

**WARMAN COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL – SCC CONSTITUTION**

**Version: March 17, 2016**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Our purpose is to strengthen the capacity of our school to improve student learning. We recognize that this is a shared responsibility and so will facilitate parent and community engagement.

**VISION STATEMENT**

The WCMS SCC strives to build a respectful partnership between students, teachers and staff, parents and the community that will facilitate engagement in school planning and ongoing improvement processes. To support a safe and nurturing environment where all students have the opportunity to achieve their full potential in the pursuit of academic success and engaged citizenship.

**GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The WCMS SCC is guided by the following principles:

- **Representative** ○ School Community Councils are an integral component of School Division governance. They strive through their membership and their actions to be representative of all families with students attending the school.
- **Inclusive** ○ School Community Councils recognize all members of the school community can make a difference in the learning success and well being of children and youth. In their activities, School Community Councils engage in processes to ensure all voices in the school community are heard and all perspectives are taken into account.
- **Respectful** ○ School Community Councils understand school communities are complex environments. Councils recognize the importance of all perspectives within the community and strive to appreciate all viewpoints.
- **Trustworthy** ○ School Community Councils conduct their affairs in an open and transparent manner. Councils honour the right to privacy of individuals and treat all information they are privy to with appropriate discretion and sensitivity.
- **Responsible** ○ School Community Councils make every effort to respond to the needs and aspirations of the school community they represent. They regularly consult with students, parents, community members, the Board of Education, the school administration, school staff and others. In addition to this, Councils respond to requests for guidance and direction, by the Board

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of Education, school administration and other community agencies and organizations that support children and youth.

- **Effective** ○ School Community Councils focus their attention and efforts on key matters that make a positive impact in student learning and well-being. Keeping in mind their understandings related to their own unique school communities, Councils align their work with provincial and School Division goals and initiatives related to student learning and well-being outcomes.
- **Committed** ○ School Community Councils are committed to fulfilling their role as a vital link in school level governance. Councils evaluate their performance regularly, take advantage of opportunities to build their capacity and account to the public they represent and the Board of Education on their progress.

### **WARMAN COMMUNITY MIDDLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL CODE OF ETHICS**

School Community Council Members shall:

- Be guided by the mission, vision, guiding principles and goals of the Council;
- Know and work towards the vision for WCMS;
- Endeavour to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity, and truth;
- Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community;
- Encourage a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- Apply democratic principles;
- Consider the best interests of all students;
- Respect and maintain the confidentiality of student, parent, and community member information;
- Limit discussions at SCC meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole;
- Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise, respect the confidential and sensitive nature of some discussions and only proceed with these considerations in mind;
- Declare any conflict of interest;
- Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community;

- Contribute to Council decision-making, publicly support decisions made by the Council and be accountable to those decisions.

## **WCMS MEANS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION, COMMUNICATION & COMPLAINT PROCEDURES**

### **Means of Public Consultation**

- Monthly meetings (open to the public).
- Informal dialogue between SCC members and the public may lead to formal agenda items being brought forward.
- Annual General Meeting (open to the public).
- Surveys and needs assessments may be utilized to gather information from the public as needed.

### **Means of Public Communication**

- The SCC chairperson will serve as the designated spokesperson for the Council to avoid any discrepancies in presenting the views and position of the WCMS SCC.
- Written Communication including email, posters, public notices, newsletters, memos and information pamphlets.
- Presentations or other verbal communication opportunities.
- Annual General Meeting and annual report.
- School website and newsletters.
- Local newspapers, radio stations, or other media outlets.
- Social media tools including Facebook and Twitter may be utilized as needed.
- Communication will be provided monthly or on an as needed basis.

