

# **Plattsville & District Public School (PDPS) Council**

Constitution and By-Laws

Amended September 2023 – to be reviewed at the first council meeting of each school year

## **Article I – Official Name**

The official name of the organization shall be the “Plattsville & District Community and School Association”, hereafter referred to as “PDCSA”.

## **Article II – Mission Statement**

Through a combined effort from the community, staff, parents, and students, PDCSA will provide a safe, caring, empathetic, inclusive, and positive learning environment at PDPS, which will allow our students to achieve their highest social and academic potential.

## **Article III – Purposes and Objectives**

*Purpose:* The primary purpose of PDCSA is to provide parental and community support to the principal and staff of PDPS with the intent of positively influencing the education for students.

*Objectives:* The purpose of PDCSA will be obtained through the following objectives:

1. To promote and encourage open communication between the school staff, volunteers, PDCSA members, parents, students, and its community by such means as meetings, newsletters, and other principal approved methods. Actively seek out the school community’s views and preferences with regards to matters being addressed by PDCSA.
2. Encourage community and school interaction through such means as volunteers for school activities and community-based events such as the Terry Fox Run, Heart & Stroke, Big Crunch, and other such initiatives.
3. To promote and aid in special events and projects at the school, e.g. snack program, fundraising, and field trips, etc.
4. To promote and encourage the education and personal well-being of our students by means of parent and student mentors.
5. To promote involvement of new families to PDPS and its community.
6. To encourage attendance and input at council meetings and to welcome participation in council committees.
7. To operate in a non-judgemental manner, respecting confidentiality, employing no-fault discussions to reach a consensus through meaningful discussion.

8. To foster co-operation between parents and teachers, in the teaching and guiding of our students.
9. To enhance the accountability of the education system.
10. To oversee the allocation of money that has been raised by PDCSA's fundraising committee.
11. To evaluate PDCSA's activities annually, discuss accomplishments and concerns
12. In addition, PDCSA will act as an advisory board to the principal at PDPS, and where applicable, to the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB), on issues and concerns that PDCSA has identified as a priority, including:
  - Needs of the students
  - School year calendar
  - School code of conduct
  - Extra-curricular activities in the school

#### **Article IV – Membership**

The following shall be voting members of PDCSA, elected or acclaimed, creating the “PDCSA Council Executive”:

- Chairperson & Vice-chairperson OR Co-chairs (2)
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Parent Representative (up to a maximum of 5)

The following shall be non-voting members of PDCSA, which create the PDCSA membership:

- Principal
- Staff Member (teaching or non-teaching)
- Community Representative
- Student Member (where applicable)
- Non-executive parents/guardians in attendance at meetings (unlimited number)
  - i. After two missed PDCSA meetings, a PDCSA Council Executive position will be considered vacated by the candidate. Extenuating circumstances may be discussed with the chairperson(s) to consider extending this criteria.
  - ii. Parents who are employed at the school are not eligible to serve as PDCSA Council Executive.
  - iii. Parents who are employed by the TVDSB *are* eligible to be elected as Parent Representatives within the PDCSA Council Executive. These parents are required to disclose their affiliation at the time of nomination.

- iv. Membership of the PDCSA Council Executive are to be elected annually within the first 35 days of the school year (see Article VIII).
- v. PDCSA Council Executive will serve a one (1) year term, with unlimited potential for re-election in consecutive years.
- vi. PDCSA Council Executive must have a current Vulnerable Sector Police Records Check on file with the PDPS office.
- vii. There will be no honorarium paid to the PDCSA Council Executive.

Duties of the PDCSA Council Executive:

*Co-Chairs:*

- In the event that a Co-Chair model is selected in place of the Chairperson and Vice- Chairperson, the co-chairs will share the responsibilities of the Chairperson as described below.

*Chairperson:*

- Meet with the PDPS principal to prepare an agenda for meetings.
- Call to order and chair PDCSA meetings.
- Ensure that minutes of council meetings are recorded.
- Communicate with the PDPS principal on behalf of the council.
- Attempt to attend regional meetings through the TVDSB.
- Have signing authority on deposit & disbursement voucher slips.
- Change the PDCSA safe code on a monthly basis, giving the code & members who will have access to the code to the school secretary.

*Vice-Chairperson:*

- Assume the duties of the chairperson in their absence.
- Support and assist the chairperson as required.
- Have signing authority on deposit & disbursement slips.

