers of James Whiteside Elementary.

### SECTION 3 - DEFINITIONS

**"Community organizations"** means groups that demonstrate an interest in education and are not already included in the scope of the Council's constitution and bylaws.

**"District"** means School District No. 38.

**"DPAC" or "district parent advisory council"** means the parent advisory councils organized according to the School Act and operating as a district parent advisory council in School District No. 38.

**"PAC" or "parent advisory council"** means the parents organized according to the School Act and operating as a parent advisory council in James Whiteside Elementary School.

**"Parent"** is as defined in the School Act and means:

- a) the guardian of the person of the student or child,
  - b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child, or
- Last Updated January 24, 2018.

- c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child and, for the purposes of these bylaws, means the parent or guardian of a child or children enrolled in School District No. 38.

“**School**” means any public elementary or secondary educational institution as defined in the School Act operating within School District No. 38.

## **SECTION 4 - OBJECTIVES**

4.1 The purposes of the Council will be:

- a) To enhance communication between: parents, students, the community, school staff, school administration, School Board of Trustees, and other stakeholders;
- b) To review, discuss and make recommendations to the school staff and administration on:
  - School policy and procedures
  - Programs and services
  - Facilities and equipment
  - Parent | community education
  - Learning resources
- c) To promote the education and welfare of students in the school;
- d) To encourage parent involvement in the school, and to support programs that promote parent involvement;
- e) To participate in the work of the school planning council through the Council's elected representatives;
- f) To promote the interests of public education and, in particular, the interests of James Whiteside Elementary School;
- g) To provide leadership in the school community;
- h) To contribute to a sense of community within the school and between the school, home and neighbourhood;
- i) To provide parent education and professional development, and a forum for discussion of educational issues;
- j) To assist parents in obtaining information and communicating with the principal and staff about their child's progress or other concerns;
- k) To assist the principal and staff in ensuring the highest safety standards are maintained in the school and neighbourhood;
- l) To organize and support activities for students and parents;
- m) To provide financial support for the goals of the Council as determined by the membership;
- n) To advise and participate in the activities of Richmond District's Parent Advisory Council (“RDPA”);
- o) To contribute to the effectiveness of the school by promoting the involvement of

Last Updated January 24, 2018.

parents and other community members. and

- p) To promote co-operation between the home and the school; and to support ongoing educational opportunities for students.

## **SECTION 5 - MEMBERSHIP**

### 5.1 Voting members

All parents and guardians of students registered at James Whiteside Elementary School shall be voting members of the Council.

### 5.2 Non-voting members

5.2.1 Administration and staff (teaching and non-teaching) of James Whiteside Elementary School shall be non-voting members of the Council. Interested members of the school community who are not parents of students currently in the system shall also be non-voting members of the Council.

5.2.2 At no time will the Council have more non-voting than voting members.

### 5.3 Compliance with bylaws

Every member will uphold the constitution and comply with these bylaws.

## **SECTION 6 – MEETINGS OF MEMBERS**

### 6.1 General meetings

6.1.1 General meetings will be conducted with fairness to all members.

6.1.2 The number of General meetings will be set by the Executive. General meetings will be held not less than four times during the school year. One of those meetings will be the annual general meeting.

### 6.2 Conduct

6.2.1 At general meetings, members will not discuss individual school personnel, students, parents, or other members of the school community.

6.2.2 The Council will refrain from partisan political action or other activities that do not serve the interests of the school or the public school system.

### 6.3 Notice of Meetings

6.3.1 Members will be given reasonable notice of general meetings.

6.3.2 Extraordinary meetings may be called by the Executive with a minimum of seven (7) days' notice.  
Last Updated January 24, 2018.

notice.

## **SECTION 7 – PROCEEDINGS AT GENERAL MEETINGS**

### 7.1 Quorum

7.1.1 The voting members present at any duly called General meeting shall constitute a quorum.

### 7.2 Voting

7.2.1 Except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, all matters required a vote will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% plus 1).

7.2.2 In case of a tie vote, the chair (or co-chairs) may cast an additional vote so that the motion is passed or defeated.

7.2.3 Members must vote in person on all matters. Voting by proxy will not be permitted.

7.2.4 Except as provided elsewhere in these bylaws, voting is by a show of hands or, where requested by two voting members present, by secret ballot.

## **SECTION 8 - EXECUTIVE**

### 8.1 Role of the executive

The executive will manage the Council's affairs between general meetings.

### 8.2 Executive defined

The executive will include the chair (or co-chairs), secretary, and treasurer at a minimum.

