

**Vincent Massey Public School Council -  
Constitution and By-Laws**

Established: 10 Oct 2000

Revised: 20 Feb 2001  
Apr/May 2009  
**January 2018**

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**1 Organization**

1.1 Name

The name of the organization is Vincent Massey Public School Council, hereinafter referred to as VMPSC.

1.2 Purpose

VMPSC exists as an advisory body to the school Principal and the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board and/or senior staff in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Board and the *Education Act* and its Regulations.

VMPSC adopts the Board’s “School Councils” policy ([P.014.SCO](#) dated 25 November 2014), and the Board’s “School Council Elections, Constitution and Bylaws” procedure ([PR.509.SCO](#) dated 20 Jun 2001). However, the VMPSC Constitution and By-Laws take precedence where they differ from the adopted policies and procedures. Board policies and procedures are available for review on the OCDSB website, <https://www.ocdsb.ca>.

1.3 Mission

To actively support and enhance student learning through collaboration, communication and cooperation.

## 1.4 Goals

- 1.4.1 Support for student learning
- 1.4.2 Involvement of volunteers
- 1.4.3 Celebrate cultural diversity
- 1.4.4 Beautify the school's environment
- 1.4.5 Enhance student play and physical activity
- 1.4.6 Raise resources to support the goals

## 1.5 Objectives

- 1.5.1 Develop a strong relationship between home, school and the community at large through effective communications
- 1.5.2 Enhance learning opportunities for all students and help students reach their full potential with respect to learning, the community and society
- 1.5.3 Provide a forum for parents, caregivers, school staff and community representatives to discuss interests, goals and concerns relating to the school experiences and share these insights with the school leadership
- 1.5.4 Provide a forum for discussing education issues, Board policies, operating procedures, and school practices
- 1.5.5 Identify, study and respond to school, area, and/or system-wide matters which require community input
- 1.5.6 Inform families, parents and guardians about school activities
- 1.5.7 Attend community meetings on behalf of VMPSC where appropriate

## 2 Membership and Affiliations

- 2.1 All parents/guardians of students at Vincent Massey Public School are members of the VMPSC, as well as all members of the staff of Vincent Massey Public School.
- 2.2 A minimum of four (4) VMPSC members, who are parents and/or guardians of Vincent Massey Public School students, shall be elected to serve as executive officers:
  - 2.2.1 Chair and Vice-Chair or two (2) Co-Chairs
  - 2.2.2 Secretary
  - 2.2.3 Treasurer
  - 2.2.4 Chair(s) of each VMPSC committee
- 2.3 The VMPSC shall have a minimum of nine (9) members but shall be allowed to function with fewer members and vacant executive officer positions provided that every attempt has been made to fill all executive officer positions.

- 2.4 A student representative may be appointed by the Principal to VMPSC if the Principal determines, after consulting with members of VMPSC, that the Council should include a student.
- 2.5 VMPSC may convene its own committees or participate on school committees as appropriate. These include, but are not limited to:
  - 2.5.1 VMPSC Fundraising Initiative Committees
  - 2.5.2 VMPSC Event Coordination Committees
  - 2.5.3 VM Safe Schools Committee
  - 2.5.4 Other committees may be formed at the request of council to carry out specific duties or to advise VMPSC in areas of interest.
- 2.6 VMPSC is affiliated with the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC).

Affiliation with any other organization or any subsequent changes to an affiliation requires a vote at a meeting for which the VMPSC membership has been given notice.

VMPSC may appoint a representative to liaise with affiliated organizations. Representatives shall attend meetings and review materials of the affiliated organization. Representatives shall regularly report on organization activities to VMPSC and solicit VMPSC input as required.

### **3 General Duties of all VMPSC members**

- 3.1 Participate in VMPSC meetings
- 3.2 Communicate regularly with the Chair
- 3.3 Ensure that all written council-related correspondence is approved by the VMPSC and reviewed by the Chair and/or Principal before distribution
- 3.4 Act as a link between VMPSC and the community
- 3.5 Encourage participation of parents/guardians from all groups and from other people within the school community
- 3.6 Keep reports to VMPSC to a limit of five (5) minutes unless an extension is previously approved by the Chair/Co-Chairs/Vice-Chair.
- 3.7 Use proper conduct when representing VMPSC as per the OCDSB School Board Code of Conduct ([P.125.SCO](#) dated 13 May 2008)
- 3.8 Consider chairing or sitting on a committee if asked
- 3.9 Consider participating in information and training programs when offered

## 4 Specific Duties of Officers

### 4.1 Chair

The Chair, hereinafter also meaning Co-Chair, shall be responsible for the overall management of the VMPSC in accordance with the constitution and the Board policies and procedures. Specifically, but not limited to:

- 4.1.1 Calling VMPSC meetings
- 4.1.2 Preparing the agenda for and presiding over Council meetings
- 4.1.3 Ensuring minutes of meetings (council and committee) are recorded and maintained
- 4.1.4 Participating in information and training programs when offered
- 4.1.5 Communicating regularly with the school Principal regarding all issues pertaining to VMPSC
- 4.1.6 Ensuring regular communication with the school community
- 4.1.7 Collaborating with VMPSC members to assign and delegate roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Board policies and procedures
- 4.1.8 Preparing and submitting an annual report as close to the end of the school year as possible

### 4.2 Co-Chair

The Co-Chair jointly assumes the duties of the Chair as described in 4.1 in addition to:

- 4.2.1 Communicating regularly with each other
- 4.2.2 Agreeing on the division of duties at the beginning of each term of office
- 4.2.3 Achieving consensus between themselves prior to and regarding ALL actions pertaining to the VMPSC. A vote in council shall be the mechanism for resolving a dispute between Co-Chairs.

### 4.3 Vice-Chair

- 4.3.1 Communicates regularly with the Chair
- 4.3.2 Assists the Chair in any of his/her roles and performs responsibilities as may be delegated by the Chair
- 4.3.3 Presides over meetings of the council in the absence of the Chair

### 4.4 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall ensure the safe-keeping of VMPSC finances in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Board. Specifically, but not limited to:

- 4.4.1 Maintaining a bank account exclusively for VMPSC funds
- 4.4.2 Receiving, distributing and accounting for all monies of the VMPSC

- 4.4.3 Providing reports to VMPSC at all VMPSC meetings
- 4.4.4 Preparing an annual financial report and presenting it to the VMPSC and the membership at large to be included in the annual report
- 4.4.5 Other duties as assigned by the Chair

#### 4.5 Secretary

The Secretary shall ensure the safe-keeping of VMPSC records. Specifically, but not limited to:

- 4.5.1 Noting a full and accurate summary of all VMPSC meetings
- 4.5.2 Declaring and recording all votes in the minutes
- 4.5.3 Ensuring that minutes are reviewed by the Chair and/or Principal before distribution
- 4.5.4 Copying and distributing minutes for each VMPSC meeting
- 4.5.5 Posting a copy on the VMPSC webpage, posting a copy on VMPSC social media accounts, and keeping a copy accessible for all parents/guardians
- 4.5.6 Preparing correspondence as required
- 4.5.7 Other duties as assigned by the Chair

#### 4.6 Chair(s) of VMPSC Committees

Chair(s) of VMPSC committees shall be responsible for the overall management of their respective committee. Specifically, but not limited to:

- 4.6.1 Calling committee meetings
- 4.6.2 Preparing the agenda for and presiding over committee meetings
- 4.6.3 Ensuring minutes of meetings are recorded and maintained
- 4.6.4 Participating in information and training programs when offered
- 4.6.5 Communicating regularly with the VMPSC Chair and school Principal regarding all issues pertaining to the committee
- 4.6.6 Communicating regularly with VMPSC

#### 4.7 Elections and Terms of Office

- 4.7.1 Election of the executive officers listed in section 2.3 shall take place annually at the beginning of the school year and in accordance with Board policy. Nominations for executive officer positions shall come from the floor. Candidates are to be chosen from members in good standing. Executive officers shall be elected by ballot unless there is only one candidate. In this case, a motion to appoint the candidate(s) must be approved by a majority vote of the quorum present at the meeting.
- 4.7.2 A Chair may preside over VMPSC for two (2) consecutive years. A Vice-Chair may

hold that position for one year with the intention of moving in to the position of Chair the following year thereby constituting their second year of office. Having served two (2) consecutive terms, a Chair cannot be nominated or volunteer for the same office for a period of, at least, two (2) years.

4.7.3 There is no limit to the number of years served by other officers or members VMPSC.

4.7.4 A member of VMPSC may be removed from office upon resolution of council and successor appointed. For example, missing three (3) consecutive meetings without explanation or disruptive behaviour as described in section 5.4 serve as reasons for removal.

## 5 Meetings and Operations

### 5.1 VMPSC Meetings

5.1.1 Meetings shall be held at least four (4) times and evenly distributed throughout the school year. The meeting schedule will be set by council at their final meeting of one school year with dates for the following school year. The date for the first meeting is to be within 30 days of the beginning of school.

5.1.2 A special meeting must be called when council is petitioned, in writing, by a minimum of fifty (50) members of the parent/guardian community. Other special meetings may be called from time to time as deemed necessary by the Chair or other executive officer.

5.1.3 Every reasonable effort shall be made to provide written notice of the dates, times and locations of each meeting to the parents/guardians of all students enrolled in the school.

5.1.4 Every reasonable effort shall be made that meetings be attended by nine (9) members including:

- A minimum of 3 members of the executive
- The Principal and/or Vice-Principal
- A minimum of 1 teacher representative
- Parents/guardians of students enrolled in Vincent Massey Public School

5.1.5 The Chair will follow the meeting agenda. Issues for the agenda are to be sent to the Chair at least three (3) days before a scheduled meeting. Items may be added to the agenda at the beginning of a meeting, subject to time constraints.