*Secretary:*

- Distribute agendas prior to meetings.
- Take attendance at meetings.
- Take minutes during meetings.
- Prepare the minutes after each meeting and ensure that minutes are distributed to PDCSA Membership.
- Keep all agendas, minutes, handouts, and other council related literature filled in designated the PDCSA area at the school for public access.

*Treasurer:*

- Prepare monthly financial reports for distribution at council meetings, including details since the previous report of opening balance, all expenses incurred, list of revenues, any projected or allocated funds still outstanding, and closing balance.
- Write disbursement voucher slips when an invoice or receipt is received, making sure the transaction meets the criteria of an approved decision by PDCSA Council Executive.
- Assume the responsibility of finding a co-signer, who is listed as having signing authority to sign the disbursement voucher slip. Hand the slip & related documentation in to the school secretary.
- Follow up on any discrepancies, errors, or NSF payments to PDCSA.

*Parent Representative:*

- Serve on at least one committee established by PDCSA.
- Solicit the views of other parents and members of the community to share with PDCSA when making decisions.
- Be available to provide necessary motions/seconds during PDCSA meetings.

**Article V – PDCSA Council Executive Election Procedure**

- i. Elections shall occur within the first 35 days of the school year.
- ii. Each parent/guardian seeking election must be nominated or self-nominated in writing.
- iii. Each parent/guardian seeing election must have a student enrolled in at PDPS during the school year.
- iv. Nomination forms will be collected during the first week of school, by the PDPS office.
- v. During the first PDCSA meeting, the PDPS principal will announce any positions acclaimed or vacant. The PDPS principal will also provide paper ballots with nominee names printed on them for anonymous voting.
- vi. PDCSA Membership present at the first PDCSA meeting will select one nominee per position and submit their ballot as directed.
- vii. A simple majority or consensus will determine the successful candidate.
- viii. The PDPS principal and administrative personnel will count the ballots and notify all nominees of the results.
- ix. The PDPS principal will communicate publicly only the names of the successful candidates.
- x. The PDCSA Council Executive Secretary will maintain a record of all candidates and votes, for use in the event of a vacancy.

## **Article VI – Vacancies**

After two missed PDCSA meetings, a PDCSA Council Executive position will be considered vacated by the candidate. Extenuating circumstances may be discussed with the chairperson(s) to consider extending this criteria. Should an PDCSA Council Executive position become vacant before the next election, the council will fill the vacancy by appointment from the non-elected candidates from the previous election. If none of the previous candidates remain interested in filling the role, the council may request that interested parents/guardians from the school community submit their names for consideration. The remaining PDCSA Council Executive will appoint one of those who indicated interest. When a vacant spot on PDCSA Council Executive is filled, the new member's term shall expire at the time of the next election.

## **Article VII – PDCSA Meeting Procedures**

- i. PDCSA will have a minimum of four (4) meetings a school year.
- ii. Meeting dates, times, and locations will be advertised publicly.
- iii. PDCSA meetings will be held in a public location, and will be open to all members of the PDPS community, including the parents/guardians of every student at PDPS.
- iv. Meeting minutes will be recorded and made publicly available as soon as possible following the meeting date.
- v. 50% of the PDCSA Council Executive will constitute a quorum for a meeting to proceed.
- vi. Meeting agendas will include, at minimum, review of the previous meeting minutes, a principal's report, a treasurer's report, and opportunity for PDCSA committees to present.

## **Article VIII – Voting Procedures**

- i. All motions must be presented during the next available PDCSA meeting, with as much detail as possible by the person bringing forward the motion or a knowledgeable representative.
- ii. When possible, decisions on motions arising during meetings will be made by consensus.
- iii. In the event that consensus cannot be made, a vote will be taken of those PDCSA Council Executive in attendance during the meeting. The decision will be based on the majority.
- iv. If a majority decision still cannot be reached during the meeting, the motion will be carried to an email vote where every member of the PDCSA Council

Executive must cast their vote. If this still cannot meet a majority decision, the PDPS principal will be the deciding vote.

- v. On the occasion where a decision must be made before the next scheduled PDCSA meeting, an email vote may be initiated.
- vi. Email votes are to be initiated by the chairperson(s), following discussion with the PDPS principal on the urgency of the motion.

