

## Eltham North Primary School School Council Standing Orders 2023

### General Purpose of the Council

The Council is the governing body of the school and assumes ultimate responsibility for all governance decisions, both legal and public policy related matters. Within Department of Education (DoE) guidelines, the School Council determines appropriate policies to ensure the goals of the school are achieved. In addition, the Council controls the school's monies and resources.

### Composition of the Council

The constituting order of the Eltham North Primary School confirms the composition of Council as:

- ☐ seven elected parents
- ☐ three DoE employees other than the Principal
- ☐ the school Principal
- ☐ two co-opted members of the school community who have a special interest in the school (excluding DoE employees).

Elected members of the Eltham North Primary School Council have two year terms of office, with half retiring annually in March each year. One Co-opted member of Eltham North Primary School Council has a one year term and one Co-opted member has a two year term, both which also terminate in March. Elections are conducted according to the Education Act regulations (as amended).

### Office Bearers

#### *President*

The President is elected by the full Eltham North Primary School Council and **may not** be a DET or School Council employee.

#### *Principal*

The Principal is the Executive Office of the school and a full member of the School Council.

#### *Vice President*

The Vice President is elected by the full Council. Although there are no restrictions on a DoE member being appointed, the position is normally allocated to a parent member of Council to allow for the Vice President to chair meetings in the absence of the President.

#### *Treasurer*

Elected by the full School Council. This person **must not** be a DoE employee.

#### *Secretary*

Elected by the full School Council. This person **should not** be a DoE employee.

### Office Bearer Responsibilities

#### *The President shall:*

- Act as chairperson of all board and executive meetings of Council
- Decide on recommendations for each item of correspondence in collaboration with the Executive Officer
- Conduct the business of Council under agreed rules and standing orders adopted from time to time
- Be an ex-officio member of all Council project teams
- Act as a signatory (or delegate) to the School Council financial statements, Council meeting minutes, and other key documents
- Together with the Principal, be the official spokesperson for the school in all matters with the media
- Chair all staff selection panels for SC employees (or delegate same to the Principal)

#### *The Vice President shall:*

- In the absence of the President, act as chairperson at School Council meetings and otherwise represent the President as required (only a non DET employed member of Council can chair meetings)
- Provide assistance to the President as requested
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#### *The Principal shall:*

- Provide all Council members with minutes of the previous meetings, agendas, reports of project teams and financial reports at the commencement of the week of the Board meeting.
- Notify Council of any apologies received
- Ensure that minutes of the meeting are recorded, and circulated to all Council members within seven days of the meeting (usually delegated to the Secretary)
- Table all correspondence relevant to the meeting
- Be the Executive Officer of the Council

- Be an ex-officio member of all Council project teams
- Abide by the Principal Code of Practice
- Ensure that adequate advice is provided to the council on educational and other matters
- Ensure that the decisions of council are implemented
- Ensure that adequate support and resources are provided for the conducting of council meetings
- Be responsible for the implementation of Council policies
- Inform the Council on educational, statutory, regulatory and Government policy issues.

*The Treasurer shall:*

- Present to Council a monthly statement of the financial position of Council
- Ensure that all Council accounts are audited according to regulations
- Ensure the administration of the Trust Funds meets with the terms of the deeds and Council guidelines

*The Secretary shall:*

- Write all correspondence authorised by Council
- Ensure that minutes are taken and circulated of Board and Executive meetings

The *Executive* shall comprise of

- President,
- Vice President,
- Treasurer,
- Secretary,
- Principal.

*Signatories of account:*

Account signatories are under the control of Council. Typically these are The Principal, the Assistant Principal, the President and the Treasurer. Another member of School Council may be delegated by Council to have authority if required. School Council will formally endorse the school account signatories each year and whenever necessary.

## **Project Teams**

Council will determine which project teams it requires and will review the need for each in an ongoing basis. Projects are allocated within the 3 main portfolios:

- Public Relations - marketing
- Resources – facilities & OSHC
- Education – policy

*Membership of Project Teams* shall be decided by the Council. Each project team must include at least one councillor but, in general, the convenor of the team need not be a councillor. Working parties may be formed to assist Project Teams. Membership of the project teams may be altered at any time. Negotiations may be necessary to achieve general balance of size and representation. Membership is encouraged from interested members of the school community with special expertise or interest in an area of the Project Team. The full membership of all Project Teams will be listed in the Council agenda each month.

*General*

All Project Teams may make recommendations to School Council. Project Teams generally meet on the alternate fortnight to the Board meeting. Each Project Team provides the minutes of its meeting, including any motions, to the Council.

## **Meetings**

1. *School Council Board* must meet at least twice each term with at least eight meetings being held in any calendar year. The times, dates and location of meetings are to be decided by the Council and reviewed annually, preferably after elections each year.

2. *Project Teams* will meet at least twice each term. The times, dates and locations of each meeting are to be decided by the Council and reviewed annually, preferably after elections each year. Typically, these meetings occur on the alternate fortnight to the Board meeting.

3. *Public Reporting* meeting. The Council must hold one public meeting (the 'ARM') to report on its activities and present a statement setting out the school's income and expenditure for the calendar year.

5. The *Executive* of the Council shall meet at any time deemed necessary by any member of the executive. The meeting may take the form of a phone hook up. No advance notice of the meeting is required however as much notice as possible should be given. The business of the meeting is confined to the purpose for which it is convened. Minutes of the meeting are to be circulated to the full School Council as soon as possible after the meeting (within 7

days) and are to be presented to the next Board meeting for formal acceptance. The Quorum of the Executive is President (or Vice President), Principal and at least one other executive member.

