



SCHOOL COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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BACK TO SCHOOL

Parents Engaged in Education are excited to welcome parents, educators and administrators back to a new school year.

This back to school issue features some excellent tools to increase parent engagement including our new Welcome Kit which can be downloaded free of charge from our website. The Welcome Kit is a template that allows users to fill in the information relevant to your school and will provide your parent community with the basic

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information that will help them keep up to date with school operations.

This year we are asking all parents to take the Parent Engagement Pledge which we have written to increase parent involvement at the school and board level. We are hoping that every school will have parents sign the pledge. It is an excellent way to increase parent engagement for students as well as for the school. We are requesting that schools who are taking the pledge will email us at parentengagementgroup@gmail.com and confirm they are taking part in the pledge challenge. We are compiling the results and preparing a report to the Ministry in hopes of advocating for increased funding in the area of parent engagement in Ontario.

We hope that our School Council brochure, also available for free download from our website, will be a great resource to attract parents to join the School Council at your school.

Lastly, our DREAM BIG School Council Training Symposium will take place on October 5, 2019. This year the format will be completely different. The focus will be on technology and how we can improve the operations, planning and communication tools (including social media) of the council. This

event will be facilitated by Microsoft and take place at the University of Toronto, Scarborough campus. As our students are embracing technology every day in their classroom, school council leaders must also take advantage of the tools that are available to make their operations more efficient and provide increased communications to their parent community. This is a one of a kind event and moves school council operations into the 21st century. Register early as we will be capping registration at 150 people. Please only register if you are confident you will be attending. As many of you know when you run an event, many people may register and only a few actually attend. Since we have to set a limit on the number attending, it is imperative that only those who are in a position to come on that date do register. We hope that all school boards will encourage their school council members to attend.

Once, again we welcome you to our Back to School Newsletter and look forward to working with you over the next school year.

Theresa Pastore

Executive Director,
Parents Engaged in Education



PARENT ENGAGEMENT PLEDGE

As a parent, guardian, or caring adult, I hereby give my pledge to support a high-quality education for my child to the best of my ability.

I have high expectations for my child and all children to succeed in school and in life.

I pledge to stay involved, serve as a positive role model, and maintain open communication with my child's teacher and school to ensure education remains a top priority in my household.

I understand that it is my responsibility to stay informed and involved in all aspects of my child's education including their mental health.

Alongside my child I will DREAM BIG and work hard with them to achieve their goals.

I believe that together, as a family, we can raise above the challenges and have our best school year yet!!

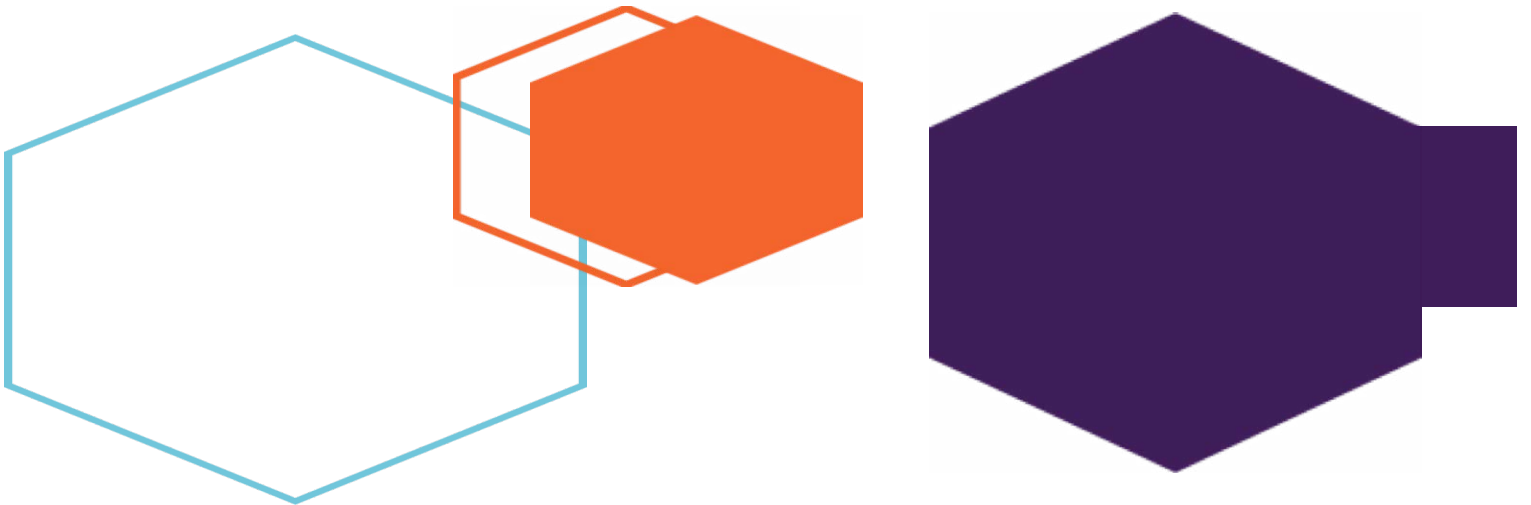
Child's Name

Parent Signature



Welcome to (School Name)

