



# **Roch Carrier Elementary School**

## **School Council Constitution**

**Roch Carrier Elementary School Council Constitution**

**Record of Amendments**

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<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1.0 DRAFT	October 27, 2005	Draft Document released for review.
1.0 FINAL	January 10, 2006	Revised draft document. Clarifications regarding the definition of committees. Added article on voting rights. Other minor changes.
1.1 Amended	October 3, 2006	As approved by council on this date, added Article XVII – Gifts from Council.
1.2 Amended	October 2007	As approved by council changes to Article V, increased minimum members from five to seven. Added section of “may consist of”.

Originals signed by:

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David Miskelly

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Date

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Susan Wehrmann

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Date

Roch Carrier Elementary School Council Constitution

Co-Chair

Co-Chair

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## Roch Carrier Elementary School Council Constitution

### ARTICLE I – Name

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The organization will be called the Roch Carrier Elementary School Council, hereinafter referred to as the Council.

### ARTICLE II - Purpose

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The objectives of the Council are:

- to promote a strong relationship between home, school and the wider community served by the school, and to enhance educational opportunities for all students;
- to encourage parents/guardians to participate in their children's education, including development of extra-curricular community activities;
- to seek the views and opinions of the school community on the operation of the School and the programs and services provided, including but not limited to capital improvements, budgetary, and extra-curricular activities;
- to provide advice to the Principal and, when required, to the Ottawa Carleton District School Board and/or its senior staff, and to the local elected Trustee on the development and implementation of policies, programs and services affecting the School.

### ARTICLE III – Responsibilities

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1. School Councils are advisory bodies. The Council may advise the School Principal and/or the School Board, on any matter that the Council has identified as a priority, including but not limited to those listed below:
  - Local school year calendar.
  - Student code of conduct.
  - Curriculum and program goals and priorities.
  - Responses to the School or Board to achievement in provincial and Board assessment programs.
  - Preparation of the School Profile.
  - Principal Profile, input concerning the qualities, skills, attitudes and training/education for the Board and administration to consider in the selection of school principals.
  - School budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans.
  - School-community communication strategies.
  - Methods of reporting to parents/guardians and the school community
  - Extra-curricular activities in the School.
  - School-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreation and nutrition programs.
  - Community use of School facilities.
  - Local co-ordination of services for children and youth.
  - Development, implementation and review of Board policies at the local level.
2. Council members shall maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not a forum for discussion about individual parents/guardians, students, staff, trustees or other Council members. Under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (1989), Councils cannot access information on individual students and staff. Individual members of the school community shall deal directly with the staff members and/or the Principal to resolve specific concerns.

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3. In addition to its advisory responsibilities, the Council:
  - Shall establish its goals, priorities, and procedures.
  - May organise information and training sessions to enable members of the Council to develop their skills as Council members.
  - Shall promote the best interests of the school community as a whole.

### **ARTICLE IV- Affiliations**

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1. The Council may seek affiliation with other organizations that have similar purposes.
2. The Council may affiliate and pay membership dues to the Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Councils, or any other "umbrella" organization of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board school councils.

### **ARTICLE V – Members**

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1. The Council will consist of no less than seven members, being:
  - A minimum of five executive members, consisting of parents/guardians of students who are or will be in the electoral year enrolled or registered in the school, elected by the parents/ guardians.
  - The School Principal.
  - A teacher or teachers selected by the members of the teaching staff.

The Council may include the following as members:

- The School Vice Principal, who may represent a teacher (if applicable to their position)
  - An administrative / support staff member elected by the administrative / support staff.
  - A student representative appointed by the Principal if the Principal determines, after consulting with other members of the Council, that the Council should include a student.
  - A community representative appointed by the Council, with preference given to an individual not currently a parent of a child at the school.
2. An executive member who has been absent for 3 consecutive meetings without due cause, shall be deemed to have resigned their position at the beginning of the third meeting. This reduced number of executive members will then be used to determine quorum.
  3. The Council may expand membership but parents/ guardians must always hold the majority of seats.
  4. The composition of the Council should attempt to reflect the diversity of the community served by the school.
  5. For any seats which remain unfilled or become vacant, the Council will continue to seek qualified persons to fill such seats. If the Council consists of fewer than seven members, it shall be allowed to function provided every attempt has been made to fill all positions.

