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OTTAWA-CARLETON
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD



School Council Update #2

October 1, 2020

School Council Information

The changes in school operations this year will mean some changes to school council practices. The school council election procedure [PR.509.SCO School Council Elections, Constitution and By-laws](#) has been amended. The amendments are based on a motion passed by the Board of Trustees which allowed parents whose children are attending a virtual school to continue participating on the school council of the school their child would attend in person, subject to certain conditions. The amendments also support online activities for school councils.

This year:

- school council meetings will be held virtually - all school councils will have access to Google Meet;
- school council elections will be held electronically, with necessary modifications to allow for and support electronic voting;
- elections shall be held by October 14th (within 30 days of the first day of school which is deemed to be September 14th, 2020) or as soon thereafter as practically possible;
- the virtual schools will have school councils.

As always, any parent or guardian of a child attending school in person is entitled to seek election to the school council. There are some changes to the rules in terms of how virtual school parents can participate on school councils. These rules are intended to recognize the important relationship that families have with their school, regardless of the attendance option they chose in this unusual year.

What options are available to parents whose children attend a virtual school?

Parents of students attending a virtual school can:

- Seek election to the school council of the virtual school that their child attends;
- Be non-voting members of their child's home school council;
- Seek election to the school council of the home school if there are insufficient numbers of parents of in person students who have put their names forward for election;
- Be eligible for appointment to any position on the executive if they have been elected to the home school council;

A parent of a student enrolled in an OCV shall be eligible to seek election to a position on the school council at their child's home school, where an insufficient number of parents of students attending in person have put their names forward for election.

Who can be elected to school council?

Any parent or guardian is qualified to be a parent member of a school council if they are a parent of a pupil enrolled in the school, including those whose children are currently attending the virtual school, unless they are employed at the school.

If the parent is employed by the OCDSB, *but not at the school*, they must take reasonable steps to inform the school community about their employment, prior to the election. An OCDSB employee cannot be the chair or co-chair of a school council.

How will school council elections be administered this year?

The [2020 School Council Election Checklist](#) provides an overview of the steps in the election process. Here are a few things to consider:

- A school council election can be held as a stand alone event or at a school council meeting, but the date and time must be advertised.
- Review the school council constitution as a first step. Understand who can vote, the number and nature of positions on council and any unique election rules. Note that if the school council constitution has specific non-voting parent member positions, then an OCV parent would be entitled to seek election to the non-voting position(s)
- Parents can self-nominate or nominate others - this can be done on the

form or by email.

- Nominees seek election to the council as parent members. While they may express interest in a particular role on the council, the election is to the council itself. The election of officers (chair, co-chair) happens after the members of council have been duly elected. It should be made clear that people are running to be on council, not for a specific position.
- An OCV parent who wants to seek election to the home school council, can file their nomination as per the established process for all nominations. If, at the close of nominations and prior to the election, there are more nominations than eligible positions, the OCV parents would be considered ineligible for election and their names would be removed from the ballot.
- If, at the close of nominations and prior to election, there are some OCV parents nominated and some in person parents nominated for election to the council, and the total number of candidates is the same as the total number of positions, all parents can be acclaimed and will be voting members of the council.
- The voting will be done online. Principals have been provided with instructions about creating an online ballot using a Google Form. The form is designed to protect the confidentiality of the vote and ensure that each person can only vote once.
- Once the election has been held, the council will meet and will determine executive positions (Chair, Co-chairs, treasurer, secretary, etc). Anyone who was elected/acclaimed as a member of the council, is eligible to be elected/appointed to any executive position.

How will school councils hold meetings online?

Google Meet is available to every school council for the holding of school council meetings. Access to Google Meet is tied to an OCDSB email address. Every school council has an OCDSB email address (sc-schoolname@ocdsb.ca). If your school council does not know the password, please contact csc@ocdsb.ca to have the password reset. School principals are familiar with Google Meet and can assist with this. A resource guide has been prepared to help with planning virtual meetings. Please review the document [A Guide to Google Meet for School Councils](#) to get started.

Contact lists for parents of students attending a virtual school

School principals have been advised about how to create a distribution list in School Messenger which includes a list of parents/guardians whose children are attending OCV. Principals will be able to use this distribution list to ensure all information about school council meetings are shared with all families.

Additional Resources:

[Nomination](#) and [Self-Nomination](#) Forms
[2020 School Council Election Checklist](#)
[A Guide to Google Meet for School Councils](#)

Further School Council information can be found [on our website](#).

Board and Committee of the Whole Meetings

The next public [Committee of the Whole meeting](#) will be held on **October 13th, 2020**, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Watch the meeting [live here](#).

Upcoming Committee Meetings:

- [Parent Involvement Committee](#) - October 14th, 2020 - 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. - Zoom Meeting
- [Audit Committee](#) - October 21st, 2020 - 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. - Zoom Meeting
- [Indigenous Education Advisory Council](#) - October 22nd - 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. - Zoom Meeting

For a summary of our board meetings, read our Boardroom Newsbriefs [here](#).

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