

**Oyster Pond Academy  
SAC Agreement  
Revised 2023-2024**

The purpose of this letter is to establish the terms and conditions of the agreement between Oyster Pond Academy (OPA), the School Advisory Council (SAC), the Halifax Regional Center for Education (HRCE) and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) to operate an advisory council at the school level.

The parties agree to the following:

**1. Duration of the Agreement**

The agreement begins when signed by all parties. The agreement will be reviewed annually by the SAC, on or before June 30 of each year. Any mutually agreed upon revisions can be made at that time and will be submitted to the HRCE and the EECD for consideration, to become effective upon the approval of all partners.

**2. Structure of the Council**

(a) The membership of the advisory council will include

- 1 principal (non-voting member)
- 1 vice principal
- 3 Community Members
- 3 Parents/Guardians
- 3 Teachers

SAC members will be asked to put their names forward for the role of SAC Chair. The Chair will be chosen by consensus.

Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of the community including Aboriginal, African-Canadian, racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities.

When possible, representation will encompass the geographic area served by Oyster Pond Academy.

Membership disputes which cannot be resolved at the local level will be referred to the school board for advice and/or mediation as requested. The EECD will provide advice and/or mediation as requested.

(b) Council members will serve for the duration of:

<b>Partner</b>	<b>Completion of Term</b>
Principal	Permanent (non-voting)
Vice Principal	Permanent (non-voting)
Teacher	3 years
Parent	2 years
Community Member	1 year
Support Staff	2 years

SAC membership will be for a maximum of two (2) consecutive terms. It is a staggered membership dependent upon the start and end dates for each member. Start and end dates will be recorded and kept in the SAC binder in the main office.

Members will have the option of renewing their membership for *one* additional year.

**3. Decision-Making Process:**

Oyster Pond Academy Advisory Council will make decisions in the following ways:

- Every attempt will be made to reach consensus for every decision. If consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be deferred to the next meeting and voted on at this time.
- If consensus is still not reached, a majority vote is required of the quorum present for the proposal to be approved.
- A quorum must be in attendance to make a decision. A quorum will consist of a minimum of five (5) of the voting members of the SAC and shall include a minimum of one member from each representative group which consists of parents/guardians, staff, students, and community members.
- In addition, the principal or designate shall be present. The vice-principal is the designate.
- All decisions reached the during meeting will be supported publically by all council members. The Chair is the official spokesperson.
- If the issue is time sensitive and a decision needs to be made during a particular meeting, an emergency meeting may be called by the Chair of the SAC prior to the deadline. Vacated positions must be refilled by individuals from the same membership group as the person who vacated the position.

**4. School Advisory Council Commitments**

Oyster Pond Academy Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- providing all partners with a voice in decision making
- collaborating with the principal and participating in efforts to improve student achievement and students and community well-being by receiving information on the school improvement plan and monitoring progress and improvement under the plan
- assisting with advice in developing school policies which promote student achievement and safe and inclusive schools.
- developing strategies to improve and support the extracurricular programs and special projects of the school
- maintaining effective communication among the partners by holding regular public meetings and making copies of agendas and minutes available upon request
- advising the principal and staff on any matters that are referred to the SAC by the principal, the regional centre or the Minister
- in accordance with the terms of the SAC agreement, determining priorities for spending the funds allocated to support the mandate of the SAC
- advising the EECD or the Provincial Advisory Council on policy and other educational matters
- preparing an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister.

#### **5. Regional Education Centre for Education (HRCE) Commitments**

HRCE will provide the following support the Oyster Pond Academy Advisory Council:

- Orientation and in-service sessions for council members, and workshops on special topics upon request
- Provide a facilitator to assist the School Advisory Council as required
- Feedback to the SAC on the SSP and the annual report
- Provide opportunities to give input on HRCE policies and procedures
- Meet with the Regional Executive Director of Education or designate and the SAC upon request
- Copies of policies via the HRCE website
- Mediation services when there is unresolved conflict between the SAC and the principal

#### **6. Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) Commitments**

The Department of Education will support Oyster Pond Academy School Advisory Council by:

- developing materials to support 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 the HRCE
- providing ongoing professional development sessions for SAC members

**7. Parties to the Agreement**

We clearly understand and agree to follow through on the commitments made in this letter of agreement

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Advisory Council Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal OPA

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Halifax

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nova Scotia Department of Education and  
Early Childhood Development

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Oyster Pond Academy  
School Advisory Council By-Laws  
Membership**

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**Membership**

The SAC for Oyster Pond Academy will have 11 members  
The principal will serve as a permanent non-voting member.