### **ARTICLE VI- Voting**

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Voting at council meetings may only be performed by the following persons, and except where indicated, shall be counted as one vote:

- Executive members (including officers) are entitled to one vote apiece.

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- The community representative is entitled to one vote.
- The teacher representative (which may or may not be the Vice Principal as a teacher) is entitled to one vote. In the event that more than one teacher representative is present, they will represent one vote as a whole.
- The support / administration staff representative is entitled to one vote. In the event that more than one representative is present, they will represent one vote as a whole.
- The student representative is entitled to one vote.
- The School Principal and/or Vice Principal (not representing the teachers) may not vote at council meetings, but may voice their support/rejection/concerns prior to the vote being conducted.
- Parents/guardians present at the meeting who are not executive members may not vote at council meetings, but may voice their support/rejection/concerns prior to the vote being conducted.
- Other attendees at the meeting (generally community members or board staff) who do not fit into one of the above criteria may not vote at council meetings, but may voice their support/rejection/concerns prior to the vote being conducted.

### **ARTICLE VII – Eligibility**

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1. Board employees are eligible for election to a position as a parent/guardian representative on any Council at a school where their children are enrolled or registered unless they are employed in that school. Board employees who are eligible to run for election as parent/guardian representatives must take reasonable steps to inform people qualified to vote in the election of parent /guardian members of their employment. Election of Board employees who are eligible under this provision entitles them to express their views as would any other parent/guardian on Council.
2. A Board employee elected as a parent/guardian member of Council may not serve as Chair of the Council.
3. A Board employee may not be appointed as a community representative to Council unless:
  - a) he/she is not employed at that school, and
  - b) the other members of the Council have been informed of the person's employment prior to the appointment.
4. While Trustees may attend Council meetings as observers, they are not eligible to be members of Councils in the Board in which they serve.

### **ARTICLE VIII – Officers**

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1. The Officers shall be two Co-Chairs, a Secretary, and Treasurer. The duties of the Officers, and the duties of the Principal in relation to the Council, and executive members of the Council, are set forth in Appendix A to this Constitution.
2. Members shall remain in office until their successors are elected or appointed.

### **ARTICLE IX – Meetings**

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1. There will be one Annual General Meeting in October of each year, open to all members of the school's community. At this meeting, the Council may wish to appoint a Nominating Committee to be responsible for seeking nominations for the following year.

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2. Regular meetings of the Council will be held at the School at least four times each school year. If the meeting is to be held elsewhere, the location shall be accessible to the public. The first meeting each year shall be held within 35 calendar days of the beginning of the school year. Notice of meetings will be posted on the School's notice boards, and will be circulated to parents/guardians in the School's newsletter.
3. Special meetings of the Council may be held at the discretion of the Co-Chairs.
4. To form a quorum, as required for a meeting of the Council:
  - a) a majority of the current members of the Council shall be present at the meeting; and
  - b) a majority of the members present shall be parent/guardian members.
5. The preferable decision-making model for the Council is consensus. However, it is recognised that voting may be required from time to time.
6. Regular meetings of the Council will be open to all members of the School's community, and no such member may be excluded from the meeting except for disruptive behaviour.
7. From time to time, votes may be required before the next scheduled meeting. With the approval of Council, the Secretary may conduct an e-mail/phone vote of all Council members and record the results as if the vote had been held at a regularly scheduled meeting. Copies of the email votes and/or a list of the individual voting results will be maintained in the Council minute book. As with all other votes, parent/guardian votes must form the majority. A reasonable attempt must be made to contact all members and quorum must be met.
8. Minutes will be taken at all meetings, and they will be made available to the school community.

### **ARTICLE X- Committees**

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The Council may establish permanent standing committees, ad hoc committees or other special purpose committees, to make recommendations to the Council, subject to the following:

- a) Each committee should include at least one parent/guardian member of the Council. If a Council member is not available or willing, approval for this must be obtained from the Council.
- b) Such committees may include persons who are not members of the Council.
- c) Council members will approve the chair of any committee.
- d) Each committee meeting is held in public, and notice of the dates, times and locations of such meetings is provided at the Council meeting immediately prior to the planned meeting of the committee.
- e) Chairs of the committee, or a representative, should provide a written summary and / or minutes of all meetings at the next scheduled Council meeting. These documents shall be provided to the Council Secretary.

