

COALBANKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL COUNCIL OPERATING PROCEDURES

Operating Procedures for School Council

Approved June 5, 2017

1. DEFINITIONS

In these bylaws:

- A. **“School”** refers to Coalbanks Elementary School;
- B. **“Council”** refers the School Council for the School;
- C. **“District”** refers to The Lethbridge School District #51;
- D. **“School Board”** refers to the elected Board of Trustees of the Lethbridge School District #51;
- E. **“Student”** refers to any child enrolled in an educational program, including the pre-school program, at the School;
- F. **“Parents”** refers to any parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at the School. The parents of pre-school children shall be included herein;
- G. **“Administration”** refers to the School Principal, Vice Principal, or Assistant Principal;
- H. **“School Staff”** refers to teachers and any support staff employed by the School;
- I. **“School Community”** means persons other than Parents (as defined in 1F above) who reside within the School boundaries and who have, in the opinion of the majority of the Members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the Students and the School;
- J. **“Stakeholders”** refers collectively to the School, Council, District, School Board, Student, Parents, Administration, School Staff, and School Community;
- K. **“Act”** means the *Alberta Education Act*;
- L. **“Regulations”** means the *School Councils Regulation* as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- M. **“Operating Procedures”** means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

2. AUTHORITY

The School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our Students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically Section 55 of the *Alberta Education Act*, and the *School Councils Regulation*.

3. MISSION

The School Council will undertake discussions and activities that will enhance Student learning and promote effective communication between Parents, Administration, School Staff, and School Board.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Council, in keeping with the Act and Regulations, are to:

- A. Provide input to, and consult with, the Administration and the School Board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision,

- policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet Student needs;
- B. Share information with Parents and the School Community and facilitate collaboration and communication with Stakeholders;
 - C. Support special events that will enhance Student learning;
 - D. Keep the School Board informed, in cooperation with the Principal, of the needs of the School, and to perform duties of functions delegated to the School Council by the School Board.
 - E. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics;
 - F. Consult with other School Councils and provincial organizations as needed;
 - G. Support the School in its efforts to focus Administration's time and School resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning;
 - H. Provide Parents with upcoming meeting dates and past meeting minutes, and encourage/ invite participation at meetings and School events throughout the school year;
 - I. Advise School Boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;

5. GOVERNANCE and MEMBERSHIP

The School Council uses a Town Hall Operating Style and/or model of Governance.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
 - i. All Parents;
 - ii. Community Members may also attend;

(hereinafter referred to as "General Members")
- B. The Voting Members of the School Council shall, to the exclusion of all others, consist of:
 - i. All Parents;
 - ii. The Principal of the School, or his/her designate;
 - iii. One teacher or staff member as chosen by the School staff;

(hereinafter collectively referred to as "Voting Members")
- C. In order for any voting to take place, the number of Parent members in attendance at the meeting must exceed all other Voting Members of the School Council.
- D. In the event that any Community Member fails to abide by the Code of Ethics as defined herein, or is disruptive to the operation of the School Council, then any Voting Member may motion for a Point of Order. The Chair and Principal have the authority to ask a Community Member to leave the meeting. If any Community Member must be removed from two meetings in any given school year, then any Voting Member may motion to remove that individual's membership for the remainder of the school year, with such a motion requiring the support of a majority of Voting Members.

6. DECISION MAKING

Decisions at Council meetings will be made through consensus. If a vote is necessary,

- A. A Voting Member makes a stated motion for the proposed decision or action;
- B. A different Voting Member must “second” the motion. If no Voting Member seconds the motion, then the motion fails;
- C. All Voting Members then vote on the motion by the uplifted hand;
- D. Only if a majority of Voting Members vote in favor of the motion will the motion pass;
- E. In the event of a split vote, there will be between five and thirty minutes allotted for further discussion amongst Voting Members. Following the discussion, the vote will be re-called by secret, written ballot. School staff in attendance will count the ballots, with the outcome being decided by a majority of votes. If the vote remains split, the motion is defeated.

