

# Highland Park Junior High School Advisory Council

## Letter of Agreement

The purpose of this letter is to establish the terms and conditions of the agreement between the Highland Park School Advisory Council, and the Department of Education to cooperate an Advisory Council at the school level.

The parties agree to the following:

### 1. Duration of the Agreement

The agreement begins on the date of signing. The partners will review the agreement annually, before November 30<sup>th</sup>. Any mutually agreed upon revisions can be made at that time.

### 2. Structure of the Council

- (a) The membership of the council will include
- 2 Parents
  - 1 Staff
  - 1 Support Worker
  - 1 Community Member
  - 7 Students
  - Principal or Principal's designate

Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of our community including Aboriginals, African-Canadians, racially visible persons and persons with disabilities.

**See "Appendix A" for Council Election Guidelines.**

- (b) Council members will serve for the duration of:

Partner	Name	Completion of Term
Parent	Angela Comeau (Chair)	September 2018
Parent	Nancy Nazer	September 2018
Teacher	Erik Lang	September 2018
Support Worker	Ann Marie Danch	September 2018
Community Member	Jon Frost	September 2018
Gr. 7 Student	Ava Putnam	June 2018
Gr. 7 Student	Sara MacDonald Pyke	June 2018
Gr. 7 Student	Peter Pottie	June 2018
Gr. 8 Student	Ryan Nazer	June 2017
Gr. 8 Student	Elie Nehme	June 2017
Gr. 9 Student	Mindy Moulton	June 2016
Gr. 9 Student	Theiaj Papa	June 2016
Principal	Lisa Daniel	Permanent Non Voting Member
Vice Principal (May serve as	Sheldon Lucas	Permanent Non Voting

- (c) Highland Park School Advisory Council will make decisions in the following ways:
- All decisions will be made by consensus.
  - If a consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be delayed until the next meeting.
  - If a consensus cannot be reached at the next meeting a decision will be made by a two-thirds majority vote of the council.
- (d) Meetings will be held on Monday evenings (6 meetings per year) from 6:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. with the exception of December, February, June, July and August.  
Special meetings may be called if needed.

**See "Appendix B" for Procedures for Decision Making.**

### **3. School Advisory Council Commitments**

#### **Highland Park Junior High School Advisory Council will be responsible for:**

- Providing all partners with a voice in decision-making.
- Collaborating with all school staff in developing a school improvement plan.
- Assisting in developing school policies that promote academic excellence and a positive learning environment.
- Developing ways and strategies to improve and support the extra-curricular program and special projects in the school.
- Advising the Principal and staff on the school-level issues related to curriculum and programs, school practices and policies, such as, student discipline, fund-raising, and parent-school communication.
- Advising the School Board on program changes, student support services, policy development, funding, and communication strategies.
- Preparing an annual accountability report that describes school improvement activities undertaken during the year, specific results that have been achieved, and factors that influenced the results.
- Maintaining effective communication among the partners by holding regular, open public meetings and circulating written information.
- Operating a discipline committee in accordance with school board and provincial guidelines.
- Participating in the selection of the principal in accordance with school board and provincial guidelines.
- Establishing a discipline committee in accordance with the Education Act and Board policies.
- Preparing an annual accountability report as defined by the Education Act that describes school improvement activities undertaken during the year, specific achievements and factors that influenced the results.

#### 4. School Board Commitment

Halifax Regional School Board will make a commitment to support the Atlantic Memorial Terence Bay School Advisory Council by:

- Providing an orientation session for School Advisory Council members and occasional workshops on special topics.
- Providing a facilitator to assist the School Advisory Council as required.
- Giving feedback to the School Advisory Council on the accountability report.
- Providing consultation on School Board policies and procedures.
- Meeting periodically with the School Advisory Council executive.

**See Appendix C for School Advisory Council By-Laws.**

#### 5. Department of Education Commitments

The Department of Education will support Highland Park Junior High School Advisory Council by:

- Developing materials to support school advisory councils.
- Training regional school advisory council support teams.
- Providing ongoing professional development sessions and conferences.

#### 6. Parties to the Agreement

We clearly understand and agree to follow through on the commitments made in this letter of agreement.

