

## **Dr. ROBERT PLAXTON**

### **SCHOOL COUNCIL BYLAWS**

#### **I. NAME:**

- (a) The name of the school council shall be "Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School Council of Lethbridge, Alberta".

#### **II. DEFINITIONS:**

- i. Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School shall hereinafter be referred to as the "School".
- ii. The Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School Council shall hereinafter be referred to as the "Council".
- iii. The Lethbridge School District #51 shall hereinafter be referred to as the "District".
- iv. The elected Board of Trustees of the Lethbridge School District #51 shall hereinafter be referred to as the "School Board".
- v. The students, parents and staff at the school along with the Council, the District, the School Board and the community of Lethbridge shall hereinafter be referred to as the "Stakeholders".

#### **III. Authority:**

The Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, specifically Section 22 of the School Act, and the School Councils Regulation which supports it.

#### **IV. OBJECTIVES:**

The objectives of Dr. Robert Plaxton School Council are as follows:

- (i) To advise the principal of the School and the School Board regarding all matters relating to the school.
- (ii) To perform any duty or function delegated to the School Council by the Board.
- (iii) To support the School and its efforts to focus teachers' time and School resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning.
- (iv) To consult with the principal so that he/she may ensure that the students in the School have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister of Education of the province of Alberta.
- (v) To work together with the School in establishing a common vision for our School.
- (vi) To acknowledge that parents have the ultimate responsibility for the education and development of their children.
- (vii) To develop a cooperative, collaborative and effective partnership among all stakeholders.
- (viii) To advocate student participation such that any disadvantage, be it physical, emotional, social or financial, will not exclude the participation of any student in school sponsored programs and activities.

#### **V. REQUIRED MEMBERSHIP:**

The membership of the Council shall consist of the following:

- (i) All parents (as defined in the school act) of students enrolled in the school.
- (ii) The Principal of the School, or his/her designate
- (iii) One teacher

VI. OPTIONAL MEMBERSHIP:

The membership may also include:

- i) Additional school staff
- ii) School board trustees and executive council
- iii) Members of the community with a clear vested interest in the educational programming of Dr. Robert Plaxton Elementary School. Such members must be approved annually by a majority vote of existing members.

VII. OFFICERS:

- (a) The officers of the Council shall consist of a:
  - (i) Chairperson
  - (ii) Vice Chairperson
  - (iii) Secretary
  - (iv) Treasurer
  - (v) District School Council Rep
- (b) Every parent member of the Council is eligible to be elected as an officer of the Council.
- (c) The term of office shall run from annual meeting to annual meeting.

VIII. THE OFFICERS RESPONSIBILITIES:

- (a) CHAIRPERSON - shall be responsible for:
  - (i) Calling and presiding over all general or special meetings.
  - (ii) Causing the agenda to be prepared and circulated for all meetings.
  - (iii) Acting as the official spokesperson for the Council.
  - (iv) Delegating any of the above noted duties to another member of the Council if necessary, to ensure the Council's affairs are properly handled.
  - (v) Preparing the annual report for the School Board according to the Board's requirements.
  - (vi) Ensures the code of ethics is being abided by at all meetings (assistance from the principal may be employed as necessary).
  - (vii) Has signing authority on the Council bank account.
- (b) VICE CHAIRPERSON - shall be responsible for:
  - (i) Assuming the duties of the Chairperson in his/her absence.
  - (ii) Assisting the Chairperson as required.
  - (iii) Reviewing the bylaws on an annual basis.
- (c) SECRETARY - shall be responsible for:
  - (i) Recording and maintaining an accurate record of all Council meetings.
  - (ii) Causing the minutes of the meeting to be typed and be made available to all members.
  - (iii) Maintaining all Council correspondence.
  - (iv) Ensuring official records are maintained at the School.
  - (iv) Maintaining a list of names, positions, and phone numbers of all officers.
  - (v) Ensuring a general meeting attendance list is kept.
- (d) TREASURER - shall be responsible for:
  - (i) Depositing all monies received in Council's bank account(s).
  - (ii) Making all disbursements for expenses incurred by the Council for its' business and maintaining supporting documentation.

