



SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2018 • VOLUME 31

HAPPY FALL TO ONTARIO

October is the beginning of a new season which brings out the extraordinary colours of nature. It also is usually the first full meeting of school councils and is the start of the new school year in terms of engaging with their school communities.

This month we feature a breakdown of topics that councils may wish to cover at this month's meeting. In addition, we are including a template of an overview of the school which will assist council members to understand the school community and to make relevant decisions when voting on matters before the council.

On November 3, 2018 it's time for the annual DREAM BIG School Council Training Symposium. This year's event will take place at Lester B. Pearson CI in Scarborough (Toronto). The response to the past few symposium has been very gratifying for

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us at Parents Engaged in Education. Not only have members been excited about the selection of the workshops and the huge vendor fair, but the opportunity to network with parent leaders from across Ontario has proven to be valued by all those in attendance.

The Save the Date flyer is included in this newsletter and a final flyer will be sent out separately. In the meantime, early registration is open. Simply email your name, school board and phone number to dreambigevent@parentsengagedineducation.ca.

I encourage all parent leaders, educators and administrators to continue your efforts to engage all parents in your school. To reach out and connect with every family to include them in supporting their child's education and feel welcome in the school.

Theresa Pastore

Theresa Pastore,
Executive Director,
Parents Engaged in Education



FREE EVENT
FOR PARENTS
ACROSS ONTARIO

Dream BIG

SCHOOL COUNCIL TRAINING



Parents
ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

EXCITING TOPICS WILL INCLUDE:

- Best practices for school council treasurers
- Best practices for school council training
- Best practices for school council parent members
- Recruiting, retaining and succession planning for school councils
- Put a team together to learn, share and network with school council members from across Ontario
- Effective fundraising strategies
- Building multi-cultural school councils
- Parent engagement in priority communities
- Social media strategies for school councils
- Creating an effective 3 year plan
- Building school partnerships
- ...and more

Save The Date

Sat., November 3rd, 2018

Lester B. Pearson CI,
150 Tapscott Dr., Scarborough
9:00 am - 3:00 pm



Register early by sending your name, school board and phone number to
dreambigevent@parentsengagedineducation.ca

OCTOBER MEETING TOPICS & ACTIVITIES

The October meeting is really the first full meeting of a school council following the election of members and the executive committee.

Prior to this meeting, the Chair and the Principal should meet and discuss the priorities each consider important to work towards in the upcoming year. They should also set up a working process that they will follow to prepare for meetings and how to implement or respond to advice from the school council.

It is helpful if the Chair and the Principal can put a few minutes aside 7-10 days before the council meeting and prepare the agenda. This allows the chair time to distribute it to members and ask if they wish to add any items to the old or new business sections of the agenda.

If you have followed the suggestions from the September meeting plan, executive members should already have had an opportunity to review their roles and responsibilities. At the October meeting, the Chair should ask the Principal to provide a copy to all members of the board policies which apply to the operation and

financial controls of the school council.

To better acquaint school council members with the school community and the structure of its operations, we have prepared a quick overview template which the Principal could complete to give a snapshot of the whole school. This will allow members to be better informed as they provide advice and make decisions on how they can support the educational experience of every student in the school.

(See Sample Template on page 5)

Provide a binder to every member so that's they can build their own reference manual and to house meeting agendas and minutes each month. In this binder there should be a copy of the school council by-laws and if there has been a formal long range planning document created in the previous year, there should be a copy as well.

It is helpful for them to include a copy of the report by the Principal outlining the details of the schools makeup and operations.



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GET TO KNOW OUR SCHOOL

SCHOOL PROFILE

Year School was built	
Total number of students this year	
Total average number of students in past 5 years	
Total number of teachers	
Total number of classes	
PA day schedule	
Special Programs offered at our school	
School secretary's name	
How long current Principal has been at the school	
Cultures represented by families at the school	
Number of ESL students	
Number of special education students	
Recess and lunch times	
Technology in the classrooms	
Nutrition or Lunch programs	
Available at the school	

Although the by-laws may reference these items it is helpful to review them at the first meeting and secure everyone's understanding:

1. Who can vote and how voting will take place.
2. When and how a member should declare a conflict of interest if there is an item on the agenda that warrants that declaration.
3. Attendance requirements.
4. If and what expenses incurred by members will be covered.
5. What items or actions require approval of the council.
6. What items or actions require approval of the principal.

