



Malvern Central School Council Standing Orders

School Council is the legally formed body that is given powers to set the key directions of a school. It is the major governing body of the school that, within DET guidelines decides the future directions for the school, determines school policy and oversees the school's educational performance, to support the achievement of the aims of the school.

It should be noted that the school Principal leads the development of the broad direction, vision and strategic planning for the school, involving the School Council and the broader school community, and has the responsibility for the day to day management and operation of the school.

The Council and Principal work cooperatively and in partnership in their roles.

Council resolved to accept these Standing Orders to take immediate effect on 17/09/09,

The Legislative Framework

The School Council operates under a framework provided by the:

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (the Act)
- Education and Training Regulations 2007 (the Regulations)
- Malvern Central School's Constituting Order

School Council Principles

School Councillors will at all times:

- Relate in a civil and respectful manner
- Promote partnerships and teamwork
- Demonstrate clear and honest two way communication
- Adopt transparent processes
- Adopt democratic, informed and inclusive decision-making processes
- Act with personal and professional integrity
- Act in good faith and the best interest of the school
- Act fairly and impartially
- Exercise due care and diligence
- Present a positive and united public position

1.0 School Council Membership

The Constituting Order of Malvern Central School states the composition of the School Council is:

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- 8 elected parent members, who represent more than one third of school councillors
- 5 elected DET employee members. The principal who is executive officer is included in this number.
- Up to 2 of community members. It should be noted that community membership is optional and that these positions are co-opted, rather than elected. DET employees are not eligible for co-option to this category.

Community members have the same voting rights as elected members.

Vacancies

Should a vacancy occur on Council between Council elections, this vacancy is filled by Council co-opting a person from the appropriate category who then completes the rest of the term of office of the retiring member.

2.0 Election of Office Bearers

The election of office bearers is conducted by the Executive Officer at the meeting immediately following the nomination by School Council of co-opted members (normally the March meeting of Council).

The term of office bearers shall be no more than 12 months without re-election by fellow Council members.

The following offices will be filled:

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------|
| President | (cannot be a DET member) |
| Vice president | (cannot be a DET member) |
| Treasurer | (cannot be a DET member) |

A position of Secretary may also be filled

3.0 Meetings

Unless otherwise decided, School Council meetings will be held twice a term on the fourth Wednesday of each month (except January and December) unless the Wednesday is a holiday, in which case the meeting will be either held on the nearest non-holiday Wednesday or by agreement, business will be held over to the next Council meeting.

If Council members are unable to attend a meeting, they are required to send their apology prior to the meeting. Council members are unable to appoint proxies to attend meetings on their behalf.

Meetings will commence at 7:30pm promptly and all Council members shall endeavor to be on time.

3.1 Quorum

A quorum requires not less than one half of School Council members currently holding office to be present at the meeting with a majority of members present who are not DEECD employees. Any parent members on School Council who also work for the Department are counted as DEECD employees for the purpose of a quorum.

A member of the School Council may be present in person or by video conferencing or teleconferencing.

3.2 Absence of President

In the absence of the President (at 7.30pm), the Vice President must chair the School Council meeting. If neither the President nor Vice President is present, councilors may elect a member to chair the meeting. This person should be a non DEECD employee.

3.3 Agenda

The agenda will be established by the President and Principal.

The agenda and associated documents will be distributed whenever possible by the Friday of the week prior to the meeting.

Members may request that additional items be added to the agenda in advance of the meeting. Council may agree at the meeting, that a new item is of sufficient urgency to require immediate attention.

The Chairperson may choose to reorder the agenda to deal with important items first.

Correspondence:

All correspondence addressed to or received by the Council and sent in the name of Council shall be available for perusal at each Council meeting.

Copies of relevant correspondence may be made available to individual members and committee conveners, as appropriate.

3.4 Minutes

All decisions of Council shall be recorded as minutes. Key points raised in discussions may be included in the minutes. Also included in the minutes are the dates and times of the meeting, those present and apologies.

The minutes shall also record, in a right hand column who will take action in respect of the decisions made. Thus, when an action decision is made, agreement will also be made as to who will implement it or follow it up.

When School Council minutes are submitted for confirmation, only questions regarding their accuracy as a record of the meeting are to be raised.

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The minutes of the previous meeting shall be normally distributed with the agenda and other Council documents by the Friday of the week prior to the next School Council meeting.

Once the minutes have been accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting, they are to be signed by the School Council President or the person who chaired the meeting. Business arising from the minutes that involve actions from the previous meeting, are dealt with after the minutes have been confirmed.

3.5 Extension of meeting Time

Unless otherwise agreed to, each meeting will normally conclude by 9:00pm. A motion for an extension of up to 30 minutes may be moved and carried if Council wants to extend the meeting. No further extensions are permitted.

3.6 Proceedings of meetings

The President's role is to chair Council meetings and to facilitate discussion. In order to do this appropriately and impartially the President* would normally refrain from taking part in detailed discussion. If the President* wants to be deeply involved in discussion/debate on a particular issue it is common for her/him to vacate the chair (the Vice President chairs this part of the meeting).

