

Constitution for Half Moon Bay Public School Council

Article 1: Name

The name of the organization shall be the Half Moon Bay Public School Council. For the purposes of this document, it shall be referred to as HMBSC. This organization shall be constituted in accordance with directives set out in Ontario Regulation 612/00 and 613/00 issued under the Education Act and in accordance with the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board Policy.

Article 2: Mission Statement

Half Moon Bay Public School Council organizes and executes social and educational activities. Half Moon Bay Public Council represents parents and offers their opinions and preferences to the school administration. Council also fundraises in order to provide each student with the resources needed for the best education possible.

Article 3: Purpose

The purpose of the HMBSC shall be to support students, parents, and staff (including teachers, the administration, and other school staff) in fostering a caring, creative, collaborative, and community-based environment at Half Moon Bay Public School. Our goal is to create an environment that allows students to thrive, parents to be engaged, and teachers to be supported in caring for and educating all students. To accomplish this, HMBSC will undertake the following non-exhaustive list of activities:

- Act as a liaison between the parent community and staff. HMBSC members will be open and available to parents and staff for dialogue and discussions on issues that concern the school, its staff, and its students.
- Providing advice and/or guidance to the school staff on a variety of topics throughout the year.
- Communicate with parents directly about council work and activities.
- Raising funds to enhance student learning, and parent participation.
- Running activities for the benefit of students and staff. Some examples would be social activities such as dances, workshops for students or parents, or in class presentations from external organizations.
- Organizing volunteers for various school or HMBSC activities.

Article 4: Membership

HMBSC shall be composed of parents/guardians, teachers, and school administration. Students and/or community representatives can be included as well, at the request of council or the principal. A minimum of 6 parents/guardians are required. While no maximum is being imposed at the time of authorship, HMBSC can amend the constitution to impose a maximum, if it is determined that too many members are preventing HMBSC from accomplishing its purpose, as outlined in Article 3 of this document. Furthermore, there must be a majority of parents/guardians on the HMBSC.

The composition is as follows:

- No less than 6 parents/guardians
- The Principal and Vice-Principal
- A teacher, selected by the school's teaching staff (this duty may be divided between two teachers)
- An administrative staff member selected by the administrative staff at the school
- A student, selected by the Principal (optional)
- A community representative (optional – a person in the community who is not a parent/guardian of a student, or a member of the school staff)

Once the HMBSC is formed for a year, voting members will vote on the Executive positions, which are as follows:

- Chair and/or Co-Chairs (maximum of 2)
- Vice Chair (when a single Chair is elected)
- Treasurer
- Secretary

Article 5: Election / Nomination of Parent/Guardian Members:

Elections for HMBSC will take place near the start of the school year, in accordance with Ontario Regulation 612/00.

The principal shall set up a date for elections to occur, and shall ensure the parent community is aware of that date at least 2 weeks in advance.

Parents wishing to be a candidate for an executive position will submit that request to the principal in writing within that period.

On the date of elections, the outgoing Chair/Co-Chair shall begin the meeting. Any outstanding items from the previous year shall be concluded, and the Chair/Co-Chair shall officially dissolve the outgoing HMBSC.

All persons present wishing to be a part of the incoming HMBSC must be present, and state their wish. The principal or a designate shall record names and contact information. These people shall now be the HMBSC for the new school year.

Once the HMBSC is in place, voting for executive positions can take place, if necessary. Successful candidates to an executive position must win a simple majority (50%+1) of voting members.

The election can be cast publicly by show of hands, or by secret ballot at the discretion of the Principal (who is a non-voting member). If the latter option is chosen, the principal or a designate will collect and count the ballots.

Each candidate shall have a brief opportunity prior to the vote to address the HMBSC.

If there has only been one name put forward for an executive position, the Principal can mention this, and the council can vote to acclaim that person by show of hands.

Should an executive position become vacant during the year, they can be filled by vote at the next HMBSC meeting.

Should a committee be unable to fulfill its duties during the year, the Chair/Co-Chair can request new members join that committee.

Article 6: Election of Other Members

The election of staff member(s) of the Parent Council shall occur within the first 30 days of the school year.

Staff at the school other than the principal or vice-principal can vote for the teacher representative on Parent Council.

Non-teaching employees at the school other than the principal or vice-principal can vote for the non-teaching representative on Parent Council.

In the event of a vacancy that requires fulfillment after the initial election process, the Parent Council will decide by majority consensus the course of action.

Article 7: Term of Office

All members of HMBSC and the Executive are elected for a one-year term only.

No member can hold the same executive position longer than 3 years, unless it is by unanimous decision of the incoming HMBSC members.

Article 8: Remuneration

A person shall not receive any remuneration for serving as a member or Executive of the HMBSC.

Article 9: Meetings

A minimum of 5 meetings must occur during the year (after the elections).