The following actions can take place at the October meeting (although it may be a lot for the first meeting and end up being handled at the November meeting):

1. Review of the previous year's PRO grant. What was the plan committed to and how will this year's council carry it out.
2. Establish sub-committees in order to help manage some of the work outside of regular monthly council meetings.

Sub-committees may include;

FINANCIAL

Review finances every quarter with the Treasurer to allow a "second set of eyes" to look over the finances and compare them to budget.

ACADEMIC

The academic committee should start with a copy of the Learning Improvement Plan completed by the Principal for the current School year. This will allow the chair of this committee to present, alongside the Principal, what the expectations are grade by grade for the upcoming year and make suggestions to the council on how they might play a role in supporting the objectives of the SLIP.

- Throughout the year, this committee can

research or receive any Information on new curriculums or information released by the Board Or the Ministry that would be of interest to council members.

- Review the EQAO results paying particular attention to the Student survey regarding parent involvement in their learning. This will help shape some ideas for events that the council can offer to increase parent engagement with their child's learning.

TECHNOLOGY

The committee, through the Principal, can advise the Council on the status of technology in the classrooms and school. If members have the applicable knowledge they may advise the Councils on ways that technology can improve their meetings, work, reports, communications etc.

COMMUNICATION

The communication committee is commonly responsible for developing event notifications, newsletters, information for the parent bulletin board etc.

EVENT PLANING

This is a busy subcommittee that concentrates on planning all events for the school community. This can be a small committee because while it does the planning, it does not have to carry out every event themselves, school volunteers can assist.

FUNDRAISING

This committee is responsible for bringing ideas to the council on what and how many fundraisers the council should support for the upcoming year.

**It is important to remember that the role of the sub-committee is to do the work and bring it to the whole council for a vote on all actions or budget items to be carried out. They exception to this is when the council has given the committee a budget and set of parameters in which to operate, without requiring additional direction or voting by the council.*

3. Prepare budget for the upcoming year. This should include all income forecasted and the expenses that would be expected and approved providing the income meets the forecast. Never approve expenses that you have not raised the income to support. A school council must never operate in a deficit. The income forecast can be very dependent on the type and how many fundraisers are conducted.
4. Draft a three year plan for the school council. If the previous council had a plan which is in place, review the plan and update it with current items or add an additional year (this may be done over the next few months as this years work progresses).
5. Introduce School Council resources – ie. Ministry of Education, Parent Involvement Committee of the Board, local parent associations/groups that the board works with to increase parent engagement.
6. Introduce the new school council to the school community – the Chair should write a letter or notice to the community introducing the members of the School Council. It helps people relate to the council if there is a note about how long the parent has been on council, what grades their children are in and how they are involved in the council ie. Executive position, sub-committee, parent member etc.

This notice should also provide parents with the contact information of at least the executive members and direction to feel free to bring to the chair's attention any matters that they wish to add to the council agenda. It is worth noting on this notice/letter that only matters which affect the whole school or a large number of children can be brought to the council and all personal matters must be handled privately between the teacher and principal.

A message encouraging all parents to attend meetings is a great way to end this type of notice or letter.



PAUL'S

safety corner

DOWNLOADING APPS

Your child (or you) have a smartphone or tablet. What's one of the first things we do went getting one? Start to download Apps to it! It could be a game, social media, utility, productivity tool or any one of millions of Apps. Before you download ANY App - READ THE PERMISSIONS! Apps ask for access to various things on your device. It could be access to your camera, wifi, contacts, call logs, phone numbers, etc. That makes most people who are in the security space very nervous. If you are not comfortable with what an App wants access to - Do Not Download It! Classic example. I once downloaded a Flashlight App (on my test device, not my personal). Think about this. All a flashlight App needs access to is, your flashlight - period. But this App wanted access to: My wifi connection, my pictures, my camera and my contacts. It's called Data Mining. Your device is worth a lot of money to companies who funnel data. I know you care about your privacy, so one small step to taking it seriously starts when you download Apps!