Specific committees that should be created include a Budget committee to setup revenues and expenditures, and the Fund Raising committee to co-ordinate the various activities and goals for the year. These committees are further described in Appendix C: Budget Process.

### **ARTICLE XI – Finance & Budget**

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1. All finances will come under direct purview of the Treasurer. Appendix B outlines Financial Guidelines for the Council. The Council may choose to follow the Budget Process and timelines described in Appendix C.
2. The Treasurer and two Co-Chairs will have bank signing authority. All cheques issued by Council must be signed by two out of three of these individuals. A signing officer may not be a co-signature for a cheque on which he/she is the payee.

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3. A preliminary budget should be set forth every spring in preparation for the incoming Council.

### **ARTICLE XII – Elections**

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1. Elections to Council shall be held on an annual basis in accordance with Board Procedure PR.509.SCO: School Council Elections, Constitution and By-Laws.
2. Elections/appointments of members of Council, including teaching, non-teaching and student members, shall be held annually within 35 calendar days of the beginning of each school year. An election of parent/guardian members shall be held on a date that is fixed by the Co-Chairs of the Council, in consultation with the Principal of the school.
3. A member of Council may be re-elected or re-appointed.
4. Council may appoint a Nominating Committee to be responsible for seeking parent nominations to the Council for the following year. All persons nominated must indicate their acceptance.
5. Council may require parent/guardian candidates to prepare and submit, on a legibly completed standard form, a brief summary of their experience and interest in the office to which they are seeking election.
6. Notice of the elections will be given to the various electoral groups (parents/guardians, teaching staff, administrative and support staff and students) at least two weeks in advance of the election. In accordance with Policy P.014.SCO, Attachment 2, section 1.23 d) ii), the Principal is responsible for giving notice of the date, time and location of the parent/guardian election to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the School, both by giving the notice to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian and by posting the notice in the School in a location that is accessible to parents/ guardians.
7. Elections for each electoral group will be held at the School on a date publicised in advance.
8. Where Council chooses to hold the parent election at a meeting, nominations will be accepted until the time voting begins, provided the person nominated is present and agrees, or if the person is not present his/her written consent is delivered to the Chair of the election meeting.
9. For any positions for which the exact number of candidates required, or fewer, are nominated, the election will be declared by acclamation.
10. In the case of a tie vote, the tied candidates will draw lots to determine the election.
11. All elections will be conducted by secret ballot, and only the name of the successful candidate and the total number of votes cast will be announced.
12. Voting in an election shall be open to all members of the representative groups. Voting by proxy is not allowed.
13. Election or appointment in accordance with this procedure will fill a vacancy in the membership of Council during the year.

### **ARTICLE XIII – Parliamentary Authority**

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The rules contained in The Modern Edition of Robert's Rules of Order (1989) will govern the conduct of meetings of the Council in all cases where they are applicable, and where they are consistent with any bylaws or special rules the Council may adopt from time to time.

## **ARTICLE XIV – Amendments**

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This Constitution may be amended by approval of a motion by a two-thirds majority of members of Council present and voting at a meeting called for that purpose, provided that at least two weeks' notice is given for such a motion. Details of the proposed amendment must be circulated to all members with that notice.

## **ARTICLE XV – Conflict Resolution**

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The School Council should resolve disagreements collaboratively and through consensus or voting at the local level. In the event that a resolution is not attained at the local level, the Chair or Principal will request the appropriate Superintendent of Schools to mediate the disagreement. If a resolution is not attained through the Superintendent of Schools, the Chair or Principal will refer the matter to the Director of Education.

## **ARTICLE XVI – Conflict of Interest**

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1. If a Council member could gain financially or otherwise benefit personally from a decision made by the Council, then that member should declare a “conflict of interest” and not vote.
2. Council members should not accept gifts from outside organizations/businesses as this could be construed as an incentive to use their influence with students, parents and staff.