Welcome to the (insert school name) school community. This information kit has been prepared by your school (parent) council to provide you with relevant school information and to invite you to participate in all school activities, your child's education and the school (parent) council.



Welcome parents,

The start of the new school year can be both exciting and challenging.

For those returning to (school name), we welcome you back and encourage you to reach out and make new families to the school feel part of this exciting school community.

At (insert school name) every parents voice is welcomed and important in making sure our school is representative of all families in our community.

This welcome kit contains important information on school activities, dates and the role of the school council.

It is important that you stay informed about your child's class happenings and events at the school. In order to be sure that you receive information directly, please provide the school secretary with you contact information.

The school staff, the school (parent) council and the Principal can be contacted at the phone and email addresses below:

- Principal -- (name, phone email)
- School Council Chair – (name, phone, email)
- School Secretary – (name, phone, email.)

Once again, welcome to (school name) and we look forward to working with you to ensure your child and all students at the school have a successful school year.

Principal's Signature
Principal's Name

School Council Chair Signature
School Council Chair Name

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KEY DATES TO REMEMBER

DATE	ACTIVITY
(insert date)	Curriculum Night -- get to know your child's teacher, overview of the school and meet the Principal and School Council chair.
(insert date)	School (parent)Council – Annual General Meeting and election of members. This meeting is a great opportunity for parents to network and get to know the work that the council have done and plans for this year.
(insert date)	School (parent)Council meeting – all parents welcome, your voice matters; agenda posted at office.
(Insert date)	Halloween Dance – all families are welcome to attend this fun seasonal event.
(insert date)	School (parent)Council meeting – all parents welcome, agenda posted at office.
(insert date)	First report card is sent home
(insert date)	Parent-teacher interviews – this opportunity to meet your child's teacher to get a personal progress report and ideas how you can support your child at home.
(insert date)	Interactive Family Math Night – this is a must attend event for parents to learn hands on strategies to make math part of everyday learning at home.
(insert date)	School (parent)Council meeting – all parents welcome, agenda posted at office
(insert date)	Fundraiser. -- the parent council is raising money to provide students with (insert council plan). Please participate if you are able.
(insert date)	Holiday Celebration Concert – bring the whole family to enjoy our students performances
(insert date)	School (parent)Council Holiday Tea - join parents for light refreshments and celebrate the winter holiday season.
(insert date)	Keep the list going with dates and events at the school.



The (insert school name) School (Parent) Council

The Role of The School (Parent) Council -

Executive Council (2018-19 school year). New elections will be held for these positions at the first school council meeting.

Committees

Accomplishments

Future goals/plans

GETTING THE MOST OUR OF PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

First, and most important, every parent should take advantage of this opportunity to meet with your child's teacher allowing you to partner on a plan to support your child.

Before meeting with the teacher, it would be helpful to "interview" your child and get their perspective. These questions will assist:

- What is your teacher going to say about your work?
- What will the teacher say about you?
- What do you think you do really well?
- What do you need to focus on?
- Do you want me to ask the teacher any specific questions?

Making the most of the time you have to meet with your child's teacher, consider some of the following questions to get the most out of the time you have:

- Do you have any concerns about my child's skills level?
- Does my child have difficulty listening to and/or following instructions?
- Does my child have difficulty staying on task?
- Does my child have difficulty organizing notes, work, stories, etc.?
- Does my child have difficulty completing assignments?
- Does my child read with comprehension?
- How well does my child read and understand words?
- Does my child actively participate in your class?
- Does my child hand in assignments on time, complete and at an acceptable level?
- What work areas does my child like best?
- What areas are more difficult for my child?
- What are my child's learning strengths?
- Are there things we can do at home to help my child?
- Do you have suggestions for me to discuss with my child?
- Does my child seem to enjoy coming to your class?
- Is there anything about my child's behaviour or performance that you would like to share?

Leaving the interview with a strategy to partner with your child's teacher to support their academic achievement and mental health is the ultimate goal of the parent-teacher interview.