**Eligibility for membership**

*Parents/guardians*

- must have a child at Oyster Pond Academy and cannot be a Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) employee on staff at Oyster Pond Academy (OPA).

*Teachers*

- must be a Licensed teacher on staff at Oyster Pond Academy

*Students*

- Every effort will be made to encourage students to participate on the OPA SAC.

*Support Staff*

- must be on the support staff at Oyster Pond Academy

*Community members*

- must reside in the geographical area served by Oyster Pond Academy or provide a service to or within the geographical area served by OPA. Community members of the council must not also be a parent/guardian with a child in the school.

**Elections:**

Elections will be held in September. Community representatives will be appointed by the SAC.

*Parents/guardians*

A call for nominations may be made during the first two weeks of September through the school website, newsletters via the SWIFT K12 (phone/email messaging system), and/or the Home and School Association.

In the event of a surplus of applicants for openings on the SAC, applicants will be asked to submit a letter of expression of interest. Expressions of interest will be received by the principal and forwarded to the SAC Chair, who along with remaining SAC members, will make recommendations. After a vetting process, a majority vote will occur at a designated voting meeting.

*Teachers and support staff*

Teachers and support staff will elect their representatives. Student representatives will be selected by the SAC from the student body.

*Community Members*

A call for nominations may be made during the first two weeks of September through the school website, newsletters via the SWIFTK12 (phone/email messaging system), and/or the Home and School Association.

In the event of a surplus of applicants for openings on the SAC, applicants will be asked to submit an expression of interest letter. Expressions of interest will be received by the principal and forwarded to the SAC Chair, who along with remaining SAC members, will make recommendations. After a vetting process, a majority vote will occur at a designated voting meeting

**Vacated Positions:**

The council will refill a vacated position by holding a special election for that position or by appointing a person for the interim for a term to be determined by the council. A vacant position must be refilled by an individual from the same membership group as the person who vacated the position.

**Executive:**

The executive of the council (chair, secretary, an additional member) shall be annually elected from among the members. This election will be done at the October meeting.

**Meetings:**

All council meetings will be open to the public. Meeting related to student discipline are closed to the public. Any member of the public who wishes to speak at council meetings must submit an agenda at least one week prior to the council meeting.

- (c) Meetings will be scheduled on Wednesday evenings from 6:00 – 7:00 PM.
- (d) Meetings will be held at least six times each year on mutually agreed upon dates..
- (e) Regular attendance at monthly meetings is expected. When an individual is absent and decisions are made during an absence the individual will publicly support the decision of the council.

**Attendance:**

It shall be the responsibility of council members to notify the secretary or Chair in advance if they are unable to attend a meeting. Any member may be removed by

consensus of council if they miss more than three (3) meetings per year for reasons other than work, health or travel.

**Agenda/Minutes:**

SAC meeting agendas will be created by the principal in consultation with the vice-principal and shared with SAC members at the beginning of each SAC meeting. If changes to the agenda are required/requested, they will be made and so noted in the minutes.

Agenda from each meeting will be “housed” in an electronic format.

Minutes will be kept for each meeting and included in the school’s official records. These minutes will be available to the public.

**Communication:**

All public statements from the council shall first be discussed and approved by consensus. The chair or delegate shall represent the council in public.

**Adopting/Amending By-Laws:**

A notice of motion, given one meeting in advance, is required to amend the by-laws.

By-laws will be amended/adopted by a consensus of council members. If consensus cannot be reached, the council will move to vote.

The amended by-laws will be forwarded to the regional executive director for approval, and the bylaws or amendments become effective upon receipt of this approval.

**Decision Making Structure:**

The council will agree on a decision-making process that outlines procedures to ensure the involvement of all partners.

All SAC members are responsible for making decisions that ensure the best education possible for our students

Council decisions will be by consensus whenever possible. If consensus cannot be reached, the council will move to vote.

Decisions and recommendations will be recorded in the minutes of meetings.