

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Joseph Howe Elementary School Advisory Council Agreement

The purpose of this school advisory council agreement is to establish the terms of reference for the partnership between the Joseph Howe Elementary School Advisory Council, Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE), and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to operate a School Advisory Council (SAC) at the school level.

Effective date and review of the agreement

The agreement begins when signed by all parties. The agreement shall be reviewed annually by the SAC before June 30 of each year. Any agreed-upon revisions can be made at that time and submitted to the HRCE and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for consideration, to become effective upon approval of all partners.

Structure of the council

The Advisory Council shall include the following members:

- the principal, who is a non-voting member
- three (3) parents/guardians
- three (3) teachers
- three (3) community members (1 designated community member of the African Nova Scotian community)

Names of the members of the Joseph Howe School Advisory Council and their respective years of service are detailed in an appendix to the bylaws.

Decision-making process

Joseph Howe Elementary School Advisory Council (SAC) will make decisions in the following ways:

- All decisions will be made by consensus where possible.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be delayed until the next meeting, which will occur within thirty days.
- If at that meeting a consensus cannot be reached, a majority funds (50% +1) is required of the quorum present for the proposal to be approved.
- If there is a timeline within which a decision must be reached, an emergency meeting may be called by the chair of the (SAC) prior to the deadline.
- A quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of a minimum of four of the voting members of the SAC and shall include a

Joseph Howe Elementary School

minimum of one member from each representative group. Representative groups consist of parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

- In addition, the principal or designate shall be present. The vice-principal is the designate as the non-voting member.

School advisory council commitments

The Joseph Howe School Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- providing all SAC members with a voice in decision-making
- working in collaboration with the principal and participating in efforts to improve student achievement and student and community well-being by receiving information on the school improvement plan and monitoring progress and improvements under the plan
- advising the principal and the regional centre on: developing policies that promote student achievement and safe and inclusive schools; school practices and initiatives; communication among the school, parents and community; and matters that are referred to the school advisory council by the principal, the regional centre or the Minister
- developing strategies to improve and support the extracurricular programs and special projects of the school
- maintaining effective communication with parents/guardians by holding regular public meetings and making copies of agendas and meeting summaries available upon request
- advising the principal and staff on any matters that are referred to the school advisory council by the principal, the regional centre or the Minister
- in accordance with the terms of the school advisory council agreement, determining priorities for spending the funds allocated to support the mandate of the school advisory council
- advising the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development or the Provincial Advisory Council on policy and other educational matters.
- preparing an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister.

Halifax Regional Centre for Education commitments

Halifax Regional Centre for Education will make a commitment to support the Joseph Howe School Advisory Council by:

- providing a yearly professional development session reflective of the roles and responsibilities of the School Advisory Council

Joseph Howe Elementary School

- providing a School Administration supervisor to assist the school council as required
- providing feedback to the council on the school improvement plan and the annual report
- providing opportunities to give input on regional centre for education policies and procedures, initiatives and communication
- arranging meetings between the Regional Executive Director of Education or designate and the school advisory council as required
- making available copies of Provincial and HRCE policies via the HRCE's website
- providing mediation services when there is unresolved conflict between the school advisory council and the principal
- responding to advice/questions from the school advisory council

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development commitments

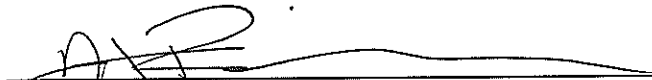
The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will support Joseph Howe School Advisory Council by:

- developing educational materials to assist school advisory councils in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.
- providing opportunities to give input on provincial policies and any other matters referred to the SAC by the Minister
- organizing and/or supporting professional development opportunities for council members
- providing funds to support the mandate of the school advisory council
- providing mediation when there is unresolved conflict between the school advisory council and the regional centre for education

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Parties to the agreement

We, the undersigned, understand and agree to follow through on the commitments made in this school advisory council agreement.



Joseph Howe Elementary School Advisory Council Chair

April 11, 2023

Date

HRCE Regional Executive Director of Education

Date

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Date

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Joseph Howe Elementary School Advisory Council Bylaws

Membership

Joseph Howe Elementary School Advisory Council will have nine voting members which shall include three parents/guardians, and three teachers, three community members, and the principal. The principal is a permanent, non-voting member.

Eligibility for membership

Parents/guardians

- must have a child at Joseph Howe School and cannot be an Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) employee on staff at Joseph Howe School

Teachers / Support Staff

- must be on staff at Joseph Howe School

Community members

- must not be employees of Joseph Howe School
- must not have children registered at Joseph Howe Elementary School
- must reside in the geographical area served by Joseph Howe Elementary School or provide a service to or within the geographical area served by Joseph Howe School
- The African Nova Scotian community member will represent the Africa Nova Scotian community of Joseph Howe.

Elections and appointments

Elections will be held in September and are usually by secret ballot. Appointments of community members will occur prior to the October meeting.