- (iii) Maintaining records of all financial transactions of the Council and preparing written statements of the same for each Council meeting.
- (iv) Making sure each disbursement made is covered by a resolution, no later than the next Council meeting following the transaction.
- (v) Preparing the books and records for the appointed auditor no later than one month following the end of the fiscal year.
- (vi) Has signing authority on the Council bank account.

- (e) District School Council Representative – shall be responsible for:
  - i. Attending all district school council meetings and taking appropriate notes
  - ii. Reporting back to Dr. Robert Plaxton School Council relevant information pertaining to our group
  - iii. Attending school board meetings as required
  - iv. Report the annual report back to the school district (in collaboration with the chair).

IX. VACANCIES:

- (i) With the exception of the Council position filled by the Principal, the Council will arrange for qualified persons to fill vacancies until the next annual meeting (either by acclamation or vote).

X. COMMITTEES:

- (i) The Council may appoint committees consisting of members of the Council and others from the school community with either delegated or advisory responsibilities.

XI. MEETINGS:

- (i) The Council shall have a minimum of six regular meetings during the school year.
- (ii) Meetings will take place at the School.
- (iii) The first regular meeting of the Council shall be called not later than 30 days after the Annual Meeting.
- (iv) Special meetings of the Council may be called by a unanimous decision of the Officers or by written request of ten parents from the school community and notice of such meeting will be communicated via email a minimum of five school days in advance of said meeting.
- (v) The quorum for meetings of the Council shall be set at six members in addition to the principal or his/her designate, a majority of which shall be made up of parent members.
- (vi) Non Routine Agenda items (as determined by the school principal in consultation with the chair) requiring a vote need to be submitted to the chair no later than 48 hours prior to the council meeting.
- (vii) Only items affecting a majority of the stakeholders will be discussed at a council meeting, and no specific students, parents or staff members will be addressed.

XII. ANNUAL MEETING:

- (i) The Annual Meeting will be the first parent council of every year as noted in the school calendar.
- (ii) The Annual Meeting shall be held no later than 30 days after the start of the school year.
- (iii) The purpose of the Annual Meeting will be to:
  - (i) Present last year's Annual Report which includes the financial statements.
  - (ii) Elect new officers.

- (iii) Amendments to the bylaws if applicable.

#### XIII. Code of Ethics:

All school council members shall:

- (i) Abide by the legislation that governs them;
- (ii) Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity, and truth;
- (iii) Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community;
- (iv) Declare any conflict of interest
- (v) Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- (vi) Apply democratic principles;
- (vii) Consider the best interests of all students;
- (viii) Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.
- (ix) Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.
- (x) Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- (xi) Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community;
- (xii) Accept accountability for decisions.

#### XIV. VOTING PROCEDURES:

- (i) All parents of students enrolled at the School who are in attendance are entitled to vote at all meetings of the Council.
- (ii) Decisions at Council meetings will be made by taking a vote on a clearly stated motion which is seconded and passed by a majority.
- (iii) In the event of a split vote, five more minutes will be allotted for discussion, after which a secret ballot vote will be taken. The ballots will be counted by school staff who are present and the outcome will be decided by a majority. If the decision remains split, the motion is defeated.
- (iv) Once a motion has been passed or defeated the decision will not be disputed for at least the remainder of the current school year.

#### XV. ANNUAL REPORT:

- (i) The Annual Report will be prepared by the Chairperson.
- (ii) The Annual Report will include the following items:
  - (i) Previous year's activities.
  - (ii) Minutes of the Meetings and Meeting Dates.
  - (iii) The financial statements.
- (iii) The Council will report to the District and to the parents of School students.
- (iv) The Annual Report will be issued in accordance with District policies.

#### XVI. AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS:

- (a) Bylaws remain in effect from year to year unless amended at the Annual Meeting.
- (b) Any proposed change to the bylaw must be tabled at the May Council meeting.

- (c) Passage of a bylaw amendment must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the parents present at the annual meeting.

XVII. CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

- (a) In the case of conflict between council members, a committee will be set up to review the conflict and provide general council membership with recommendations for conflict resolution. This committee will consist of the Principal or his/her designate, the Chair person or Vice-Chair person and the council members who the conflict is between.
- (b) In the case of conflict between the Council and the School Board the conflict resolution procedures established by the School Board as required by Law will be adhered to.