7. QUORUM

- A. Quorum will be attained when Parents make up the majority of Voting Members at any Council meeting, and the Principal (or designate) is present;
- B. In the absence of a Quorum:
 - i. If all Voting Members in attendance agree to proceed, the Council may continue the meeting for the sole purpose of discussion of issues;
 - ii. No motions may be considered or approved.

8. EXECUTIVE and TERMS OF OFFICE

- A. The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (if required).
- B. Parents must fill all Executive positions.
- C. Every Parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the School Council.
- D. The terms of office are from the close of the Annual General Meeting to the close of the following Annual General Meeting. Any elected member may serve two (2) consecutive terms in the same position.
- E. Parents attending the Annual General Meeting will elect the Executive of the School Council. In the event of vacancies after the Annual General Meeting, the Voting Members in attendance at a subsequent Council Meeting shall elect a replacement Executive.
- F. Any Executive member may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Chair and Principal.
- G. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive.
- H. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

It is expected that the School Council Chair will be a Parent. Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of the School Council will:

- i. Direct all meetings of the School Council;
- ii. Coordinate with the Principal to establish meeting agendas;

- iii. Cause the meeting agenda to be circulated among the Executive and published on the School website at least three days prior to the date of the meeting;
- iv. Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
- v. Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
- vi. Ensure that these Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- vii. Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- viii. Ensure that there is regular communication with the whole School Community;
- ix. Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
- x. Have signing authority, if required, on any financial accounts together with the Treasurer and Chair;
- xi. Prepare and provide an annual report to the School Board, with such report complying with the School Board's and Legislation's requirements;
- xii. Have general responsibility for all activities of the School Council;

B. Vice-Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the School Council will:

- i. Assume the role of Chair in the event of the Chair's resignation or incapacity;
- ii. In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- iii. Assist the Chair with duties, as assigned by the Chair;
- iv. Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with *Personal Information Protection Act*, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
- v. Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the "society" or other Parent groups within the School;
- vi. Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;

C. Secretary

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

- i. Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that attendance is recorded and that the meeting minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the meeting;
- ii. Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;
- iii. Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
- iv. Distribute, as determined by the School Council, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;
- v. Create and maintain a list of the names, positions, and contact information of all Executive Members of the School Council;

In the absence of the Secretary at a meeting, the School Council shall choose a recording Secretary for that meeting;

D. Treasurer (if required – see Fundraising clause)

Unless otherwise delegated, the Treasurer of the School Council will:

- i. Keep accurate records of all financial transactions;

- ii. At each Council meeting, present a report of all recent financial activities;
- iii. Ensure that records are available upon request of the School Board, public or School Community;
- iv. Be responsible for the deposits of all monies paid to the School Council in whatever bank, trust company, credit union or treasury branch the School Council may order;
- v. Have signing authority on any financial accounts together with the Chair, Treasurer;
- vi. Present a full, detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the School Council as required by the School Council, and prepare the financial statements for the annual report, with such report complying with the School Board's requirements;

E. Past Chair (Optional)

If willing, the Past Chair of the School Council may serve in an advisory capacity to the new School Council;

10. DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVE(S)

One or two members of the School Council shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting to represent the School at the District School Council. Unless otherwise delegated, the District Representative will:

- A. Attend all meetings of the School Council;
- B. Attend all meetings of the District School Council. If unable to attend, the District Representative shall arrange for an alternate Council member to attend the District School Council meeting;
- C. Report to the School Council any pertinent or applicable information from the District School Council;
- D. Report any School highlights to the District School Council at their monthly meeting;

11. COMMITTEES

The School Council may appoint committees consisting of School Council Members and/or the School Community. Committees meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the School Council and report their activities at the School Council.

12. MEETINGS

A. Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with the Act and Regulations, otherwise an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place once each School year.

- i. The Annual General Meeting of the School Council will be held in either May or June as determined by the School Council. The meeting will be advertised throughout the School and the community no less than 2 weeks beforehand and will state the business to take place at the Annual General Meeting;
- ii. All Parents are eligible for election to the Executive and the District Representative(s);
- iii. All Parents in attendance are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting;
- iv. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:

1. the election of Executive Members and the District Representative(s);
 2. any proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures;
 3. presentation of the financial statement of the current school year;
 4. Proposed schedule of Regular School Council Meetings for the upcoming school year.
- v. And may also include:
1. plans and budget for the upcoming school year;
 2. discussion of any major issue in which all Parents should have input such as changes to the Vision or Mission of the School or School Board, School policy or other major changes in the School program or focus;
 3. any evaluation of the School Council.