*Angela Comeau*  
Highland Park School Advisory  
Council Chair

*October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015*  
Date

*Lisa Daniel*  
Principal

*October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015*  
Date

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Halifax Regional School Board

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Date

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Department of Education

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Date

## **Appendix A**

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### **Guidelines for School Advisory Council Elections**

- All elections will be conducted by secret ballot.
- Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of our community including Aboriginals, African-Canadians, racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities.
- Teacher representatives are to be elected by teachers.
- Support staff representatives are to be elected by support staff.
- Parent representatives are to be elected by parents who have children enrolled in the school.
- The council may appoint community representatives for a specific term or they may be elected at a public meeting.
- When a position on a school advisory council becomes vacant, the School Advisory Council shall arrange a new election for that position. Alternatively, the council may appoint a person for a term not to exceed six months. The person appointed must be selected from the membership group in which the vacancy occurred.
- Upon formation of the council, it is recommended that elected or appointed members have staggered terms so that a minimum of 50 percent of the representatives are retained from one year to the next to facilitate continuity. The term for any position will be no longer than three years.
- The Chair is elected annually by the council from among the school advisory council membership. The Chair would normally be a parent or other community member. The Principal may not serve as Chair.

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## **Appendix B**

### **Procedures for Decision Making**

We agree to use the following principles and procedures when making School Advisory Council decisions:

#### **Principles**

- We will employ democratic processes and strategies in our decision-making.
- All School Advisory Council members will have an opportunity to participate in decision-making.
- Council members are responsible for participating in decision-making.
- All members will support School Advisory Council decisions.
- Consultation will be carried out with parents, school staff, students, and community members as appropriate.

## **Procedures**

- We will gather information and consult with partners when appropriate.
- Topics and issues will be discussed in a structured way prior to decision-making.
- We will attempt to reach a consensus on all School Advisory Council decisions.
- If we cannot reach a consensus, the decision will be tabled until the next meeting.
- When appropriate, we will consult with other representatives of the respective partners and return for a second discussion and decision-making session.
- We will record decisions and methods used in making specific decisions.
- We will inform school and community partners through the school newsletter.

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## **Appendix C**

### **School Advisory Council By-Laws**

#### **Membership**

The council for Highland Park Junior High School will have equal membership from all groups, including three parents of the children enrolled in the school; two teachers and support staff; and three students. Not more than one-third of the membership should be from any one of the above groups.

Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of our community, including Aboriginals, African Canadians, racially visible persons and persons with disabilities. The Principal will serve as a permanent member. The Vice Principal will serve as the principal's designate.

#### **Elections**

Parent representatives will be elected at a public meeting. Community representatives will be elected at a public meeting or may be invited to serve on the council. Teachers and support staff will elect their representatives. These elections will be held on or before September 30. Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of the community including Aboriginal, African-Canadian, racially visible persons and persons with disabilities.

#### **Conflicts**

Conflicts that cannot be resolved at the local level will be referred to the School Board. The Department of Education will resolve any disputes that the Board cannot resolve.

#### **Vacated Positions**

The council will refill a vacated position by holding a special election for that position or by appointing a person for a term not to exceed six months. An individual from the same membership group as the person who vacated the position

must refill a vacant position.

**Executive**

The executive of the council (Chairperson, Secretary, an additional member) shall be annually elected from among the members. This election must occur before September 30.

**Meetings**

All council meetings will be open to the public. The council must meet at least six times a year. The council will hold an annual general meeting in May or June. All meetings are open to the public except for committee meetings related to responsibilities for student discipline as outlined in sections 123 (3), 124 (3), and 125 (b) of *The Education Act 1996*.

**Agenda/Meetings**

The executive of the council will develop meeting agendas in consultation with the Principal and other School Advisory Council members. The agenda will be distributed at least a week prior to the meeting. Minutes will be kept for each meeting and included in the school's official records. These minutes will be available to the public.

**Support**

The school will provide, within the limits of its financial resources, support services, communication, and other reasonable assistance associated with the council's activities. These costs are expected to be minimal.

**Accountability Report**

The council and the school staff in consultation with appropriate partners will produce an annual school accountability report. This accountability report will be submitted to the School Board and Department of Education, and will be communicated to students, parents, and the community at large.

**Adopting/Amending By-laws**

By-laws will be adopted or amended by a consensus decision of council members. If consensus cannot be achieved, the council will use a voting procedure. Membership disputes which cannot be resolved at the local level will be referred to the school board for advice and/or mediation as requested. The Department of Education will provide advice and/or mediation as requested.

**Decision-Making Structure**

The council will agree on a decision-making process that outlines procedures and strategies to ensure the involvement of all the partners.