HAPPY BACK TO SCHOOL

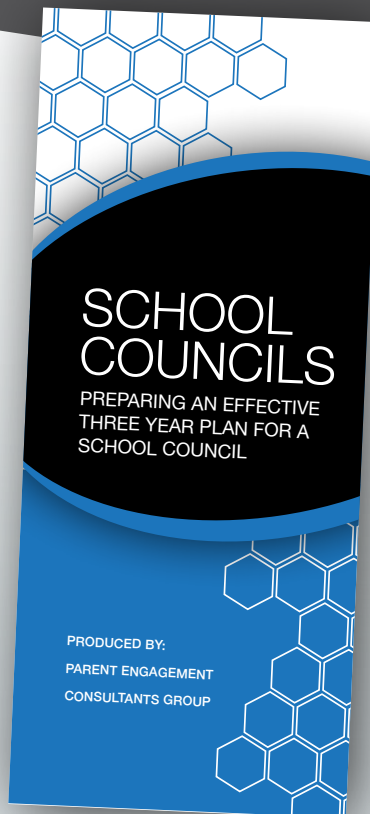
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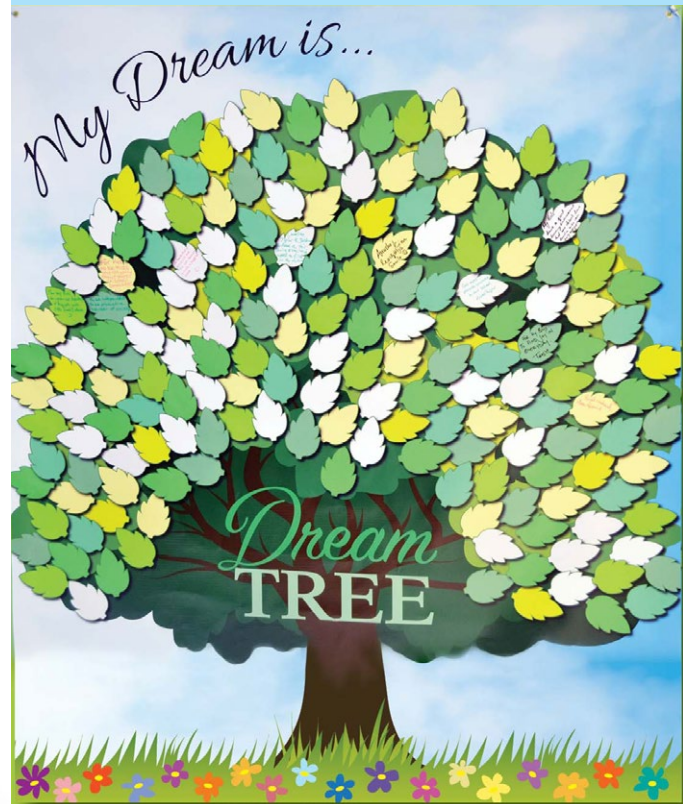
Parents
ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

FREE
this
month

AVAILABLE
FOR FREE
DOWNLOAD
AT OUR
WEBSITE



ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca



Parents Engaged in Education have designed a **"DREAM TREE"** banner. This vinyl banner is 5' x 6.5' with hundreds of blank leaves for parents and students to write their dreams.

This is a wonderful example of positive messages which will inspire the entire school community all year round.
GREAT FOR CURRICULUM OR PARENT/TEACHER INTERVIEW NIGHTS!!

Our aim is to raise enough funds this year to offer priority schools in challenged communities a **"DREAM TREE"** to encourage their communities to strive for the best they can be.

While we work on this program, if your school would like to purchase a **"DREAM TREE"** for your community you may do so by contacting
Theresa.pastore@
parentsengagedineducation.ca.

The cost is \$200.00 plus shipping

(This is cost recovery only, we do not charge in excess of our cost)

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ONTARIO

BECOME A PEIE AMBASSADOR

AND BE A PART OF YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL COMMUNITY



Parents
ENGAGED IN EDUCATION
Ambassador

A P.E.I.E. Ambassador will...

Promote the mission of the organization.

Share the organization's resources with their school community.

Work to engage other parents with their children and their school.

Be their child's biggest CHEERLEADER in school!


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ONTARIO
ONTARIO'S WATCHDOG

Can the Ombudsman help you?

The Ombudsman resolves and investigates complaints about Ontario public sector bodies.

Do you have an unresolved problem with a school board?

Our staff have helped thousands of parents and families with school board issues, such as:

- Student busing and transportation
- Special education
- Student safety
- School board administration

We can:

- Refer you to local officials who can resolve the matter
- Investigate problems and recommend solutions
- Answer questions and help you navigate the system



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 OntarioOmbudsman



Parents Engaged in Education

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ONTARIO

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PAUL DAVIS

www.socialnetworkingsafety.net

TEDx Speaker - 2015

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pauldavisSNS/>



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Parents

ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

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647-408-2091

Parents Engaged in Education is a not-for-profit organization formed by experienced school council members to provide resources and skill building opportunities for parent leaders across the province.

Follow us on twitter  @parentengagcons