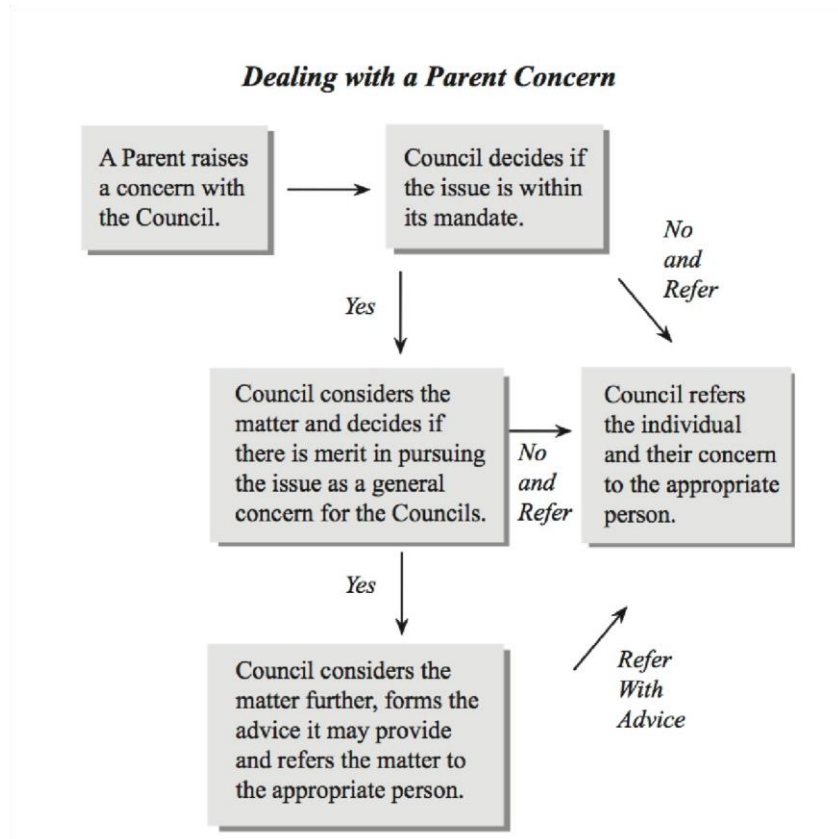
### **Complaints and Concerns Procedures With Respect to School Related issues**

- Any matter concerning an individual student or staff member must be directed to the teacher or Principal. It is not the responsibility of the School Community Council to deal with concerns or complaints about individuals other than to direct the concern to the appropriate individual.
- The Principal, Vice Principal, teachers and other staff in the school all have carefully developed roles and responsibilities. For example, the Principal is responsible for assigning students to classrooms. This is a legislated responsibility; no one else including the Board of Education can make these

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decisions. The Board, Director of Education, parents and certainly individual teachers have ideas about how the decision should be made, and they should be listened to and their suggestions considered, but ultimately the Principal must decide which children will be in what classrooms. Similarly, teachers decide about the instructional approach to be used in their classroom. Principals and parents have valuable ideas about instructional approaches and they should be considered but the classroom teacher must make the final decision. This is one of their professional responsibilities. The duties of Principals and teachers are set out in legislation, may appear in collective agreements and may be guided by School Division governing policy statements and operational procedures. And of course parents are appropriately responsible for the vast majority of decisions that affect their children. There is also no shortage of advice for parents but, in the end, they must make the decisions in their view of their children's best interest.

- These different responsibilities must be respected. But from time to time individuals may express concern about the decisions that are made. These concerns may be expressed to the School Community Council and once there the Council must sort through how it should be dealt with, if at all. The flow chart on the following page sets out how the matter should be addressed.



### **Complaints and Concerns Procedures with Respect to Council Operational Issues**

Members of the School Community Council need to exercise flexibility when responding to concerns and complaints related to the operations and responsibilities of Councils. Generally, complaints and concerns fall into two categories:

- ***Informal Complaint or Concern Procedure***

Provided Council Members are comfortable in their knowledge and feel at ease expressing themselves, concerns or questions about Council initiatives or activities expressed informally to members of the Council may be addressed immediately by the Council Member. If Council Members are unsure of the appropriate response, they should say so but indicate that they will check and get back to the individual. If such a commitment is made the Council Member must follow through. After responding to the complaint or concern Council Members should always ask if their response has been satisfactory. If the individual is not satisfied with the response, the Council Member should explain how the concern or complaint could be brought to the attention of the Council in a more formal manner. Councils may wish to keep a record of informal complaints or concerns as patterns may provide them with valuable information in evaluating their operations.

- **Formal Complaint or Concern Procedure**

Concerns or complaints can be brought to the attention of the School Community Council in a formal manner in writing or by presenting the concern/complaint at a School Community Council meeting. Individuals or parties wishing to present at an SCC meeting must request to be added to the meeting agenda at least one week prior to the meeting by contacting the SCC Chair to make such request. Council will provide a written response regarding how they have or will address the concern or complaint.

## **WCMS SCC OPERATIONS**

### **WCMS SCC Composition**

School community councils will be comprised of two kinds of members: **representative members** (with parents in the majority) and **permanent members**.

#### **Representative Members will include:**

- Five to nine elected parent members that are representative of the student demographics of the school.

