St. Gabriel Education Centre

- September 12, 2023
- School Council Establishment Meeting
- 6:30 pm via Google Meet Link

In attendance - Yvonne Dutton, Sherry Gural, Sue Donovan, Sheenagh Donovan, Rena Yakemchuk, Tony LaGrange, Colleen LaGrange, Rachel LaGrange

Agenda

- Call to order - Principal Renee Trottier
    a. 6:34 pm
- Prayer and Acknowledgement - Principal Renee Trottier
- Introductions
- Principal Trottier will chair the meeting until a new chair is elected
- Approval of the agenda
    a. (Members may request that items be added to the agenda at this time)
        i. Nothing to add

- Establishment of St. Gabriel Education Centre's School Council (See Appendices):

Reviewed all the bylaws and governing documents for school councils

    a. St. Gabriel Education Centre School Council Bylaws
    b. Role and responsibilities of school councils, principals and teachers
    c. Code of Ethics for School Council
    d. Governance models and voting procedures
    e. Meeting dates and times for the year
    f. School Council Executive
        i. Positions on the Executive
        ii. Term of office of each member of the executive
    g. Alberta School Council Website
- Election of the members of the executive
    a. Chair - Yvonne Dutton by acclamation
    b. Vice Chair - Sue Donovan by acclamation
    c. Secretary - vacant
- Setting meeting dates and times - Tuesdays at 6:30
    a. Oct. 10, 2023
    b. Nov. 14, 2023
    c. Jan. 16, 2024

    d. Feb. 13, 2024
    e. Mar. 12, 2024
    f. April 9, 2024
    g. May 14, 2024
- Board representative, Trustee Joseph Becigneul
    a. Board report - Trustee Becingneul was absent. Asked Principal Trottier to report on new Board Chair, Lydia Yeomans, and new Vice-Chair, Greg Schell. Next meeting to decide which trustees are assigned to each school is in October.
- Principal's Report
    a. Update on enrollment
        i. 110 primary students with 128 students total currently enrolled
    b. Update on new staff members
        i. New counsellor, Monique Webb. Ken Kordyback replacing Harmony Terin while she's on maternity leave.
    c. Update on move
        i. Moving to EFJ Oct. 20 for the remainder of the year. Gave address on 15 Mission Avenue.
    d. Welcome Back Celebration, BBQ and Terry Fox Roll and Stroll
        i. Liturgy, catered BBQ and a walk through the Founder's Walk in St. Albert near the school. Reminder to RSVP using the Google Form
    e. School Council grant
        i. Yvonne mentioned that the ASCA website has information and a catalogue with sessions parents can book to use the money. Possibly partnering with another school for a presentation.

Yvonne mentioned her school council email address, stgabes@gmail.com and encouraged parents to volunteer to take on the role of the secretary.

Adjourn - 7:25

Appendices for School Council:

Roles and Responsibilities:

School councils are an important forum through which members of school communities play an advisory role in school improvement planning. Key factors in collaborative relationships are building meaningful, two-way communication and supporting respectful interactions among education partners.

School council is a structured group of parents, principals, teachers, secondary students and community representatives whose purpose is to advise the principal and the school board respecting matters relating to the school. It is a means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning.

A school council is a vehicle to support meaningful parental involvement in decisions that affect the school and its operations. The school council provides the venue for parents to reflect the wishes of the broader community for the education of its students and to actively participate in giving advice and support to the principal in the operations of the school. The actual decision-making authority of the school council is limited to:

- determining the school council's operating procedures
- setting policies to govern school council activities at the school level, as described in the *Education Act*
- planning engagement activities that align with the school council's legislated purpose
- choosing to provide advice to the principal and school board

What School Councils are Not

As the primary role is advisory, school councils are not eligible to incorporate as societies. It is not the primary intent of school councils to fundraise or lobby.

Roles that are not to be taken on by a school council include:

- school governance
- employment issues
- school management
- listening to complaints

Roles continued . . .

