

LeMarchant-St.Thomas Elementary School

LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council Agreement

The purpose of this school advisory council agreement is to establish the terms of reference for the partnership between the LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council, Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE), and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) 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;
- four (4) parents/guardians of students currently enrolled at the school (with representation from both the English and French Immersion programs);
- four (4) LMST staff members; (3 teachers, 1 support staff)
- four (4) community members (who are not parents of current students at the school).

Names of the members of the LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council and their respective years of service are detailed in appendix A that is attached to the bylaws.

Decision-making process

LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council 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. During this time, there will be consultation and discussion with the appropriate partners and information brought back to the meeting.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, then the decision will be made by a majority vote of the eligible voting members present provided there is a quorum.
- A quorum is defined as at least 50% plus one of the voting members of the council, with at least one (1) of the four membership groups in attendance will be established when the meeting is called to order. Representative groups consist of parents/guardians, staff, and community members. In addition, the principal or designate must be present. The vice-principal is the designate as the non-voting member.
- If there is a timeline within a decision must be reached, an emergency meeting may be called by the chair of the SAC prior to the deadline.
- The principal, as a non-voting member, participates in the decision making of the SAC in a consultative role.

School advisory council commitments

The LeMarchant- St.Thomas School Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- Providing all SAC members with a voice in decision-making
- Collaborating 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 staff on any matters that are referred to the SAC.
- Assisting in developing school policies that promote student achievement and a positive, safe and inclusive learning environment.
- 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 minutes available upon request.
- 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 DOEED or the Provincial Advisory Council on policy and other educational matters.
- Participating in the selection process of the school's principal in accordance with the Education Act and HRCE guidelines.
- Preparing an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister.
- Developing by-laws to guide the structure and operations of the SAC and appending them to the School Advisory Council Agreement.

Halifax Regional Centre for Education commitments

HRCE will provide the following support to LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council:

- providing a yearly professional development session reflective of the roles and responsibilities of the School Advisory Council
- 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 the LeMarchant-St.Thomas 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
- Providing mediation when there is unresolved conflict between the SAC and HRCE.
- Organizing and/or supporting professional development opportunities for council members
- Providing funds to support the mandate of the SAC
- Providing a model and framework for school improvement (currently SSP)
- Providing information on new curriculum and policy initiatives

Parties to the agreement

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



LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council Chair

26 Jan 21
Date



Halifax Regional Executive Director of Education

27 Jan 21
Date



Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

04 April 21
Date

LeMarchant-St.Thomas School Advisory Council Bylaws

Membership

The LeMarchant St.Thomas School Advisory Council will have eleven voting members which shall include:

- four parents/guardians with representation from both French Immersion and English programs. (done by vote if more than four parents/guardians)
- four LMST staff members (3 teachers, 1 support staff)
- four community members;
- and the principal.

The principal is a permanent, non-voting member.

Eligibility for membership

Parents/guardians

- must have a child at LeMarchant-St Thomas School (LMST) and cannot be an employee of Halifax Regional Centre for Education or an employee on staff at LeMarchant-St.Thomas School.

Staff of LeMarchant-St.Thomas

- a teacher must be a teacher on staff at LeMarchant-St.Thomas
- a support staff member must be a member of the support staff at LeMarchant-St.Thomas.

Community members

- must not be an employee of LeMarchant-St.Thomas
- must not have children registered at LeMarchant-St.Thomas and
- must reside in the geographical area served by LeMarchant-St. Thomas or provide a service to or within the geographical area served by LeMarchant-St.Thomas.

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, relevant social media channels and/or the Home and School 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. If the number of interested parents exceeds the number of openings on the SAC, an election will be by a simple majority vote of eligible parents/guardians on a designated voting day. Those unable to vote on that day can contact the school to make arrangement to vote prior to the voting day. The principal and chair will appoint three individuals to act as scrutineers to count the vote.

Eligible parents/guardians are those who have children enrolled in LeMarchant-St.Thomas. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be organized.

LMST Staff

Teachers and/or 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 ,on relevant social media channels, and may be advertised in the local newspaper. All applicants may be asked to submit, in writing, a brief resume and a letter which explains why the applicant is interested in being on the school advisory council.

Terms of service

Terms of service for each representative group are the following:

- Parents/guardians are elected for a term of three years. Parents/guardians elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.
- Teachers and/or support staff are elected/chosen from their respective group for a term of three years. Teachers and support staff 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 two consecutive terms.
- A council member elected to an executive position may serve in that position for a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms.
- The principal position is a permanent non-voting member.

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.

Executive

The executive will consist of a chair, vice chair, secretary, and principal. The selection of the chair, vice chair and secretary will be done annually at the October meeting. 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 an employee of the Halifax Regional Centre fro Education.

Agenda and meeting summary

The chair will develop the meeting agenda in consultation with the principal and the agenda will be available at least 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 LMST 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 summary will be provided to the principal of LeMarchant-St.Thomas 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.

Meeting

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 6 meetings annually. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the LeMarchant-St.Thomas School SAC. Meetings will be a maximum of 90 minutes in length unless the SAC agrees by consensus to go longer.
- All meetings are open to the public. There should never be issues of confidentiality. 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.

Quorum

A quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of a minimum of 50% plus 1 of the SAC voting members present. Representative groups consist of parents/guardians, students, staff, and community members.

In addition, the principal or the designate (vice principal) must be present and are non-voting.

Decision-making process

The following principles and procedures will be used in making decisions. If a vote is required, use 50% + 1 of the members present.

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 will be delayed until the following meeting, which must occur within 30 days. If at that time consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will be required of those members present.
- Decisions and recommendations will be recorded in the meeting summary.

School improvement plan and annual report

The school improvement plan for LeMarchant-St.Thomas 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.

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.

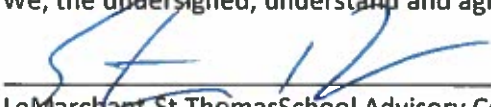
The SAC will prepare an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister. The report will be presented at the June SAC meeting and then submitted to the regional centre for education by the end of June.

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.



Le Marchant-St. Thomas School Advisory Council Chair

21-Jan-21
Date



HRCE Regional Executive Director of Education

27 Jan 21
Date