Dates and times are to be proposed by the Chair/Co-Chair, and approved by members.

All dates, times, and locations of meetings are to be available to all parents in advance of the meetings.

Regular meetings shall take place at Half Moon Bay Public School unless the Principal can provide a reason why another location should be used for a given meeting.

For any votes to take place, quorum must be achieved at the meeting, as defined in By-Law #2.

The agenda, as set by the Chair/Co-Chair, shall be available to all members and parents in advance of each meeting through the school newsletter, and through HMBSC communications channels.

All meetings are open to the entire parent community.

At the beginning of each meeting, the minutes from the previous meeting must be voted and approved.

Whenever possible, HMBSC should all be in agreement on a decision to be made.

Major agenda items that will require a vote should be emphasized in the agenda, such that members, and parents, can have their positions determined in advance. This will help limit the length of time a discussion is held before a vote.

If an issue is too large to discuss at a regular meeting, a special meeting can be requested. If a 2/3rds majority of council members agree, a date and time for the special meeting can be set.

Article 10: Committees/Sub-Committees

Further to the Executive committee, other positions or committees can be formed by members on an ad hoc basis. Some examples of this are communications representative, Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) representative, fundraising committee, parent involvement committee, and lunch program committee. These committees can choose to elect a Chair to speak for them at general council meetings.

Committees have ownership and the responsibility to act within their mandate with the exception of needing to request funds from Parent Council as required. All planning, discussion, and work towards executing their mandate must take place within the working sessions of the committees. Only high level updates shall be brought forward to Parent Council meetings. Any input from the larger membership shall be gathered external to Council meetings. The exception to this rule is requests for and decisions on funding requirements.

Fundraising Sub-Committee

There will be a sub-committee of Parent Council that will include Parent Council members and staff representatives. This group will:

- Establish the fundraising goals and schedule of fundraising events for the year.
- Be responsible for all monies raised by the Parent Council in accordance with Board Policy and Procedures; and ensure that funds raised are given to the Treasurer, who in turn will work with the Co-Chairs to ensure all policies/procedures are complied with provide the council with a financial report upon completion of the fundraising event.

Other Sub-Committees

There will be other sub-committees that are struck from time-to-time, on the instruction of the Parent Council. The parameters for any sub-committee will be discussed and approved by the Parent Council.

Article 11: Voting

Votes should always take place in person at a scheduled meeting. Quorum must be achieved, as outlined in By-Law #2, for a vote to be considered valid. The Chair/Co-Chair shall conduct votes, but do not have to be the proposing member, or the seconder. A vote must have one member propose and a second member “second” it before the HMBSC can vote. Votes should be by show of hands. Results of votes must be recorded in the meeting minutes.

Voting can take place via email, provided the conditions outlined below are met, however this option should be used sparingly and only when a need arises that cannot wait for the next scheduled meeting.

- A motion is proposed by a member, and seconded by another
- More than 50% of voting members vote on the motion via email (thus ensuring a quorum)
- A time limit of 3 days is imposed on email voting. If the motion is not approved (or not approved) within that time, the motion will be considered to not pass

When the email motion is proposed, the initial email along with the 'seconding' email must go to all of council. Following that, individual votes should be sent only to the Co-Chairs, one of whom must self-identify as the person responsible for managing the voting. This way every council member does not have to receive each vote and the integrity of the voting cannot be questioned. When an outcome is reached or the time for voting has expired, the individual receiving the ballots will contact all of council to advise on if the motion was approved or not approved, and that member will keep all email ballots in the event they are requested. If quorum is reached, the benchmark is 50%+1 to approve a vote. If quorum is not reached then the vote is considered to have been unable to take place. As such, another vote can be called in an attempt to achieve quorum

Article 12: Financial Records

The Fiscal year shall be from September 1 to August 31 of the following calendar year.

All funds raised during the fiscal year must be spent within that fiscal year, unless one of the following situations is deemed active:

- * Long-term fundraising for a large-scale goal
- * Certain funds to be carried over to the next school year for the next council to get started

For revenues raised by the Parent Council – monies will be deposited in a bank account set up specifically for HMBSC, following the Board's/school's financial policies and procedures.

All money raised by council will be spent in accordance to the spending strategy. All resources over \$1,000 will be discussed with council prior to the purchase. The administration will present council with a record of where the funds were spent over the school year. This shall take place on or before the last meeting of the school year.

Any expenditures which are outside the spending strategy must be discussed and voted in favour of at a council meeting.

All cheques issued require two signatures. One from the Treasurer, and a second from another authorized signee. In the case of the Treasurer's absence, two other authorized signatures can be used. Under no circumstances can relatives or partners be granted signing authority at the same time.

Two scheduled financial statement reviews shall take place during the school year. In each case, the Treasurer will coordinate a time to present the statements to two non-executive members of council. It is recommended that these reviews take place once around winter break and once near the end of the school year.

