

**River Heights Elementary School**  
**Parent Council**  
**Operating Procedures**  
**Approved: \_\_\_\_\_**

**1. DEFINITIONS**

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "School" means River Heights Elementary School;
- B. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- C. "Parents" means parent, guardian, or primary caregiver of any child enrolled at the School;
- D. "Regulation" means the School Councils Regulation as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- E. "School community" means persons including parents (as defined in 1C above) who have, in the opinion of the majority of Members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the students and the School;
- F. "Operating Procedures" means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

**2. AUTHORITY**

The River Heights Elementary School derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation, hereinafter referred to as "legislation".

**3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY**

River Heights Elementary School Philosophy or mission or motto is:

*River Heights Elementary School provides an instructional program that enhances the delivery of the Alberta Education Curriculum. We emphasize critical and creative thinking skills within a safe and caring environment. We promote the integration of subject areas using technology as a vehicle. We encourage and facilitate student independence/interdependence. Our motto describes our approach to learning: "Explore, Create, Reflect".*

*The Mission/Philosophy of the River Heights Elementary School Council is:*

*School Council will undertake discussion and activities that will enhance student learning and foster the well-being and effectiveness of our school community*

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**4. OBJECTIVES**

- A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the Principal and the School Board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
- B. Foster a positive, collaborative environment with a variety of opportunities for meaningful engagement by Members of the School community;
- C. Support special events that will support and enhance student learning, encourage participation and promote the well-being of the School community;
- D. Facilitate a performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of this evaluation to the School Board and the School community;
- E. Develop a communication plan to share information with parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders;
- F. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics;
- G. Consult with other School Councils and provincial organizations;
- H. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively;
- I. Advise School Boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;
- J. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP AND DECISION MAKING**

River Heights Elementary School Council uses a Town Hall Model of Governance.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
  - 1. All parents, as defined in 1C above;
  - 2. The Principal of the School (either the Principal or Vice Principal must be in attendance at every meeting.);
  - 3. One or more teachers/ staff of the School, elected or appointed by the teachers.
- B. The voting Members of the School Council shall consist of:  
Co-chairs, Secretary, and Treasurer as well as the Committee Chairs and all parents;
- C. The non-voting Members of the School Council shall consist of:  
the Principal, the Vice Principal, and the teachers and staff if acting in their professional capacity at the meeting.
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent Members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

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**6. DECISION MAKING**

Decisions at School Council meetings will be made by consensus wherever possible.

A. A decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.

B. If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved, seconded and passed by the majority of School Council voting Members present at the meeting at which the vote was taken.

C. There will be no voting by proxy.

**7. QUORUM** (Means: minimum # of members required to make a meeting valid.)

A. The quorum for the transaction of any business at any regular meeting of the School Council will consist of fifty percent (50%) of the parent Members, as defined above, of the School Council in addition to the Principal or designate. So for River Heights that is two (2) of the four (4) Executive in addition to the Principal. (Note: Principals don't vote, but can veto any decision. Also, any staff member that is also a parent can vote if attending as a parent, but not if attending as a Teacher Representative.)

B. In the absence of a quorum:

i. If the parents and School Council Members present agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council may continue for the purposes of discussion of issues.

ii. No motions shall be considered or approved.

iii. No decisions by consensus shall be reached.

**8. EXECUTIVE AND TERMS OF OFFICE**

The positions of the Executive shall consist of : Two (2) Co-Chairs, Secretary and Treasurer

A. All Executive positions must be filled by parents as defined in 1C above.

B. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the School Council.

C. The terms of office are from the close of the Annual General Meeting to the close of the following Annual General Meeting. As a rule of thumb the Co-chair and Treasurer positions are a two (2) year term. The Secretary position is a one (1) year term. Any elected Member may serve multiple consecutive terms up to a maximum of six (6) years in the same position.

D. The Executive of the School Council will be elected by parents attending the Annual General Meeting or in the event of vacancies after the Annual General meeting, elected by the voting Members present at a subsequent School Council meeting.

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E. Any Executive Member may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Executive and the Principal.

F. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgement, the best interest of the School Council will be served.