B. Special General Meetings

Special General Meetings may be initiated:

- i. Upon the determination of the School Council Executive; OR
- ii. Upon the written request of ten (10) Parents to the School Council.

Notice of the Special General Meeting must:

- i. be posted on the School website no less than five (5) days before the meeting;
- ii. include the time, date and place of the meeting;
- iii. describe the matters to be dealt with at the meeting.

At any Special General Meeting, all Parents in attendance shall have the right to vote.

C. Regular Meetings

- i. A minimum of 7 Regular School Council meetings will be held per School year, or as called by the Executive.
- ii. The schedule of Regular School Council meetings will be determined at the Annual General Meeting. If, at any time, the School Council needs to reschedule a Regular School Council Meeting, the Executive shall provide no less than seven (7) days notice of the newly scheduled meeting.
- iii. All Regular School Council meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised.

13. MEETING AGENDAS

- A. The Chair will work in partnership with the Administration to establish the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chair no less than five (5) days prior to the meeting. If necessary, the Chair will consult with the Executive and Administration as to the appropriateness of the proposed item. In cases of a dispute, the Principal shall have the final say respecting all agenda items.

14. POLICIES

- A. The School Council may make and implement policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.
- B. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term.

- C. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Elections, Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Fundraising, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

15. SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISING

- A. All fundraising must be done in accordance with the Act, the Regulations, and any applicable School Board policies;
- B. Where possible, the School Council will encourage the Fundraising Association to fundraise on behalf of the School, the School Council, and the School Community;
- C. Should the School Council choose to fundraise on its own behalf, any collected funds may be:
 - i. given to the School to track and record;
 - ii. given to the Fundraising Association; or
 - iii. deposited in a bank account operated by the School Council.
- D. School Council funds given to the School will be subject to the School Board's policy on School Council fundraising and/or School-generated funds.
- E. In the absence of mutually agreed terms, School Council funds given to the Fundraising Association will be subject to the policies of the Fundraising Association.

16. FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION and OTHER GROUPS OF PARENTS

- A. The School Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of other groups of parents striving to support and enhance the educational opportunities in the School.
- B. The School Council will communicate regularly with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities.
- C. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open and transparent relationship with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of parents.

17. CODE OF ETHICS

- A. All School Council Members shall:
 - i. Abide by the Act, the Regulations, and the Operating Procedures;
 - ii. Be guided by the mission statements of the School and School Council;
 - iii. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
 - iv. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School Community;
 - v. Declare any conflict of interest;
 - vi. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
 - vii. Apply democratic principles;
 - viii. Consider the best interests of all Students;
 - ix. Respect the confidential nature of some School business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
 - x. Not disclose confidential information;

- xi. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School Community as a whole;
- xii. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- xiii. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School Community;
- xiv. Accept accountability for decisions;
- xv. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

18. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- A. The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School Board's policies and regulations. If none exist, the School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures.
- B. If at any time, 10 Parents, or 5 Parents and 50% of the Executive Members of the School Council, are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a signed written letter to all Executive Members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following shall apply:
 - i. The Chair will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council in accordance with these Bylaws;
 - ii. On motion, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
 - iii. If the majority of voting Members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it. If the majority of voting Members present vote against the resolution, then the resolution shall be defeated.

19. PRIVACY

- A. The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA), and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

20. DISSOLUTION

- A. As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Administration may choose to establish an advisory committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next School year. The Administration will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) School days after the start of the next School year.

21. REVIEWS and AMENDMENTS

- A. Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may from time to time make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.
- B. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually by the School Council Executive or by a committee established expressly for that purpose.

- C. The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting Members present at any scheduled meeting of the School Council.
- D. Notice of proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School Community no less than five (5) days before a meeting.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted by a majority of the Members entitled to vote at a General meeting of the School Council.

Date _____

Chair's Name

Chair's Signature

Secretary's Name

Secretary's Signature

Principal's Name

Principal's Signature