Should a member have reason to see the financial statements at other times, a request will be made to the Treasurer and Co-Chairs so a vote can be held. Should council vote 50%+1 the financial statements will need to be made available to two non-executive members of council within one week of the vote. The purpose of this clause is to ensure that the Treasurer is not frequently being asked to provide the statements to many members at different times.

Article 13: Incorporation

HMBSC shall not be incorporated.

Article 14: Policies

From time to time it may be determined that HMBSC would like to have a policy to help guide its activities. These policies may be enacted by HMBSC so long as it does not contravene this constitution, any existing policies of the Board or Ministry, or laws. A member can put forward a policy proposal to be discussed and voted on at any given meeting.

Article 15: Amending Process

This constitution shall be enacted to govern the affairs of HMBSC.

Once enacted, proposals to amend this constitution shall only be accepted at the first meeting after the election of a new HMBSC, and at the first meeting in the new calendar year.

For an amendment to be considered, it must be provided to HMBSC members for review no later than 15 days prior to the next meeting where amendment proposals are allowed.

Amendments to this constitution shall require a 2/3rds majority of voting members' approval.

Amendments, once approved, will take effect immediately.

HALF MOON BAY PUBLIC SCHOOL COUNCIL BY-LAWS

1. Meetings

Parent Council will establish its meeting schedule at its first meeting of the year in September. Meetings will normally take place on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m. Meeting duration shall normally be no longer than 1.5 hours. The next meeting date is confirmed and adjusted if required each month.

2. Quorum

For Quorum to be reached, the following must hold:

- * A majority of the current members of HMBSC must be present
- * A majority of the members present shall be parents/guardians
- * At least 50% of the executive are present

If for a period of three consecutive regularly scheduled meetings a quorum fails to exist, a membership review committee shall be struck to make recommendations on how to proceed.

3. Officers & Responsibilities

In addition to the mandated chair or co-chair the council's parent/guardian members will also nominate and acclaim or elect a Secretary and a Treasurer at the meeting where other elections are taking place.

The following lists duties or responsibilities of the officers.

Chair/Co-Chair:

- * Arranges for meetings, prepares agendas, and chairs meetings
- * Ensures that meeting minutes are recorded and kept in a safe place for a minimum of four years
- * Participates as ex-officio member on council committees
- * Communicates with the school principal on behalf of council
- * Maintains the constitution and ensures an annual review by the council
- * Communicates with the school community on a regular basis and ensures that parents/guardians of all students are consulted on matters under consideration
- * Facilitates the resolution of conflicts
- * Consults with senior board staff and trustees (as required)

- * Prepares an annual report and financial statements to be submitted to the principal for distribution to the school community and the OCDSB
- * Functions as a signing authority with Treasurer

Vice-Chair (when elected):

- * Assists the Chair in performing their duties
- * Run meetings when the Chair is unavailable
- * Acts as a third signing authority, along with the Chair and Treasurer

Treasurer:

- * Maintain financial and bank records for HMBSC
- * Deposit all incoming funds without delay into the HMBSC bank account
- * Provide a current account of the HMBSC financial position at all scheduled meetings
- * Be the primary signatory on all outgoing cheques (always requiring a second signature from the Chair/Co-Chair/Vice-Chair)
- * Provide a written financial report to be included in the annual report, as required by Ontario regulation 612/00 section 24.

Secretary:

- * Act as the official record keeper for the HMBSC
- * Take minutes of all council meetings held, including incorporating reports provided by members
- * Take attendance at meetings
- * Record the outcomes of votes (identify if motion was passed (voted in) or not)
- * Provide minutes to council members during the period between meetings
- * Once minutes are approved, they are to be made publicly available to the parent community

Committee Chairs:

- * Should a committee elect a Chair, that person will be responsible for speaking on that committee's activities at each meeting
- * Facilitating that committee's work by assisting in scheduling meetings

Communications reps:

- * Maintain direct communications channels between HMBSC and parents including (if applicable):
 - HMBSC website
 - Email account
 - Facebook page
 - Twitter account
- * Monitor the HMBSC email account and contact necessary members to answer parent questions promptly and accurately
- * Ensure this constitution is available to the parent community
- * Assist HMBSC members and committees with communicating to parents about various activities including upcoming events, fundraising goals, etc.