### 8.3 Duties of Executives

#### 8.3.1 Chair or co-chairs

The Chair (co-chairs):

- a) shall convene and preside at all membership, special and executive meetings;
- b) shall, in consultation with the school staff and administration, ensure that an agenda is prepared and presented;
- c) shall take such actions or ensure that such actions are taken by others to achieve the objectives and purpose of the Council;
- d) shall speak on behalf of the Council;
- e) shall consult with Council members;

- f) shall establish committees where authorized to do so by the Executive or membership;
- g) shall be a signing officer;
- h) shall report on Council activities between meetings at meetings; and
- i) shall ensure that Council activities are aimed at achieving the purposes set out in the constitution.

### 8.3.2 Secretary

The Secretary:

- a) will record the minutes of the membership, special and Executive meetings;
- b) will issue and receive correspondence on behalf of the organization;
- c) file minutes of all meetings;
- d) prepare and maintain other documentation as requested by the membership or executive;
- e) may be a signing officer;
- f) and will keep an accurate copy of the constitution and bylaws, and make copies available to members upon request.

### 8.3.3 Treasurer

The Treasurer:

- a) will ensure all funds of the Council are properly accounted for;
- b) will disburse funds as authorized by the membership or executive;
- c) will ensure that proper financial records and books of account are maintained;
- d) make financial records and books of accounts available to members upon request;
- e) will be responsible for and report monthly on the accounts of the Council;
- f) will be one of the signing officers;
- g) will prepare a written year end financial report for the Annual General Meeting; and
- h) with the assistance of the executive, draft an annual budget; .

### 8.3.4 Additional Executive Officers

Titles and duties of additional Executive Officers (Members at Large, Committee Chair Persons; R.D.P.A. Representative, Early Warning Coordinator, Fundraising Coordinator, Hot lunch Coordinator, Social Media Coordinator, Class Parent, etc.) may be added as determined by the needs of the Executive Council.

Last Updated January 24, 2018.

#### 8.4 Eligibility

8.4.1 Any voting member of the Council is eligible to serve on the executive, except employees or elected officials of School District 38 or the Ministry of Education.

#### 8.5 Election of executive

8.5.1 Members at Large may nominate themselves: a) via personal email to the Principal one week prior to the Annual General Meeting with the position of interest or b) in person at the Annual General Meeting.

8.5.2 The executive will be elected at each annual general meeting.

8.5.3 Elections will be conducted by the Chair (Co-chairs).

#### 8.6 Term of office

8.6.1 The executive will hold office for a term of one year beginning the first day of school in September of that year.

8.6.2 No person may hold the same executive position for more than three (3) years.

#### 8.7 Vacancy

8.7.1 If an executive member resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the remaining executive members may appoint an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy until the next annual general meeting.

#### 8.8 Removal of executive

8.8.1 The members may, by a majority of not less than 75% votes cast, remove an executive member before the expiration of his or her term of office, and may elect an eligible member to complete the term.

8.8.2 Written notice specifying the intentions to make a motion to remove the executive member must be given to all members not less than 14 days before the meeting.

#### 8.9 Remuneration of executive

8.9.1 No executive member may be remunerated for serving on the executive but will be reimbursed for expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred while engaged in the Council's affairs.

## **SECTION 9 – EXECUTIVE MEETINGS**

#### 9.1 Meetings

9.1.1. Executive meetings will be held at the call of the chair (co-chair).

#### 9.2 Quorum

9.2.1 A quorum for executive meetings will be a majority (50% plus 1) of the members of the

Last Updated January 24, 2018.

executive.

### 9.3 Notice

9.3.1 Executive members will be given reasonable notice of executive meetings.

### 9.4 Voting

9.4.1 All matters requiring a vote at executive meetings will be decided by a simple majority of the votes cast (50% plus 1).

9.4.2 In the case of a tie vote, the chair does not have a second or casting vote and the motion is defeated.

## **SECTION 10 – EXTERNAL COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

### 10.1 District Parent Advisory Council representative

10.1.1. One representative to the RPDA may be elected annually from among the voting members who are not employees or elected officials of School District No. 38 or the Ministry of Education.

10.1.2. RDPA representatives will hold office for a term of one year.

10.1.3 If an RDPA representative resigns or ceases to hold office for any other reason, the membership may elect an eligible member of the Council to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

### 10.2 External committees

10.2.1 The membership or executive may elect or appoint a member who is not an employee or elected official of School District No. 38 or the Ministry of Education to represent the Council on an external committee or to an external organization.

10.2.2 The representative will report to the membership or executive as required.

## **SECTION 11 – CONDUCT OF EXECUTIVE AND REPRESENTATIVES**

### 11.1 Code of ethics

11.1.1 On election or appointment, every executive member and representative must sign and agree to abide by a code of ethics acceptable to the membership (refer to Appendix A).