## **ARTICLE XVII – Gifts from Council**

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1. In the event of the death of a current student or member of their household or the death of a current staff member, their partner, or child, Roch Carrier School Council will donate \$100 to a charity of council's choice. This does not have to be voted on by council.
2. Every school year the Roch Carrier School Council will donate a minimum of \$200 to a Beacon School of their choice in consultation with the principal. These funds will be distributed any time during the current school year. This is done provided sufficient funds are available.

## **APPENDIX A – Duties of Officers and Executive Members**

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The following are the roles and responsibilities fulfilled by members of the Council.

### ***School Council as a Whole***

- Ensures that the minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained. The minutes should include, or have attached to them, any advice provided in writing to the Principal, Board and/or senior staff by the Council, and the written response or responses in reply.
- Ensures that accurate minutes and records, including records of all financial transactions, are kept available for at least four years at the school for examination. Any person may examine these records without charge.
- Ensures that the following reports are prepared, presented to the Council, and submitted to the School Principal and the Director of Education.
  - Council year-end report.
  - Financial year-end report.
  - Report on fund-raising activities, if applicable.
- Ensures that the minutes and records of the Council during the Council's tenure are passed on to the successor Council.
- Ensures that a current "Principal Profile" is on file with the Board by 31 October of each year.
- May participate or assign an alternate to participate in information and training programs.
- Communicates with the School Principal.
- Ensures that there is regular communication with the school community.
- Consults parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the School about matters under consideration.
- Ensures that the Constitution and By-laws of the Council are up-to-date and are reviewed annually by the Council.
- Consults with senior Board staff and Trustees, as required.

### ***School Council Co-Chairs***

- Call Council meetings.
- Prepare the agenda for Council meetings.
- Chair Council meetings.
- Work collaboratively with Council members to assign and delegate the roles and responsibilities of the Council as outlined above.
- Attend inter-school council meetings of which the School is a member.

### ***Executive Members***

- Participate in Council meetings.
- Participate in information and training programs.
- Act as a liaison between the School Council and the community.

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- Encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community.
- Work collaboratively with other School Council members to carry out the roles and responsibilities of the Council.

### ***Principal***

- Facilitates the establishment of the Council and assists in its operation.
- On behalf of the Council, provides written notice of the dates, times and locations of annual elections and meetings of the Council to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school. Notice is given to the student for delivery to his/her parent/guardian and is posted in the School in a location that is accessible to parents/guardians.
- On behalf of the Council, posts a copy of the annual Council report in the fall of each school year in a School location that is accessible to parents/guardians.
- In accordance with the *Act* and Ontario regulations, seeks input from the Council by:
  - Providing for the prompt distribution to each member of the Council, and for the posting in a location accessible to parents/guardians, of Ministry materials identified by the Ministry for such distribution.
  - Attending all meetings of the Council or, when unable to do so, designating a staff member to attend on his/her behalf.
  - Acting as a resource to the Council, and assisting the Council in obtaining information relevant to the functions of the Council, such as information relating to relevant legislation, regulations and policies, and the budgets for the School and for school-generated funds, required by the Council to enable it to provide informed advice.
  - Considering each recommendation made by the Council to the Principal, and advising the Council of the action taken in response to the recommendation.
  - Soliciting the views of the Council with respect to:
    - the establishment or amendment of School policies and guidelines relating to pupil achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, such as the Board and School code of conduct and dress code.
    - the development of implementation plans for new education initiatives relating to student achievement or to the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians, for example the Board and School code of conduct and dress code.
    - School action plans for improvement based on EQAO reports, and the communication of these plans to the public.
    - all Board policies on which consultation is required, and any other matter for which the Board has directed that Councils be consulted.
- Acts as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies, and collective agreements.
- Communicates with the Co-Chairs of the Council, as required.
- Ensures that copies of the minutes of the Council's meetings are kept at the School and are available to the public on request.
- Assists the Council in communicating with the School community.
- Encourages the participation of parents/guardians from all groups and of other people within the School community in the life of the School and the activities of the Council.

