



Dartmouth South Academy

111 Prince Arthur Avenue - Dartmouth, NS - B2Y 0C5

Tel # (902) 464-2081 Website: dsa.hrce.ca Email: dsa@hrce.ca

Principal: Jacquelyn Reid Vice Principals: Ashley Grant & Sarah Petrie

Administrative Assistants: Amanda Drake & Doug Jarvis

Dartmouth South Academy: School Advisory Council Agreement

The purpose of this school advisory council agreement is to establish the terms of reference for the partnership between the Dartmouth South Academy School Advisory Council, Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE), and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 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.

Membership

The Dartmouth South Academy School Advisory Council will have eleven voting members which shall include

- three parents/guardians;
- two teachers;
- one support staff member;
- two students;
- three community members;
- and the principal.

The principal is a permanent, non-voting member. The vice-principal may attend SAC meetings as a member of the public and may Chair, and will replace the Principal as a School Advisory Council as a non-voting member when necessary.

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 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 be an employee of the Halifax Regional Centre for Education.

Eligibility for Membership

- **Parents/guardians:** must have a child at Dartmouth South Academy and cannot be a Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) employee on staff at Dartmouth South Academy
- **Students:** must include grade seven to eight students
- **Teachers:** must be a teacher on staff at Dartmouth South Academy
- **Support staff:** must be on the support staff at Dartmouth South Academy
- **Community members:** must not be an employee of Dartmouth South Academy, must not have children registered at Dartmouth South Academy; and must reside in the geographical area served by Dartmouth South Academy or provide a service to or within the geographical area served by Dartmouth South Academy

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:** Nominations will be open during the first two weeks of September and close one week before the advertised voting day in late September. Nominations are submitted to the principal and forwarded to the SAC Chair. Eligible parents/guardians of students at Dartmouth South Academy may vote. Voting will be by simple majority, with arrangements available for those unable to vote on the designated day. Three scrutineers will be appointed to count the votes. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be held.
- **Teachers and Support Staff:** Teachers and support staff will elect/choose their own representatives in September by the method of their choice.
- **Students:** The student representatives will be students from grades seven to eight elected through an in-school process from among the grade seven-eight student body.
- **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. All applicants may be asked to submit, in writing, a brief 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.
- Student representatives are elected/chosen for a term of one year.
- Teachers and 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 three 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 permanent.

Agenda and Meeting Summary

The chair will develop the meeting agenda in consultation with the principal and make it available at least five days before each meeting. The agenda and relevant supporting information will be distributed to members by email. Agendas will be retained in Dartmouth South Academy's records in print or electronic format, made available to the public upon request, and posted on the school website.

The secretary will prepare a meeting summary highlighting key decisions and actions. Once approved at the subsequent meeting, the summary will be provided to the principal for inclusion in the school record. Meeting summaries will be retained in print or electronic format, made available to the public upon request, and posted on the school website.

Meetings

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 six meetings annually. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the Dartmouth South Academy SAC. Meetings will be a maximum 90 minutes in length unless the SAC agrees by consensus to go longer.
- All meetings are open to the public. 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.

Decision-Making Process

Dartmouth South Academy School Advisory Council (SAC) 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, which will occur within thirty days.
- If at that meeting a consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote is required of the quorum present for the proposal to be approved.
- If there is a timeline within which a decision must be reached, an emergency meeting may be called by the chair of the (SAC) prior to the deadline.

Quorum

A quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of a minimum of 50% +1 of the SAC voting members and shall include a minimum of one representative from each representative group. 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.

School Advisory Council Commitments

Dartmouth South Academy School Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all SAC members have a voice in decision-making and work collaboratively with the principal to support student achievement, well-being, and school improvement.
- Advising and supporting the school community by contributing to policies, extracurricular programs, special projects, and priorities for SAC funding.
- Maintaining open communication with families and the broader school community through regular public meetings, accessible agendas and minutes, and opportunities for parent/guardian input.
- Providing advice on educational matters referred by the principal, Regional Centre, Minister, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, or Provincial Advisory Council.
- Reporting on the work of the SAC by preparing the required annual report.

Regional Centre for Education Commitments

HRCE will provide the following support to Dartmouth South Academy School Advisory Council:

- orientation and in-service sessions for council members, and workshops on special topics
- a facilitator to assist the school council as required
- feedback to the council on the school improvement plan and the annual report
- opportunities to give input on regional centre for education policies and procedures
- meetings between the regional executive director of education or designate and the school advisory council upon request
- copies of policies via the HRCE's website
- mediation services when there is unresolved conflict between the school advisory council and the principal

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development Commitments

The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development will support the Dartmouth South Academy 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 school advisory council and the regional centre for education
- organizing and/or supporting professional development opportunities for council members
- providing funds to support the mandate of the school advisory council

Parties to the Agreement

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

Dartmouth South Academy School Advisory Council Chair

Date

HRCE Regional Executive Director of Education

Date

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Date