

# Halifax West High School Advisory Council Bylaws

## Membership

The Halifax West High School Advisory Council will have sixteen voting members which shall include 4 parents/guardians (at least one parent or guardian representative from the French Immersion program and one from the English program), (efforts will be made to have a parent or guardian of a student from each of the feeder junior high schools), 4 staff members consisting of at least 1 teacher and 1 non-teaching staff member, 4 students, and 4 community members. The principal is a permanent, non-voting member. Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of our community.

## Eligibility for Membership

### *Parents/Guardians*

- Must have a child at Halifax West High School and cannot be a Halifax Regional Centre for Education employee at Halifax West High School.

### *Students*

- Must include a Student Government co-president or vice-president and grade ten to twelve students elected through an in-school election.

### *Teachers*

- Must be a teacher on staff at Halifax West High School

### *Support Staff*

- Must be a member of the non-teaching support staff at Halifax West High School

### *Community Members*

- Must not have children at Halifax West High School
- Must reside in the geographical area served by Halifax West High School or provide service to or within the geographical area served by Halifax West High School

## Elections and Appointments

Elections will be held in September and are usually by secret ballot. Appointments of community members will occur during the annual meeting prior to October 30<sup>th</sup>.

### *Parents/Guardians*

A call for nominations may be made during the first two weeks of September through the school website, advertisement in the local newspaper and newsletters sent home with students, with a meeting designated for voting held in late September. Nominations will close one week prior to a duly advertised voting meeting. Nominations will be received by the school principal and forwarded to the school advisory council chair. Election will be by a simple majority vote of eligible parents/guardians at a designated voting meeting.

Eligible parents/guardians are those who have children enrolled in Halifax West High School. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be organized.

#### *Teachers and Support Staff*

Teachers and support staff will elect/choose their own representatives in September by the method of choice.

#### *Students*

The Student Government will select either the President(s) and/or Vice President(s) to sit on the SAC. The remaining representatives will be students from grades ten to twelve elected/chosen through an in-school process from among the student's classmates.

#### *Community Members*

The community member(s) will be appointed to the school advisory council by the SAC prior to the October meeting so that the executive can be selected. The position(s) will be advertised on the school website. All applicants may be asked to submit, in writing, a brief resume and a letter which explains why the applicant is interested in being on the school advisory council.

### **Terms of Service**

Terms of service for each representative group are the following:

- Parents/guardians are elected for a term of three years. Parents/guardians elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.
- Student representatives are elected/chosen for a term of one year.
- Teachers and support staff are elected/chosen from their respective group for a term of three years. Teachers and support staff elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.
- Community members are appointed for a term of two years. Community members appointed to fill a vacancy are appointed for the remainder of the term.
- All members can re-offer for election or appointment to the SAC at the end of their term, to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- The principal position is permanent.
- A council member elected to an executive position may serve in that position for a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms.

### **Vacancies**

Should a vacancy arise, it will be addressed as follows:

- Vacancies on the SAC will be filled from the relevant membership group.
- Vacancies of less than six months may be filled by school advisory council appointment.
- Vacancies of longer than six months will be filled according to the bylaws governing elections or appointment of the appropriate membership groups to fill the remainder of the vacated term.

## **Executive**

The executive will consist of a chair, secretary, and principal. The selection of the chair, vice chair and secretary will be done annually at the October meeting. The chair, vice chair and secretary will be selected from those school advisory council members other than the principal and will serve no more than two consecutive years as chair, vice chair or secretary.

## **Agenda and Meeting Summary**

The chair will draw up the meeting agenda in consultation with the principal. Copies of the agenda will be distributed via email along with any pertinent information. Agendas from each meeting will be stored electronically. Agendas will be made available to the public upon request.

The secretary will prepare a meeting summary for each school advisory council meeting which will include highlights of key decisions and actions. Once approved at the subsequent meeting, the meeting summaries will be given to the principal in electronic format to be included in the school record. Meeting summaries will be made available to the public upon request.

## **Meetings**

Meetings will be conducted according to the following guidelines:

- A regular meeting schedule will be determined at the September meeting with a minimum of four meetings per year. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the Halifax West High School Advisory Council. Meetings will be 90 minutes in length unless the SAC agrees by consensus to go longer.
- Members of the public who wish to address the Halifax West High School Advisory Council are asked to inform the SAC through the chair or the principal in writing at least two weeks prior to the SAC meeting. They may address the meeting at the discretion of the chair.
- Agendas will allow for a ten-minute period for input on the agenda items from the public in attendance at the council meeting.
- Members who are not able to attend a meeting will notify the Halifax West High School Advisory Council secretary or chair by noon of the meeting date.
- Any member absent without cause for three consecutive meetings will be considered to have vacated their position. Vacancies will be filled as per these bylaws.

## **Quorum**

A quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of a minimum of eight of the SAC voting members present and shall include a minimum of one representative from each representative group. Representative groups consist of parents/guardians, students, staff, and community members.

In addition, the principal or the vice principal shall be present.

## **Decision-making Process**

The following principles and procedures will be used in making decisions.

### *Principles*

- All council members are responsible for making decisions that ensure the best education possible for our students.
- All council members will have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.
- Council decisions will be by consensus whenever possible.

### *Procedures*

- Agenda items will be discussed in a structured way prior to a decision.
- When background information is needed on an agenda item, the principal will provide council members with that information and the time required to review in advance of a decision.
- Whenever possible, decisions will be made by consensus.
- If consensus cannot be reached, the decision can be delayed until the following meeting, which must occur within 30 days. If at that time consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will be required of those members present.
- Decisions and recommendations will be recorded in the meeting summary.

## **School Improvement Plan and Annual Report**

The school improvement plan for Halifax West High School will be developed by the principal and staff of the school and shared with the SAC. The SAC will work in collaboration with the principal and participate in efforts to improve student achievement and student and community well-being by regularly receiving information on the school improvement plan and by monitoring progress and improvements under the plan.

In addition, in accordance with the terms of the school advisory council agreement, the SAC will determine priorities for spending the funds allocated to support the mandate of the school advisory council including student achievement and report annually on the expenditures of funds to the Minister.

The SAC will prepare an annual report containing the information determined by the Minister. The report will be presented at the June SAC meeting and then submitted to the regional centre for education by the end of June.

## **Adopting and Amending Bylaws**

A notice of motion, given one meeting in advance, is required to amend the bylaws. Bylaws will be amended following the established decision-making process. The amended bylaws will be forwarded to the regional executive director for approval, and the bylaws or amendments become effective upon receipt of this approval.

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Parties to the Agreement

We, the undersigned, understand and agree to follow these Bylaws.

Halifax West High School School Advisory Chair	Date
HRCE Regional Executive Director of Education	Date