Parents/guardians

A call for nominations may be made during the first two weeks of September through the school website, newsletters sent home with children, and/or the Parent-Teacher Association, with a day designated for voting in late September. Nominations will close one week prior to a duly advertised voting day. Nominations will be received by the school principal and forwarded to the school advisory council chair. Election will be by a simple majority vote (50 + 1) of eligible parents/guardians at a designated voting day. Those unable to vote that day can contact the school to arrange to vote prior to the voting day. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be organized.

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Teachers and support staff

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

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 letter which explains why the applicant is interested in being on the school advisory council.

In an effort to ensure diverse representation of membership from the African Nova Scotian community self-identified individuals will be considered as they meet the requirements outlined for community membership. If the SAC is not able to fill the position a self-identified parent/guardian may be selected to fill the position.

Terms of service

Terms of service for each representative group are the following:

- Parents/guardians are elected for a term of two years. Parents/guardians elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.
- Teachers are elected/chosen for a term of two years. Teachers 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.

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Executive

The executive will consist of a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and principal. The annual selection of 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. The chair should not be an employee of the Halifax Regional Centre for Education.

Agenda and meeting summary

The chair will draw up the meeting agenda in consultation with the principal five days prior to each meeting. Copies of the agenda will be distributed to each member by email, along with any other information that is relevant to the agenda items. Agendas from each meeting will be kept in Joseph Howe School's records, in either print or electronic format. Agendas will be made available to the public upon request and posted on the school website.

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 of Joseph Howe School to be included in the school record in either print or electronic format. Meeting summaries will be made available to the public upon request and posted on the school website.

Meetings

Meetings will be conducted according to the following guidelines:

- A regular meeting schedule will be determined at the initial meeting of the school year with a minimum of four meetings annually. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the Joseph Howe School SAC. Meetings will be a maximum of 90 minutes in length unless the SAC agrees by consensus to go longer.
- Members of the public who wish to address the school advisory council are asked to inform the SAC through the chair or the school principal in writing at least one week prior to the school advisory council 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 school advisory council secretary or the school advisory council 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.

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Quorum

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

In addition, the principal or designate 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 it 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 (50% + 1) will be required for those members present.
- Decisions and recommendations will be recorded in the meeting summary.

School improvement plan and annual report

The school improvement plan for Joseph Howe 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 monitoring progress and improvements under the plan.

Joseph Howe Elementary School

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

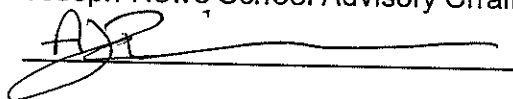
Adopting and amending bylaws

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.

Parties to the agreement

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

Joseph Howe School Advisory Chair



Date

04/11/2023

HRCE Regional Executive Director of Education

Date

Joseph Howe Elementary School

Joseph Howe School Composition of School Advisory Council 2022 - 2023

| | Member | Name | Completion Of Term |
|----|------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Principal or Designate | Michael MacDonald (Keisha Brown) | Permanent Members |
| 2 | Parent / Chair | Amy Richardson | September, 2023 |
| 3 | Parent | Samantha McPhee | September, 2023 |
| 4 | Parent | Sheleema Flint | September, 2023 |
| 5 | Parent | Fatima Hussein | September, 2023 |
| 5 | Teacher | Taylor Velemirovich | September, 2023 |
| 6 | Teacher | Sara Jennex | September, 2023 |
| 7 | Teacher | Terin DeWolf | September, 2023 |
| 8 | Community Member | Brenda Hibbits | September, 2023 |
| 9 | Community Member | Aponnia Perri | September, 2023 |
| 10 | Community Member | TBD | September, 2023 |

School Advisory Council Records

This information is intended to assist School Advisory Councils (SACs) in making decisions related to record keeping. Please note that records may be subject to the *Nova Scotia Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPOP Act). More information on the act can be obtained from the RCE/CSAP Information Access and Privacy Manager.

Retention of Records

SACs generate records during their operations. These records include:

- SAC agreements
- SAC bylaws
- meeting agendas
- meeting summaries
- supporting meeting documents (e.g., a presentation given at a meeting)
- annual reports

As a best practice, it is suggested that the SAC retain these records for seven years in a manner of their choosing (e.g., digital or hard copy). This is the recommended timeframe because these records may contain financial information (e.g., spending discussions or decisions). Even if the record does not contain financial information, it is still best to retain it for the full seven years as it may contain useful information for understanding the historical context of SAC operations.

Public Availability of Records

SACs are required to make the following records publicly available:

- meeting agendas
- meeting summaries
- annual reports

Based on best practices from other jurisdictions, it is suggested that these records remain available publicly for three years (i.e., on the school website). Once removed from the website, these records should be stored with other SAC records and retained an additional four years to meet the full seven year retention period as outlined above.

Destruction of Records

SACs should establish roles and responsibilities around the destruction of records. Records may be destroyed by either the SAC chair, school principal, or SAC secretary based on SAC direction. This direction may be arrived at via consensus of or motion of the SAC. Records should be destroyed in a secure manner that makes them irretrievable, such as shredding for paper records or permanent deletion for electronic records.