- **Principal** • Accountable to senior admin and Board of Trustees for school activities and budgets • Set meeting dates and agenda items with Chairs • Provide administrative support and advice • Retain hard copies of agendas and minutes for seven years.
- **Chair** • Is familiar with the council, its roles and handbook • Consult with principals to set agenda items and meeting dates • Ensure clear guidelines for respectful participation is in place • Call and run meetings and solicit input; use clear language to handle difficult situations • Ensure

that minutes are recorded and maintained • Oversee all committees • Follow existing council bylaws and procedures; provide information to members • Attend parent-trustee forums (or send delegates) and report on meeting for councils • Mentor vice-chairs to become chairs • Perform other duties as principals request.

- **Vice-Chair** • Run meetings in chairs' absence • Assist chairs with duties • Oversee and monitor sub-committees • Consult with chairs and principals to review bylaws and operating procedures • Promote teamwork and help run meetings • Perform other duties upon the request of principals and chair
- **Secretary** • Record and distribute minutes to chairs and principals before the next meeting for review, approval and inclusion in agendas • Through principals: • Notify school communities of meetings and activities • Post minutes for upcoming meetings on websites or email to parents • Maintain files and minutes in a binder for archives and audits • Transfer annual files and year-end reports to new executives
- **Role of teachers** - Councils must include at least one teacher. Teacher representatives may not vote in council elections or decisions. More than one teacher can share this responsibility on a rotational basis. Teachers may: 1. Share classroom best practices 2. Highlight special or significant learning opportunities/events in the school 3. Give presentations or have students present to the council 4. Provide an instructional perspective in discussions 5. Support the principal in matters related to teaching and learning.
- **Role of the Board of Trustees** - To follow Alberta Education procedures, boards must provide councils: • Liability insurance • Opportunities for meaningful input on decisions about education • Appeal and conflict resolution procedures • Support for councils' work • Accurate and timely information.
- **Student -** The student is the centre of the education system and, in high school, has an important role to play as a participant on the school council. A student presents the student perspective on issues, helps with school policies, seeks other students' views to share with the school council and communicates the school council's information to fellow students.

Code of Ethics for School Councils:

A Code of Ethics guides councils' behaviour and protects the integrity of their position of trust. Members who act on behalf of a school council, must:

- Abide by the legislation that governs school councils
- Live by the school's, council's and district's mission
- Become familiar and act in accordance with school and district policies
- Practice the highest standard of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth
- Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community
- Declare any conflict of interest
- Encourage a positive atmosphere in which others value and encourage individual contributions
- Apply democratic principles
- Consider the best interests of all students
- Respect the confidential nature of some school business and the limitations this may place on the operation of a school council
- Not disclose confidential information
- Limit discussion at meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole • Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community
- Respect decisions made collectively
- Not accept payments for council activities.

Governance and Voting Procedures

School councils choose the model of governance that will work best for their communities and indicate the selected model in their operating procedures. Two common models are the ***town hall*** model and the ***representative*** model.

In a ***town hall*** model, decisions are made at regular meetings open to the entire school community and the executive members of the school council act only to carry out the wishes of the assembly. All parents that attend meetings are welcome to participate and vote. Individuals are elected or appointed (executive and others) to manage meetings and coordinate school council business.

A ***representative*** model acts like a board of directors to conduct the day-to-day business and reports back to the wider school community one or more times a year. The school community elects or appoints individuals to specific positions (representing a particular responsibility or activity area). Only individuals (parents, staff, students, community members) that are designated will have a vote and are considered to be "the school council." All other attendees are welcome to attend, and participate in discussion at meetings but are not eligible to vote.

Many school councils have taken aspects of each model and created a ***combined*** model that reflects their community and serves their purposes. Some meetings, or specific agenda items, may allow for all attendees to participate and vote.

Voting will be as per Robert's Rules of Order https://robertsrules.com/

Links to resources referenced in the Appendices:

Alberta School Councils
School Council Resource Guide
School Council Provincial Regulation Guide
School Council Provincial Regulation - Education Act Section 55