Members at Large:

- * Contribute to school and school council discussions
- * Solicit views of other parents/guardians and community members to share with the council
- * Participate on council committees
- * Observe the council's code of ethics and constitution
- * Encourage parents/guardians and community members to participate in events and programs

Community Representative (when applicable):

- * Contribute to school and school council discussions
- * Represent the community's perspective and helps build partnerships and links between the school and the community
- * Participate on council committees
- * Observe the council's code of ethics and constitution
- * Encourage parents/guardians and community members to participate in events and programs

Student representative (when applicable):

- * Contribute to school and school council discussions
- * Solicit views of students to share with the council
- * Participate on council committees
- * Observe the council's code of ethics and constitution
- * Communicate with students on behalf of the council

School Staff:

- * Contribute to school and school council discussions
- * Solicit views from staff to share with the council
- * Participate on council committees
- * Observe the council's code of ethics and constitution
- * Communications with staff on behalf of the council

School Principal:

- * Seeks the input of the school council on school improvement planning, school budgets, and community partnerships
- * Distributes and posts council communications to parents/guardians (including the annual report)
- * Facilitates annual school council elections
- * Attends all school council meetings or appoints a vice-principal delegate when required
- * Participate on council committees
- * Supports and promotes the council's activities and acts as a resource on by-laws, regulations, and policies. Forwards relevant information from the OCDSB and the Ministry to the council
- * Considers each recommendation made by the school council and advises the council of the action taken in response to the recommendation
- * Solicits views of the school council on important educational issues such as: the development of school policies and guidelines regarding student achievement; the accountability of the

education system to parents (school code of conduct, dress code); school action plans for improvement and the communication of those plans to the public; and Board policies (as directed)

- * Communicates with the council chair
- * Observes the council's code of ethics and established bylaws
- * Encourages parents/guardians and community members to participate in events and programs

4. Selection of Officers and Filling Vacancies

The method selection and filling vacancies is specified in Article 5 of the Constitution.

5. Duties of Members

Attendance. The Parent council does not wish to spell out expectations and consequences of extended absences.

Standards of conduct. The following is a sample code of conduct for a meeting:

- One person shall speak at a time.
- No abusive language or personal remarks.
- Confidential issues shall not be discussed.
- Speakers shall limit comments to a reasonable time. Committee Leads shall only provide updates of their efforts; Council meetings shall not be used as working sessions for Committees to make decisions on planning items.
- Speakers shall limit comments to the topic under discussion.
- Use appropriate communications channels when questions arise.
- Accept accountability for decisions.
- Declare any conflict of interest.
- Focus on the best interest of all students.

Removal clause. In rare cases a member may have to be removed from Parent Council.

A member of Parent Council may be removed for:

- behavior that regularly prevents the Parent Council from carrying out its responsibilities;
- habitually failing in performing the duties of a member;
- failing to uphold the Constitution or comply with the By-laws of the Parent Council;
- engaging in activities deemed to be detrimental to the interests, or contrary to the purposes, of the Parent Council.

The permanent removal of a member from Parent Council requires 2/3 of the votes cast by voting members of the Parent Council at a Parent Council meeting attended by not less than 80% of the Parent Council.

6. Decision Making Process

Members of Parent Council will attempt to make decisions by consensus. If a consensus is not possible voting using ballots or a show of hands, with a majority win, will make the decision.

There may be times where decisions are required to be made outside of the regular meeting. In these cases, members' input and vote may be obtained via electronic survey, telephone, or electronic mail. A report of any decisions made outside of the regular council meeting will be reported on at the next available meeting.

7. Conflict Resolution

The Parent Council will make every effort to solve its internal disputes in a timely way using the following process.

Step 1: Identify the source of the conflict. The more information you have about the cause of the conflict, the more easily you can help to resolve it. To get the information you need, use a series of questions to identify the cause, like, "When did you feel upset?" "Do you see a relationship between that and this incident?" "How did this incident begin?" Both parties must share their side of the story.

Step 2: Look beyond the incident. Often, it is not the situation but the perspective on the situation that causes anger to fester and ultimately leads to a shouting match or other visible—and disruptive—evidence of a conflict. The source of the conflict might be a minor problem that occurred months before, but the level of stress has grown to the point where the two parties have begun attacking each other personally instead of addressing the real problem.

Step 3: Request solutions. After getting each party's viewpoint on the conflict, the next step is to get each to identify how the situation could be changed. Again, question the parties to solicit their ideas: "How can you make things better between you?" Steer the discussion away from finger pointing and toward ways of resolving the conflict.

Step 4: Identify solutions both disputants can support. Identify for the most acceptable course of action. Point out the merits of various ideas, not only from each other's perspective, but in terms of the benefits to the organization.

Step 5: Agreement. The two parties must shake hands and agree to one of the alternatives identified in Step 4.

8. Conflict of Interest

It is expected that any individual with a conflict of interest with respect to any issue shall immediately notify the Parent Council, who will then decide on that individual's further participation on the issue.

Individuals employed at Half Moon Bay Public School cannot serve as parent members of the Parent Council.

Employees of the OCDSB wishing to serve as parent or community members must inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent members and the Parent Council, of that employment.

OCDSB employees cannot serve as Chair or Co-Chair.

9. Amending Process:

Amendments to By-laws require a majority vote.