4. An *Extraordinary Meeting* of Council may be held at any time decided by Council, preferably giving all members 7 days prior notice of the time, date, place and purpose of the meeting. An extraordinary meeting may also be called upon by written request of 3 Council members being given to the President, Vice-President or Executive Officer of the Council. In these circumstances a meeting must be convened by sending a notice to all councillors at least 7 days in advance, advising the time, date, place and purpose of the meeting. The business of any extraordinary shall be confined to the purpose for which it is convened.

The *Quorum* for a School Council Board meeting requires that: not less than half the maximum number of members that could be appointed to the council under its constituting order are present, and provided that there is a majority of members present who are not DoE employees.

### **Decision making by Council**

A decision of the majority of members eligible to vote and present at any meeting of Council is the decision of the Council.

The Executive may act on behalf of the Council on any urgent matters or at any time when it is not possible to call a full meeting of the Council. Any decision by the Executive must then be discussed at the next meeting of Council, and ratified at the next Board meeting. If a matter is deemed to be of sufficient importance, the Executive may call an extraordinary meeting of Council to decide the issue.

### **Meeting Procedures**

**Board Meetings.** Formal meeting procedures will be followed. Motions to be put must have majority support of Council representatives at the project team meeting. Motions presented may be debated using formal rules of debate (see appendix) during the Board meeting. New issues / items may be raised in General Business section of the Board meeting, but Council may defer discussion/decision to the next Board meeting. The business of Board meetings must include:

- Acceptance of minutes of previous Board meeting
- Correspondence (in and out)
- Reports from Principal, Staff, President and Treasurer, OSHC program
- Minutes, recommendations and motions of the various project teams

Meetings can occur onsite or via video conferencing. They are to commence at 7.00pm and conclude by 9:00pm unless Council votes for a 10 minute extension by a majority of those present. A maximum of 2 x 10 minute extensions may be granted.

All decisions of the Council Board require formal voting. All members of Council including the Principal have one vote. If votes are tied, the presiding member (usually the President) has a second and deciding vote. Voting will be by show of hands, unless Council resolves to hold a secret ballot on a particular item of business.

If a member of the Council or a member of his or her immediate family has any direct pecuniary interest in a subject or matter under discussion at a council meeting, that member must not be present when a vote is taken on the matter, but may be included in the quorum for that meeting.

Visitors are welcome as observers and may speak if invited by Council, but may not vote. If the matters to be discussed are of a confidential nature Council may declare the meeting "closed", and observers will be requested to leave.

### **Agenda and Meeting Papers**

#### **Board meetings**

The *Agenda* is to include:

- A general outline of the order of the meeting
- A statement of correspondence sent and received

The *meeting papers* are to include:

- Copies of any correspondence to be discussed by Council
- A written report from the Principal, Staff Representative, President and OSHC
- Financial report for the period since the last Board meeting and minutes of Finance meetings (monthly financial statements, and monthly summary sheets. to be tabled half hour prior to the meeting).
- Report of final recommendations from Project Teams
- Information about forthcoming camps and excursions in order to approve/disapprove them taking due regard of DoE guidelines.

## Responsibility of Council Members

Each member of Council is expected to:

- Thoroughly scrutinise the papers circulated prior to each meeting
- Be an active member of at least one project team
- Maintain confidentiality
- Have a prime responsibility to the interests of Council above that of any particular interest group
- Adhere to the School Councillor's Code of Practice ('Code of Conduct')
- Regularly attend Council meetings. (Absence from 3 consecutive meetings of council without special leave previously being granted by the council will cause a casual vacancy on council.)
- Maintain an awareness of education initiatives and developments
- Participate in at least one annual professional development activity pertinent to the operation of School Councils

## Council Project Team Guidelines

Project Teams shall:

- Have a School Council member as the official representative of Council.
- Operate within the brief decided by the Council to achieve the outcome desired by Council. The brief may specify an investigation, developing a plan of action, or carrying out an approved action plan
- Advise the school community of the specified project, and invite participation so as to use the available skills and resources of the whole community
- Prepare submissions for programs to be considered when budgets are prepared
- Advise the Finance Team of projected non-budget costs
- Report to Council meetings as specified in the brief
- Make final recommendations for approval to the Council Board
- Be wound up when Council has approved their recommended course of action, or the action plan has been carried out to the satisfaction of Council.

The Convenor of Project Teams shall:

- Be a member of the School Council
- Be nominated by School Council as the convenor
- Call all meetings and provide all team members with an agenda prior to the meeting
- Arrange another member to chair the meeting in their absence
- Within one week after each meeting, provide the Council Executive Officer written minutes of the meeting and any recommendations/motions or final report for Council consideration
- Ensure that the above guidelines are carried out.

The Executive Project Team shall:

- Make decisions of a routine nature on the behalf of the Council when necessary because of urgency between meetings.
- If it deemed a matter of sufficient importance, call an extraordinary meeting of the Council to discuss an issue.
- Report of any decisions taken to the next School Council meeting

The Finance Project Team shall:

- Oversee the annual program budget process and monitor progressive expenditure within program budgets.
- Consider unbudgeted submissions in the light of Council policies and priorities and make recommendations to Council for approval
- Monitor Council income and expenditure including: local fundraising, school fees, trusts and co-operatives and School Council employed staff
- Make recommendations to Council for short and long term financial planning in line with School Strategic Plan goals and priorities
- Report at each full council meeting the financial status of the school.

Resources:

School Council overview of policies and guidance on school councils

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-overview/overview>