The President* shall endeavor to see that the meeting operates such that:

- Meetings have a clear purpose, are focused, and have positive and timely outcomes/decisions that are developed after careful consideration
- All members who wish to comment are given a reasonable opportunity to do so and all are treated as equally important in the partnership. The participation of all Council members is actively promoted
- All members are provided with the available information to enable them to be aware of the issue being discussed and jargon, acronyms etc are avoided
- New members have the necessary background to the issue explained to them, wherever possible
- Meeting procedures are clear and understood by all
- Agenda items are adhered to within appropriate time limits, and dealt with decisively whilst keeping a balance of structure and flexibility
- People stay on topic, with one person speaking at a time and everyone respecting and actively listening to the views of others
- Discussion is related to the Council's roles and responsibilities
- Ideally, reports are presented in writing and members have the opportunity to discuss options and proposals within them
- Discussion that would be more suitably held at the relevant Sub-committee is referred to it
- Discussion about individual teachers, families or students or confidential information related to any individual is unacceptable

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- Opportunity may be given to those not on Council for input on an issue, where deemed appropriate
- Proposed points of agreement are in writing to assist the minute secretary;
- Discussion is directed towards making a decision that would be generally accepted, effective, clear, and acceptable to those who will be required to implement it. Decisions will generally be determined by a show of hands.

All other members will assist the President* and Council by

- Cooperating with the President* on the above points and allowing the Standing Orders to operate
- Respecting opinions, allowing all voices to be heard and treating everyone equally
- Working together, trusting each other, respecting confidentiality, sharing tasks and seeking agreed ways forward
- Showing understanding and goodwill regarding the roles of the Council and the management/operational/leadership role of school leadership. Where the respective roles may be unclear, the Council President and Principal will meet to clarify the matter

The President* has both a deliberative and casting vote. However, wherever possible, a matter shall be deferred to the next Council meeting (in order to attempt to resolve the deadlock) rather than decided on by the President's* casting vote.

3.7 Communication and Email

Communication between meetings is seen as inclusive, constructive and fostering of teamwork. Council members will endeavor to raise significant issues or concerns with the Council President or Principal wherever possible.

Email to Councillors may be used as required to circulate information which will either clarify or facilitate/sign off on proposals between meetings.

4.0 Discussion Papers

Wherever possible, agenda items requiring a Council decision or ratification should be submitted as a discussion paper. The proposed resolution should be listed at the end of the discussion paper.

Discussion papers should be, wherever possible, limited to one page each, and should address the following points:

- What is the purpose of the paper?
- What are the main background and key issues?
- What decision is Council being asked to make and are there other options?

Discussion papers should be lodged with the Principal and forwarded to members by the Friday prior to each meeting as part of the School Council "Pack", or it shall not be considered at the meeting unless the Council determines otherwise.

5.0 Extra-ordinary Meetings

An extra-ordinary meeting may be held:

- a) at any time by the Council providing that all members are notified of the time, date, place and object of the meeting or
- b) upon a request in writing by three members, being given to the President of the Council or Vice President who shall, within fourteen days, convene a meeting by sending a notice advising the time, date, place and object of the meeting to all Council members.

The business of any extra-ordinary meeting shall be confined to the object for which it was convened.

6.0 Open and Closed Meetings:

While all School Council meetings are expected to be open to the school community, there may be times when the Council meeting, or part of the meeting needs to be closed to protect confidentiality or privacy or for another valid reason. Should this occur, School Council will need to approve a recommendation (called a “motion”) to go into a “closed” session. School Council should then go back into open session once the topic under discussion has been concluded.

Visitors or observers can be present with the agreement of the Principal and a decision by School Council, but they must direct all their comments through the chairperson. Visitors have no voting rights.

7.0 Sub-Committees of Council

Sub-committees have specific terms of reference. They operate in good faith and make recommendations to Council following research, consultation and discussion. They utilize specialist skills where appropriate and best practice is investigated.

Sub-committees remain focused on their terms of reference; their reports and recommendations are clear and succinct. Council members have time to read them prior to Council meetings.

Council has the ultimate decision making responsibility in relation to any recommendations

All school councillors are expected to play an active role in at least one Sub-committee, and all members shall be informed of Sub-committee meetings.

The Sub-committees of Council are: Buildings and Grounds; Finance; Policy

Working Parties

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Council may set up Working Parties to deal with specific and short term matters and make recommendations to Council. Any Working Party should contain at least one member of Council.

8.0 Annual Reporting

Council will present an Annual Report to the School Community and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, in accordance with DEECD time requirements.

Council will seek to make this report available to members of the School Community upon request and placed on the school's website.

9.0 Rescission

Council may need to change decisions and can do so in its normal way of agreeing to other matters.

* Refers to the Council President or the nominated chairperson of Council meetings

These Standing Orders are based on the Key Principles Underpinning the Purpose and Operational Framework for Malvern Central School Council (attached)

17th September 2009