G. Unless authorized at any meeting and after notice for same shall have been given, no Member of School Council shall receive any remuneration for his/her services.

H. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

**9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

**A. Co-Chairs**

It is expected that the School Council Co-Chairs will be parents of students enrolled in the School. Unless otherwise delegated, the Co-Chairs of the School Council will:

1. Chair all meetings of the School Council;
2. Coordinate with the Principal to establish meeting agendas;
3. Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
4. Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
5. Ensure that the School Council Operating Procedures are current and followed;
6. Be the official spokespeople of the School Council;
7. Ensure that there is regular communication with the whole School community;
8. Be ex-officious members of all committees;
9. Review any communication to the School community prior to distribution and

include the Principal in same;

10. Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
11. Have signing authority, on any financial accounts together with the Treasurer;
12. Have previous leadership and/or committee experience whether at the School

or otherwise.

13. Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the School Board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous School year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30th;

14. Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the Fundraising Association or other parent groups within the School;
15. Promote teamwork in the smooth running of the meetings.
16. Attend all Council of School Council meetings and report back to council.

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**B. Secretary**

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

1. Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
2. Keep minutes, correspondence, records, and other School Council documents, and to ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of seven (7) years;
3. Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
4. Distribute, as determined by the School Council agendas, minutes, notices or meetings and notices of other events;

In the absence of the Secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

**C. Treasurer**

Unless otherwise delegated, the Treasurer of the School Council will;

1. Keep accurate records of all financial records for seven (7) years;
2. Ensure that records are available upon request of the School Board, public, or School community;
3. Be responsible for the deposits of all monies paid to the School Council in whatever bank, trust company, credit union, or treasury branch the School Council may order. All monies greater than fifty dollars (\$50) must be counted at the school, receipted, and deposited in tandem. Any monies leaving the school must be deposited immediately or left locked in the school safe until such a time works to deposit; (Excluding deposits under fifty dollars (\$50). )
4. Have signing authority on any financial accounts together with the Co-Chairs;
5. Present a full, detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the School Council as required by the School Council, and prepare the financial statements for the annual report;
6. Supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the financial committee.

#### **D. Past Chair**

The Past Chair of the School Council can:

1. Serve in an advisory capacity to the new School Council;
2. Act in the absence of both the Co-Chairs.

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#### **E. Committee Chairs**

Special event team leaders such as Hot Lunch, Winter Village, Staff Appreciation, Fine Arts, Casino and Spring Fling. (Among others)

These members will:

1. Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
2. Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
3. Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the School community;
4. Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
5. Have a clear understanding of the School Council's objectives
6. Attend School Council meetings;
7. Identify possible topics for agendas;
8. Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their area of responsibility.

### **10. VACANCIES**

With the exception of the School Council positions filled by the Principal and Teacher Representative, any vacancy of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Elections for a vacant position will be held at subsequent meetings of the School Council until the vacancy is filled.

### **11. MEETINGS**

#### **A. Annual General Meetings**

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with legislation; otherwise, an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place once each School year.

1. The Annual General Meeting of the School Council will be held in the month of June of at an appropriate time during the School year as determined by the School Council. The meeting will be advertised throughout the School and the community via

posters, website, social media, email, and/ or newsletter, no less than two (2) weeks before hand and will state the business to take place at the Annual General Meeting;

2. All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible for election;

3. All parents as defined in 1C above are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting;

4. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:

a. The election of School Council Executive Members;

b. Any proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures;

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c. Presentation of the financial statements of the previous year;

d. A summary of events of the past school year, by Committee Chairs/and or Co-Chairs.

5. And may also include:

a. Plans and budget for the upcoming year;

b. Discussion of any major issue in which all parents should have input such as changes to the Vision or Mission of the School or School Board, School policy, or other major changes in the School program or focus;

c. Any evaluation of the School Council.

#### **B. Special General Meetings**

1. The School Council Executive may at any time give notice of a Special General Meeting of the School Council. Notice will be given at least five (5) days before the meeting. The notice will state the time, date, and place of the meeting, and describe the matters to be dealt with.

2. At any Special General Meeting, all parents in attendance shall have the right to vote.

#### **C. Regular Meetings**

A minimum of nine (9) regular School Council meetings will be held per School year or as called by the Executive. It will be decided when these meetings will take place at the Annual General Meeting. The meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised.