### 11.2 Representing the Council

11.2.1 Every executive member and representative must act solely in the interests of the parent membership of the Council.

### 11.3 Privilege

Last Updated January 24, 2018.

11.3.1 Any information received in confidence by an executive member or representative from school personnel, a student, parent, or other member of the school community is privileged and must not be divulged without permission of the person giving the information.

#### 11.4 Disclosure of interest

11.4.1 An executive member or representative who is interested, either directly or indirectly, in a proposed contract or transaction with the Council must disclose fully and promptly the nature and extent of his or her interest to the membership and executive.

11.4.2 Such an executive member or representative must avoid using his or her position on the Council for personal gain.

## **SECTION 12 – COMMITTEES**

12.1 The membership and executive may appoint committees to further the Council's purposes and carry on its affairs.

12.2 The terms of reference of each committee will be specified by the membership or executive at the time the committee is established, or by the committee at its first meeting, as the membership or executive decide.

12.3 Committees will report to the membership and executive as required.

## **SECTION 13 – FINANCIAL MATTERS**

#### 13.1 Financial year

The financial year of the Council will be September to August.

#### 13.2 Power to raise money

The Council may raise and spend money to further its purposes.

#### 13.3 Bank accounts

All funds of the Council must be kept on deposit in the name of the Council in a bank or financial institution registered under the Bank Act.

#### 13.4 Signing authority

The school principal and vice principal will have signing authority.

The executive will name at least two signing officers for banking and legal documents.

Signatures required for these documents may be:

- a) one executive signing authority member of the Parent Advisory Council together with
- b) one of Principal or Vice-Principal of the School.

#### 13.5 Annual budget

Last Updated January 24, 2018.



The executive will prepare a budget and present it to the membership for approval at the beginning of each financial year.

The budget gives the executive authority to spend money. Without a current budget, the executive cannot spend money. A budget covers a time period within a council's financial year, usually the entire financial year. It must not extend over more than one financial year.

#### 13.6 Non-budgeted expenditures

The executive will present all proposed expenditures beyond the current budget for approval at the next general meeting.

#### 13.7 Treasurer's report

A treasurer's report will be presented at each general meeting.

#### 13.8 Auditor

A need for audits will be agreed upon by the members at any General meeting whereupon an independent Auditor may be appointed as needed. All accounting of funds is open to audit by the Richmond School Board.

## **SECTION 14 - CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

14.1 Amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws of the James Whiteside Parent Advisory Council may be made at any General meeting at which business is conducted providing:

- a) Written notice of the meeting has been given to all members (fourteen [14] days minimum);
- b) The notice of the meeting included notice of the specific amendment(s) proposed. Where the proposed amendments exceed one page, they need not be given to every member, but must be posted in a conspicuous place in the school or made accessible to all members; and
- c) A two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of those voting members present at the meeting will be required to amend the Constitution and By-Laws.

14.2 Amendment(s) to the Constitution and By-Laws should be submitted to the Board of Trustees of School District 38 for their information.

## **SECTION 15 – PROPERTY IN DOCUMENTS**

15.1 All documents, records, minutes, correspondence, or other papers kept by a member, executive member, representative, or committee member in connection with the Council shall be deemed to be the property of the Council and shall be turned over to the chair when the individual ceases to perform the task to which the papers relate.

## **SECTION 16 – DISSOLUTION**

16.1 Unalterable Dissolution Clause:

Last Updated January 24, 2018.

Upon winding up or dissolution of the Council, the assets which remain after payment of all costs, charges and expenses which are properly incurred in the winding up shall be distributed to such charitable organization or organizations in British Columbia having a similar charitable purpose as may be determined by the members of the Council at the time of winding up or dissolution. This provision shall be unalterable.

In the event of winding up or dissolution, all records of the Council shall be given to the principal of James Whiteside Elementary.

## APPENDIX A

### CODE OF ETHICS

A parent who accepts a position as a Council executive member, committee member, or representative

1. upholds the constitution and bylaws, policies, and procedures of the electing body
2. performs his or her duties with honesty and integrity and in the interests of the Council
3. works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions
4. respects the rights of all individuals
5. takes direction from the membership and executive
6. encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns to act on their own behalf, and provides information on the process for taking concerns forward
7. works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process
8. strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable
9. respects all confidential information
10. supports public education

#### Statement of Understanding

I, the undersigned, in accepting the position of \_\_\_\_\_ of James Whiteside Parent Advisory Council have read, understood, and agreed to abide by this Code of Ethics. I also agree to participate in the dispute resolution process that has been agreed to by the electing body, should there be any concerns about my work.

Name of Executive Member, Committee Member, or Representative

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_