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### ***Treasurer***

The Treasurer shall ensure the safe keeping of Council finances in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Ottawa Carleton District School Board, and provide accounting thereof as required by Council and by the Board. Specifically, the Treasurer shall:

- Set up and maintain a detailed record of all income and expenses along with the accompanying receipts and invoices.
- Verify the amount of cash and cheques received from fundraisers and other events, and ensure that incoming funds are deposited in the Council account and accurately recorded in financial records.
- Prepare cheques for signature by other members of Council when required and, upon receipt of invoices for Council-approved expenditures, issue the required cheques and ensure that they are delivered to the appropriate party.
- Check the accuracy and consistency of monthly bank statements.
- Report monthly to Council on fundraising and other revenues, expenditures (including accounts payable), bad debts, investments, and cash position.
- Work with the chairs of the Budget and Fundraising committees, if created.
- In the event that neither of the Co-Chairs are in attendance at a meeting, the Treasurer may be asked to assume the duties of the Co-Chair.

Annually, the Treasurer will also:

- Ensure that financial policies and procedures are reviewed and recommend and/or propose amendments as required.
- Prepare a year-end financial report to present to Council. This report should include details of any committed funds, and funds directed for future, multi-year projects. A copy of the Treasurer's report to Council will be included in the annual report to the Principal, Superintendent and the Director of Education.

### ***Secretary***

- Maintains a full and accurate account of all Council meetings.
- In conjunction with the Council Co-Chairs, ensures that adequate notice of meetings, the agenda, and previous minutes are circulated to all members within a reasonable period of time.
- Prepares correspondence as required.
- Ensures the safekeeping of Council records.
- Provides for inspection of the minutes and records of the Council to any member of Council or members of the School Community, on request.
- In the event that neither of the Co-Chairs are in attendance at a meeting, the Secretary may be asked to assume the duties of the Co-Chair.

### ***OCASC Representative***

- Represents the Council at meetings of the Ottawa Carleton Association of School Councils, and raises issues on our behalf. Also acts as a voting delegate for the School at OCASC meetings.
- Presents a report of OCASC meetings at each School Council meeting.
- Keeps the Executive members aware of upcoming issues to be discussed at OCASC meetings.

## APPENDIX B – Financial Guidelines

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### ***General***

- All expenditures on behalf of the Council must be accompanied by a receipt from the payee.
- All cheques issued on behalf of the Council must be signed by two of the three members of Council with bank account signing authority.
- Any expenditure not specifically identified in the approved budget, in excess of \$50.00, must be approved by a Council quorum. The Treasurer must receive written notification of such expenditures. (See Budget Submission requirements in Appendix C).
- Financial statements shall be maintained, and may be audited when necessary.

### ***Fundraising Targets***

- As a general principle, fundraising should be carried out to meet a specific revenue goal, as identified in the budget. Once that goal has been achieved, fundraising for that year should end.
- Where an expected or actual variance in fundraising exceeds -10% to + 15% of the target identified in the budget, the Fundraising committee will provide timely notification to the Treasurer.
- The Council should not undertake fundraising activities that would exceed the budgeted target without prior approval.

### ***Fundraising Procedures***

- All fundraising activities must be presented to Council for approval prior to undertaking. Every effort should be made to have this performed at a Council meeting. If the activity is of a timely nature, then communication to the Co-Chairs must be performed, and approval received.
- The Treasurer will deposit all monies collected on behalf of the Council, unless other arrangements are made with the Treasurer and the Fundraising Chair.
- Ideally, two people should count all cash collected, preferably before it leaves the collection premises.
- Where cheques collected from a fundraising event are being used as the sole source for payment of suppliers, the cheques should be deposited at least five business days prior to the supplier invoice/payment date.
- Where possible, within two weeks of a fundraising event, a report detailing the following should be submitted to the Treasurer:
  - Description of items sold
  - Unit cost of items sold
  - Unit sale price of items sold
  - Number of each item sold
  - Total Sales
  - Total Cost
  - Vendor's Invoice
  - Total Cash; Total Cheques collected
  - Name/ signature of individuals who counted cash

## **APPENDIX C – Budget Process**

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### **Overview**

In order to ensure that the Council budget serves the purposes and objectives of the Council, the following budget process has been developed. The process is based on the premise that the budget is a means to an end; more specifically, that all fundraising is performed to satisfy an identified set of projects.