TIPS FOR STUDENTS ON BUS SAFETY

1. Take your seat promptly and sit properly, facing forward at all times.
2. Hold bags and parcels in your lap. Do not stick your feet in the aisle: someone might trip.
3. Keep your head and arms everything inside the bus. Don't throw anything out the windows or around in the bus.
4. Talk quietly. The driver must concentrate to drive the bus safely.
5. Save snacks for snack time at school or until you get home. They may spill or you may choke if the bus goes over a big bump.
6. No fighting, shouting or playing in or around the bus.
7. Always follow the bus drivers instructions.



QUICK TIPS ON PLAYGROUND SAFETY TO SHARE WITH YOUR CHILD

- Wait your turn
- No pushing, shoving or tripping
- Keep ropes and scarves away from playground equipment and fences
- Keep clear of moving things
- Hold on with both hands when swinging or climbing
- Only one person on the slide at a time
- Slide down feet first and sitting up

SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCILS IN ONTARIO

PARENTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Research shows that when parents are involved in their children's education children do better in school, are more likely to graduate, feel safer and do better socially with their peers at school.

Partner with parents, staff and the school community to benefit all of the students in your child's school. Have a voice at your school by running for a position on your school council.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed individuals can change the world, indeed it's the only thing that ever has." – Margaret Meade



QUALIFICATIONS TO RUN FOR ELECTION TO THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

Simply be a parent or guardian of a child in the school. Your voice to improve the student experience for all at the school is the only thing that is needed to be an effective council member.



Parents
ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

 @parentengagcons

Parent Engagement Consultants Group
33 Creekwood Dr.
Toronto, Ontario M1E 4L6
647.408.2091
parentengagementconsultantsgroup.com

SCHOOL COUNCIL

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Download free at www.parentsengagedineducation.ca

SCHOOL ISSUES A COUNCIL MAY ADVISE THE PRINCIPAL

- School Learning Improvement Plan
- School Budget
- Code of Conduct, including school uniforms
- Facility concerns
- Technology used by students
- Opportunities for parent volunteers in the school
- School events
- EQAO
- School safety
- Use of funds raised by the council or the school to better the learning experience of students

SUCCESSFUL SCHOOL COUNCILS ARE BASED ON THESE PRINCIPLES

- Inviting and welcoming school environment
- Inclusive and diverse parent representation
- Mutual respect by members allowing for every voice to be heard and valued
- Meetings that are at a time and place convenient for the majority of parents
- Consistent and regular communication with the school community
- Agendas that offer topics on a variety of subjects of interest to the school community
- Have a good mix of time to conduct business and allow members to network and socialize
- Empower members and provide good succession planning for officer positions

ROLE OF KEY MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

CHAIR – Lead the council, prepare agendas, spokesperson for the council.

PRINCIPAL – Work in conjunction with the council and Chair to provide resources, guidance and support actions of the council. Approve any action or communication from the council to the community.

TEACHER REP – to bring feedback and suggestions from the staff to the council and keep Teachers informed of issues being considered or worked on by the council.

COMMUNITY REP – a person voted on by the council to provide input or support, usually from the community i.e. daycare centre, local business owner, etc.

COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

The composition of a school council in Ontario is established by Legislation 612 and any relevant school board policy. It is made up of the following members:

- Principal
- Parents / Guardians of the school
- One teacher
- One non-teaching staff
- Student (secondary school, optional for elementary)
- One or more Community Representatives
- One person appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, the Ontario Association of Parents in Catholic Education or Parent Partenaires en Education, if the association is established in respect of the school.

The full text of Regulation 612 is available at the link below.
www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/regs/english/elaws_regs_000612_e.htm

BE THE VOICE OF THE CHILDREN IN YOUR SCHOOL – GET INVOLVED TODAY !

School councils play a vital role in the education system in Ontario. They provide a forum through which parents and other members of school communities can contribute to improving student achievement and school performance.

With the development of the Parent Engagement Policy, the Ontario government took significant steps to ensure that parents, through their school councils, would have greater influence in their children's education. Regulations were created that confirm the advisory role of school councils and clearly state that their purpose is to improve student achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

Today the role of the council is to consult and provide input to the school Principal, the school board and the Ministry of Education on matters such as; student achievement, facilities, school/board budgets, technology, etc.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT SUPPORT PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ONTARIO

Experienced. Knowledgeable. Respected.

It's the start of another new school year filled with great expectations.

Ontario teachers are ready to lead, inspire and develop young hearts and minds.

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A PROGRAM OF

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Resources are available at **no cost** via the website go to:
talkwithourkidsaboutmoney.com

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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!

For more information, visit
ParentsEngagedInEducation.ca

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ENGAGED IN EDUCATION

www.parentsengagedineducation.ca

info@parentsengagedineducation.ca

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