#### **Permanent Members may include:**

- The school principal (and or designate(s) reporting to the principal)
- The school vice-principal(s)
- A school administrator who may serve as the Council Secretary/Treasurer
- One teacher member
- An SRC/SLC member(s)

Other community representatives such as RCMP Liaison Officers, City of Warman officials, and members from various service or community groups may also be asked to consult on specific Council matters as they arise. **Membership**

- Membership in the school Community Council shall be regulated as per Ministry of Education Policy and Regulations and Prairie Spirit School Division Board of Education Policy with respect to School Community Councils. This policy also regulates the election process and should be considered when applying the Constitution.
- Members of Council vacating their position at times other than election/re-election, shall do so in writing to the Chair.

**Term of Service for Council Members**

- Each elected member of Council holds office for two years and is eligible for re-election.
- If there is a vacancy in an elected member's position, the Prairie Spirit School Division Board of Education may appoint an individual to that position.
- A Council member shall vacate their position as a member of the school community Council if the member:
  - 1) is convicted of an indictable offence
  - 2) is absent from three consecutive meetings unless Council passes a motion for them to retain their position due to extenuating circumstances.
  - 3) ceases to be eligible as a member pursuant to the regulations or the policies of the Prairie Spirit School Division Board of Education.

**Council Officers**

- The Council will elect the following executive officers at the Annual General Meeting on an annual basis, or in the event that an executive position is vacated: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Secretary/Treasurer.

**WCMS OFFICERS' ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Chairperson will:

- Conduct meetings of the Council
  - Ensure that all members have input to discussion and decisions
  - Prepare meeting agendas in consultation with the Principal and other Council Members
  - Oversee operations of the Council
  - Establish networks that support the Council and,
  - Act as a spokesperson for the Council
- The Vice-Chairperson will:
- Support the Chairperson in his/her duties, taking over when the Chairperson is unable to attend
  - Perform responsibilities assigned by the Chairperson and
  - Normally, become the Chairperson the following year
- The Secretary will:
- Take minutes at Council meetings

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- Receive and send correspondence and communications on behalf of the Council
- Maintain a membership list of all of the Members of the Council and ensure that appropriate notice is given for all meetings of the Council

**Schedule of Meetings**

- Monthly from September to June
- Annual General Meeting (set by Prairie Spirit School Division) to coincide with the spring election. **Provision of Special Meetings**
- Additional meetings of the School Community Council can be called at the discretion of the Chair, in consultation with members of the Council.

**Sub-Committees**

- Sub-committees may be appointed on an ad-hoc basis to deal with matters of interest or concern; all sub-committees shall exist at the will of the Council and shall report to the Council. No sub-committee may make decisions or recommendations without the knowledge and approval of the Council as a whole.

**WCMS DECISION MAKING PROCESSES**

**Consensus**

- Preferred method for decision-making
- An attempt will be made to inform all Council members when a decision needs to be made. In the case of a Council of 8 or more members, Council voted to strike the number "75%" and replace it with "a majority of the elected members". Council voted to strike the number "7" and replace it with "a majority of the elected members".
- Where a decision cannot be reached by consensus, the decision will go to a majority vote. The administrators and the teacher representative will not have a vote.
- For the sake of clarity, all matters going to a vote must be put forth as a motion.

**Majority Vote**

- In the case of a Council where 7 or less members make up the Council in its entirety, all members must be consulted on decisions
- In the case of a Council of 8 or more members, Council voted to strike the number "75%" and replace it with "a majority of the elected members".
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## **FINANCES**

### **Accounts**

- All SCC funds/accounts will be managed through the Prairie Spirit School Division financial system.
- The SCC shall maintain an operating account to support the operations of the Council. The operating account is funded through an annual dispensation from the board of education.
- The SCC shall maintain a fundraising account to support special projects and initiatives of the Council. The fundraising account is funded through fundraising activities, grants, donations, etc.

### **Reporting**

- The school administration will provide regular updates to Council of spending and account balances through monthly meetings.
- A written financial statement will be provided at each Annual General Meeting.

## **WCMS SCC – GOVERNMENT BY CONSTITUTION AND AMMENDMENTS**

This Council shall operate as outlined within the framework established in this Constitution.

The Constitution may be amended by the Council prior to the annual meeting of the Council or at a special public meeting convened for that purpose. Any subsequent amendments shall be reported to the public at the annual meeting. Should it be deemed necessary to amend the Constitution, the process shall be as follows:

- Resolutions regarding Constitutional amendments are to be presented to the Executive for their consideration at least 1 regularly scheduled meeting in advance of the Annual Meeting to be held each spring.
- These will then be considered and voted on by the Council. Decisions will be made on the basis of majority vote. Any changes that result shall be presented to the public at the annual meeting.

*Note: The Saskatchewan School Board Association: A Handbook for School Community Councils and Principals is used as a reference for the Warman Community Middle School Community Council.*