5.1.6 Meetings are to last no longer than two (2) hours

## 5.2 Other Committees

- 5.2.1 Committees will be provided with a clear mandate.
- 5.2.2 Committee meetings shall be accessible by all parents/guardians. Every reasonable effort shall be made, in writing, to notify parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school of the meetings.
- 5.2.3 Except for the committee chair, other committee members need not all be members of VMPSC.
- 5.2.4 Any recommendations made by a committee must be approved by VMPSC prior to being appropriately directed by council.
- 5.2.5 VMPSC authorization is required for the committee to:
  - o gather information which is not available to the public at large (e.g. through surveys, teacher interviews, etc.)
  - o communicate with parents/guardians
  - o communicate with the general public and/or the media
  - o meet with committees or organizations external to Vincent Massey Public School with the objective of representing the school or VMPSC.

## 5.3 Quorum, Decisions and Voting

- 5.3.1 Quorum is required for decisions of VMPSC. To form quorum, a minimum of nine (9) members must be present. The majority of which must be parent/guardian members including a majority of the executive officers.
- 5.3.2 The Principal, Vice-Principal and teachers are non-voting members of VMPSC. Other members of VMPSC, defined herein, may vote at meetings. Members are entitled to one vote when a vote is taken.
- 5.3.3 Consensus is the preferred procedure for making decisions, with issues being put to vote by the Chair as required.
- 5.3.4 The Chair will recognize a raised hand and take questions/comments relevant to the issue, where time permits. A show of hands may be requested by the Chair to obtain an opinion or to take a vote.
- 5.3.5 A simple majority in favor is necessary to pass any motion. The results and/or decisions shall be declared and recorded in the minutes.
- 5.3.6 Should there not be quorum at a council meeting, the meeting can proceed with those present noting recommendations for further discussion, decision and vote (if required) at the next council meeting where there is quorum.

## 5.4 Conduct and Disputes

- 5.4.1 The Chair or Principal may exclude someone from a meeting for disruptive behavior, if they exceed the appropriate guidelines set out by the Board or if

they violate the school's code of conduct (attached).

- 5.4.2 VMPSC should resolve disagreements collaboratively and through consensus or voting at the council level. Should a resolution not be attained by council, the Chair or Principal shall request the appropriate Superintendent of Schools to mediate the disagreement. If a resolution cannot be attained by the Superintendent of Schools, the Chair or Principal shall refer the matter to the Director of Education.
- 5.4.3 If a VMPSC member is in a position of personal financial gain from a decision made by council, then that member should declare a "conflict of interest" and refrain from voting on the decision. VMPSC members should not accept gifts from outside organizations/businesses that could be construed as an incentive to use their influence with students, parents or staff.

## 5.5 Finances

- 5.5.1 The financial year shall be from August 1st to July 31st of the following calendar year.
- 5.5.2 All monies generated through the activities of VMPSC must be spent for the benefit of the students of the school and at the discretion of council.
- 5.5.3 All cheques issued on behalf of VMPSC shall be signed by two (2) executive officers with signing authority with the bank; preferably the Treasurer and the Chair. All executive officers should be signing officers at the bank.
- 5.5.4 Individual, routine expenditures of less than one hundred dollars (\$100.00) must have approval of the executive officers but do not need the approval of the entire council. Examples of routine expenditures include office supplies, advertising, photocopies, memorial donations and regular low-cost council initiatives like the annual Refuse-to-Lose award or babysitting services.
- 5.5.5 Individual expenditures totaling one hundred dollars (\$100.00) or more must be approved by VMPSC. Should such expenditures be required in between council meetings, an interim vote may be organized by the Chair in agreement with the executive officers. Background information, the proposal, exact dollar amount and response deadline shall be sent out to the VMSC email distribution list and posted prominently on the VMPSC social media accounts.
- 5.5.6 VMPSC financial records shall be reviewed annually at the end of the financial year by a person appointed by VMPSC who is not the Treasurer.



## 6 Constitution

6.1 This constitution takes effect on the date on which it is adopted by VMPSC.

### 6.2 Amendments

- 6.2.1 Any VMPSC member may propose amendments to this constitution. Amendments may be adopted at a council meeting provided the proposed amendment(s) were submitted in writing at the previous council meeting. Amendments will not be accepted from the floor.
- 6.2.2 A motion to accept the amendment(s) must be approved by at least two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the quorum present at the meeting.
- 6.2.3 All amendments shall be declared and noted in minutes of the meeting. They shall become effective as soon as they are passed unless otherwise specified in the amendment.

Adopted by the Vincent Massey Public School Council on \_\_\_\_\_

(Date)

Name, Chair/Co-Chair	Signature, Chair/Co-Chair
Name, Chair/Co-Chair	Signature, Chair/Co-Chair
Name, Principal	Signature, Principal