To facilitate the timely development of the year's objectives, and for the potential of annual changes in Executive membership, the start of the budget process for a fiscal year, begins near the end of the previous fiscal period. This allows those most familiar with the current environment to provide a preliminary plan for the next year.

This preliminary budget plan will provide the new Council with an early picture of the natural progression of Council objectives for the coming school year. Potential Council Chairs and Fundraising Chairs can gain an understanding of the challenges ahead, while still having the opportunity to apply their own views of the upcoming year.

The final phase of the process allows for input based on changes which may occur in the School environment between the end of one year and early part of the new year, as well as input which reflects changes in the makeup of the Council itself.

The process is outlined below, in chronological order:

### **YEAR IN REVIEW - APRIL**

#### **Carry-over Commitments**

- Identify any commitments made/ approved for the current year for which funds have not yet been issued. Determine whether these funds will be claimed in this fiscal year or whether they should be carried forward to the next year's budget as a Previous Commitment.

#### **Ongoing Commitments**

- Identify commitments which address needs that recur each year. Review funding requirements for the next fiscal year.

#### **Fundraising Events**

- Review fundraising events with Committee Chair to establish viability for next year's drive. In particular, determine whether fundraising targets could be increased based on this year's successes, or scaled back due to concerns about meeting the current targets.

### **NEW INITIATIVES - MAY**

Solicit written submission from the following sources (at a minimum) for inclusion in the preliminary budget for the next fiscal year:

- preliminary School budget figures to highlight potential shortfalls as compared to current School budget from principal
- Staff & School organisations (via request from the Principal at April/May staff meeting.)
- School Council committees.

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All submissions should be in writing and include the following information:

- organisation/group name and contact person.
- brief description of event/project being supported including specific group(s) which will benefit (division, number of students) .
- amount of request and length of commitment.
- time-frame during which the funds will be required.
- identification of other sources of income.

### **SUBMISSION SELECTION - JUNE**

#### **Prioritization**

Compile a list of all submissions. If created, the Budget Committee reviews the submissions list, using the criteria listed below to develop a prioritized list of submissions:

- The funds would be utilized to directly benefit some portion of the school's student population.
- The project would address an area of educational value or an opportunity to increase school morale.
- Projects for which no other funding avenues are available.
- Primary and junior students should benefit equally from the overall budget. If, in the future, there are intermediate grades at the school, they should also benefit equally.
- Expenditures in a given year should equal at least 90% of receipts --unless funds have been allocated to a specific future project.

Comparing the total funds required for all submissions with the fundraising achieved for the current year, develop a list of funded and "unfunded" submissions. (i.e., submissions which could be met with the funds collected during the current year and submissions which would require an increase in the fundraising targets.)

#### **Adjustments**

If the total funds required to satisfy the submissions represents a significant increase from the funds available this year, hold a meeting with the Fundraising Committee (or council as a whole if no committee exists) to determine whether new fundraising targets are feasible. Develop a new fundraising target and identify what "unfunded" submissions (if any) would be addressed by the increased funds.

### **PRELIMINARY BUDGET - JUNE**

Develop a preliminary budget to be presented and approved by the current Council. The budget should include the following information:

- Carry-over commitments.
- Ongoing commitments.
- New Initiatives (prioritized).
- Fundraising targets.
- Appendix listing submissions not included in the budget.

The preliminary budget should be made available to the new Council candidates prior to the election meeting.

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### **BUDGET SUBMISSIONS - OCTOBER**

The Budget Committee (or council as a whole if no committee exists) should revisit the submissions included in the preliminary budget to ensure that the requirement still exists. The committee should re-solicit budget submissions from the same sources identified in "New Initiatives" above. Once the School budget has been set, real shortfalls in this budget should also be examined.

Discrepancies in the submissions should be prioritized and integrated into the preliminary budget.

If this process results in a significant shortfall, the Fundraising Committee (or council as a whole if no committee exists) must meet to determine whether new fundraising initiatives can be expected to meet the shortfall. If not, all of the submissions must be reprioritized and the selection process used to finalize the submissions to be included in the current year's budget.

### **BUDGET APPROVAL - NOVEMBER**

The final budget should be submitted to the Council for final approval. Once approved, all the submission sources should be notified as to the outcome of their particular submission.