Any School Council Member may be suspended or expelled for the duration of the School year from attendance at any Regular School Council meetings, if, upon a majority vote of voting Members present at Special General Meeting called for that purpose, it is determined to be in the best interests of the School Council to do so.

## **12. MEETING AGENDAS**

The Co-chairs will work in partnership with the Principal to establish the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Co-chairs, who will, if necessary, consult with the Executive and Principal as to the appropriateness of the item

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requested. Agenda items must be submitted two (2) weeks prior to the Parent Council Meeting.

## **13. COMMITTEES**

Committees will be determined by the School Council and will make decisions or recommendations according to the mandate that the School Council gives them as deemed necessary from School year to School year

- A. Committee members shall consist of participants from the School community;
- B. Standing committees will operate on an ongoing basis with specified lengths of terms for members;
- C. Ad hoc committees will be formed as necessary and will work within a specific time period; (committees formed for a specific purpose)
- D. Chairs of committees shall submit a written report of their work at the Annual General Meeting and report on their activities at School Council meetings.

## **14. POLICIES**

Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make and implement its own policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginnings of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term.
- B. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Elections, Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Fundraising, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

## **15. SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISING**

Subject to any provincial or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may raise funds that do not require incorporation to obtain (eg. not casinos, bingos, raffles)

A. The School Council will, where possible, encourage the Fundraising Association to do the fundraising for the School and the School community.

B. Should the School Council choose to fundraise, funds may be given to the School to track and record, given to the Fundraising Association, or deposited in a bank account operated by the School Council.

C. School Council funds given to the School will be subject to the School Board's

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policy on School Council fundraising and/or School-generated funds.

D. In the absence of mutually agreed terms, School Council funds given to the Fundraising Association will be subject to the policies of the Fundraising Association.

## **16. FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION AND OTHER GROUPS OF PARENTS**

The School Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of other groups of parents striving to support and enhance the educational opportunities in the School.

A. The School Council will communicate regularly with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities.

B. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open, and transparent relationship with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of parents.

## **17. CODE OF ETHICS**

All School Council Members shall:

A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;

B. Be guided by the mission statement of the School and School Council;

C. Endeavour to be familiar with School policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;

D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity, and truth;

E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School community;

F. Declare any conflict of interest;

- G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- H. Apply democratic principles;
- I. Consider the best interests of all students;
- J. Respect the confidential nature of some School business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- K. Not disclose confidential information;
- L. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School community as a whole;
- M. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise; (talk directly to the person, and if still having an issue bring in school Principal and/ or Co-Chairs)
- N. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School community;

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- O. Accept accountability for decisions;
- P. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

**18. CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

The School Council shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School Board's policies and regulations. If none exist, the School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal conflicts using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures.

A. If at any time, 10 parents, or 5 parents and 50% of the Executive Members of the School Council are of the opinion that the School Council is in a state of conflict such that its operation is significantly impaired, they may deliver a signed written letter to all Executive Members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following will apply:

1. The Co-Chairs will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council.
2. The Secretary will provide a minimum 5 days written notice to all parents and School Council Members of the date, time, place, and purpose of the Special General Meeting.
3. At the Special General Meeting, all parents and School Council present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing conflict.
4. On motion, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the conflict.
5. If a majority of voting Members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it.

## 19. PRIVACY

The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

## 20. DISSOLUTION

As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may establish a Principal's Advisory Committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next school year. The Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) School days after the start of the next School year.

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## 21. REVIEW AND AMENDMENTS

Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the School Council may make any changes to the Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

A. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually by the School Council Executive or by a committee established expressly for that purpose.

B. Notice of proposed changes to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School community no less than 5 days before the meeting.

C. The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting Members present at any scheduled Regular, Special, or Annual General Meeting of the School Council.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted by a majority of the Members entitled to vote at a Regular, Special, or Annual General meeting of the School Council.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

  

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Co-Chair's Name

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Co-Chair's Name

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Secretary's Name

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Principal's Name

Co-Chair's Signature

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Co-Chair's Signature

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Secretary's Signature

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Principal's Signature