### **Article IX – Conflict of Interest**

Each PDCSA Council Executive shall avoid situations that could result in an inconsistency between the overall goals and visions of the school council and a personal or vested interest that arises in connection with his/her duties as a PDCSA Council Executive. Should an issue or agenda item arise during a PDCSA meeting where a PDCSA Council Executive is in a conflict of interest situation, he or she shall declare a conflict of interest immediately and decline from the vote. He/she may continue to participate in the discussion.

### **Article X – Conflict Resolution**

- i. Every PDCSA Member shall be given the opportunity to express his/her concerns or opinion about the issue of dispute, and how the dispute has affected him/her.
- ii. Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone at all times.
- iii. Speakers will be allowed to speak without interruption.
- iv. The chairperson's responsibility is to clarify the statements made by all speakers, to identify common ground among points of view raised, and to set out the joint interest of all members. If no common ground can be identified, the chairperson will seek to clarify preferences among all PDCSA Council Executive before proceeding further.
- v. If all attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success, the chairperson shall request the intervention of the PDPS principal, superintendent, or other senior administrator within the TVDSB to facilitate the resolution.

### **Article XI – Financial Policies**

- i. PDCSA will follow financial policies established by the TVDSB, including *School Generated Funds* procedure number 1009a. The PDPS principal can act as an informant or provide the documents as necessary.
- ii. All purchases for PDCSA are to be completed via the PDPS administration, in accordance with TVDSB policies.

- iii. All purchases funded by the PDCSA will have a set margin of flexibility to account for unforeseen adjustments to the approved cost (i.e. shipping and handling, taxes etc.) with the understanding that the PDPS Principal will provide final cost summaries/updates at each meeting. The margin of flexibility will be set at \$30 for items under \$300 or 10% for items over \$300. If the approved cost exceeds the margin of flexibility, the purchase will need to be put on hold and brought back to the PDCSA for approval.
- iv. PDCSA budget allocations are to be reviewed and voted on within the first 35 days of the new school year.
- v. Any funds raised by PDCSA, and all assets purchased with those funds, belong legally to the TVDSB.
- vi. The PDCSA Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining detailed financial records.
- vii. All financial discussions will be clearly identified and documented as part of the PDCSA meeting minutes.
- viii. Bank reconciliations should be completed monthly, with date and sign off.
- ix. Bank statements, with copies of the cancelled cheques, should be consolidated and filed in the designated PDCSA location on school property.
- x. The PDCSA shall have their own safe, securely located on school property. Only the PDCSA Treasurer and Chairperson(s) shall have access to change the code on the safe, & to provide the names of those authorized to open the safe.
- xi. All funds collected will be counted on school property, by at least two people, one of whom is a PDCSA Council Executive (other than the Treasurer), the other must have a valid police record check on file with the school. Counted funds will be recorded on a receipt log, sealed in a deposit envelope which identifies the amount and source of the funds, given over to the school secretary for deposit. For complete details, see the *Fundraising Checklist* in the financial log binder.
- xii. Receipt log shall then be attached to the corresponding monthly bank statement, in chronological order.
- xiii. The PDCSA Treasurer will fully complete disbursement voucher slips prior to having them endorsed.
- xiv. Disbursement voucher slips should always be issued in sequential order. Any break or change in numbering should be documented and explained during the "Treasurer's Report" during the next scheduled PDCSA meeting.

## **Article XII – Fundraising Procedures**

- i. PDCSA fundraising initiatives will be carried out in accordance with TVDSB's policies on the matter. The PDPS principal will act as an informant, or provide documentation of these policies, as needed.

- ii. The purpose of all fundraisers shall be identified publicly, with accounts of how money is expected to be spent. This can be communicated as a general statement for the year, or as specific fundraisers arise.
- iii. PDCSA will collaborate with PDPS on dates for fundraisers, to diminish the financial demands on families.
- iv. Should a cash float be required for a particular fundraiser, the fundraising committee is to bring forward a motion to request the funds in accordance with the voting procedure (see Article VIII). If agreeable, PDCSA will write a disbursement voucher slip to the organizer, with the expectation that the funds are returned by the next PDCSA meeting following the fundraising event.
- v. All funds collected (cash or cheque) must remain on school property, secured in the PDCSA safe, using the specifics outlined in Article XI.