



# Bylaws of Parent Involvement Committee

Approved March 2022

## Terms and Definitions

**PIC** - Parent Involvement Committee of the Waterloo Region District School Board. PIC is a statutory committee under Ontario Regulation 612/00 School Councils and Parent Involvement Committee of the Education Act of Ontario.

**Parent** – means a parent/guardian of a pupil who is enrolled in a school of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB).

**Parent member** – a parent/guardian who is elected/appointed to PIC for a specified term and is a voting member.

**Officer** – a parent member of PIC who holds a PIC Co-Chairperson or the treasurer position of PIC.

**Office** – means the position of an officer.

**PIC Co-Chairperson** – is the title for the two chairpersons of PIC.

**Board employee member** – means a member of PIC who is serving on PIC in their capacity as an administrator, teacher or staff member of the Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) and is non-voting.

**Community representative member** – means a resident of the Region of Waterloo who has an interest in supporting public education who has been elected/appointed to PIC and cannot be an employee of the Board. These are voting members.

**Board** – means the Waterloo Regional District School Board (WRDSB).

**Trustee** - means a person elected, or acclaimed, or appointed to the office of Trustee on the Board pursuant to the provisions of the Municipal Elections Act and the Education Act.

**Sub-Committee** – means a committee composed of some members of the larger PIC committee and other Community Members that makes meaningful, focused, and specific recommendations on various topics to help support the PIC mandate.

## Section 1

### 1.1 Mandate

The mandate of PIC is to support, encourage and enhance the engagement of parents of the Board in their children's education in order to improve student achievement and well-being.

The mandate of the PIC is to:

- support, encourage, and enhance meaningful parent engagement at the board level;
- provide information and advice to the board on parent engagement;
- communicate with and support school councils;
- undertake activities to help parents support their children's learning at home and at school.





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## 1.2 Purpose

PIC will achieve its purpose by:

- a) providing information and advice on parent engagement to the Board,
- b) undertaking activities aimed at helping parents in the Board to support their children's learning at home and school, and
- c) working and communicating with other established Board groups to support and enhance the work of school councils of the Board.

## 1.3 Responsibilities

PIC does not exercise any power over decision-making within the Board. However, recommendations provided by PIC to the Board will be given full consideration by the Board. PIC is responsible for:

- a) developing strategies and initiatives that the Board can use to effectively communicate with and engage parents in their children's education,
- b) advising the Board on ways to use these strategies and initiatives.
- c) collaborating with Board employees through the Director of Education and collaborating with school councils to:
  - i. enhance the skills and knowledge of these groups and individuals with respect to effective parent engagement;
  - ii. identify and reduce barriers to parent engagement;
  - iii. focus on the needs of parents who find engagement challenging; and
  - iv. help ensure that schools of the Board create a welcoming environment for parents;
  - v. communicating information from the Ministry to parents directly or through school councils; and
  - vi. determining, in consultation with the Director of Education, how funding provided under the Education Act for parent involvement will be used in keeping with PIC's purpose and responsibilities.
- d) establishing subcommittees to assist in achieving its purpose.

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- i. Subcommittees will make recommendations to PIC.
- ii. All Subcommittees must include at least one parent member of PIC and must be chaired by a PIC member.
- iii. Subcommittees may include persons who are not members of PIC.

## Section 2- Membership

### 2.1 Parent members

The majority of the membership of PIC shall be parents, with a total of sixteen parent members. PIC membership will represent the diversity of Waterloo Region with representation of elementary, intermediate, and secondary school levels, along with at least one (1) parent member from each of the three (3) cities [Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo] and four (4) townships [North Dumfries, Wellesley, Wilmot, Woolwich].

### 2.2 Other members

- a) the Director of Education or their designate,
- b) one Trustee or their designated alternate,
- c) one to three community representatives,
- d) one principal/vice-principal of an elementary school of the Board,
- e) one principal/vice-principal of a secondary school of the Board,
- f) one teacher presently teaching in a school of the Board.

### 2.3 Delegation by Director of Education and Trustee

- a) The Director of Education may delegate their powers or duties as a member of PIC to a supervisory officer of the Board. If such delegation is made it must be renewed at least annually. In addition, the Director of Education may designate a supervisory officer to attend a PIC meeting in their place.

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- b) The trustee member of PIC may delegate any of their powers or duties as a member of PIC to another trustee, and/or may designate another trustee to attend the PIC meetings in their place. Such delegations or designations will be to the alternate trustee member wherever possible, and, when the trustee member is not available to attend a PIC meeting, the alternate trustee will take reasonable steps to make themselves available to attend on the member's behalf. Any delegations or designations by the trustee member must be renewed at least annually and must be declared per meeting.
- c) Wherever possible, should the Director of Education or the trustee member be unavailable to attend a PIC meeting, they will designate the same supervisory officer or trustee, as the case may be, to attend as has attended any other PIC meetings that same year.

## 2.4 Terms of Parent Members

- a) All parent members serve two-year terms unless they request to serve a one-year term or, if they are beginning their sixth consecutive year as a PIC member, they may only serve a one-year term.
- b) If a one-year term is requested it will be granted so long as there are fewer than 50% of parent members currently serving one-year terms.
- c) Re-election or re-appointment is possible for up to a total of six consecutive years. Parent members wishing to serve additional terms beyond six years must go through the process set out in by-law (Sec 2.6).
- d) Members wishing to serve as a PIC Co-Chairperson may not request to serve a one-year term.
- e) A parent cannot serve more than two consecutive terms as PIC Co-Chairperson. However, they may serve another term as PIC Co-Chairperson if two years have elapsed since their last term in that officer position.
- f) Parent member terms begin in the September of the current school year that the parent is elected/appointed to PIC and run for one or two years from that date. In the case of a parent filling a vacancy, see section 2.9.

## 2.5 Terms of other members

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- a) Director of Education: term is ongoing.
- b) Community representative member(s): one-year term to be renewed annually.
- c) Trustee: to be determined by the Board. The Trustee and alternate Trustee will be designated following the Inaugural Meeting of the Board in December of each year for a two-year term, to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- d) Board employee members: one-year term to be renewed annually.
- e) The term of community member(s) and board employee members run for one year from the date of the first PIC meeting of that school year.

## 2.6 Appointment Process

PIC parent members as well as the community member(s) will be elected/appointed at the first PIC meeting of the year.

- a) Parents who are beginning their second year of a two-year term will have their membership affirmed at the start of the first PIC meeting of the year, and any officers beginning their second year of a two-year term will continue in those offices.
- b) Community representative member(s) beginning a new term are elected/appointed at the start of the first PIC meeting of the year.
- c) Process for appointment or election of new PIC parent members:
  - i. The chair of the PIC membership subcommittee, or designate, will attend the first PIC meeting of the year to put forward the recommended new parent members.
  - ii. If the number of PIC parent member positions available is the same as or greater than the number of recommended new members then all those recommended will be appointed.
  - iii. If the membership subcommittee recommends more potential new members than the number of spots available, then voting members will conduct a vote by secret ballot.
  - iv. The Director of Education will oversee the vote and announce the successful new PIC parent members. Other recommended parents may remain at the meeting without speaking privileges.

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- d) Process for election of new community representative member(s):
  - i. The chair of the membership subcommittee, or designate, will attend the first PIC meeting of the year to put forward the recommended new community representative members.
  - ii. If the number of community representative positions available is the same as or greater than the number of recommended community representative members then all those recommended will be appointed.
  - iii. If the number of recommended community representative members is more than the number of available positions then there will be a vote by secret ballot.
  - iv. The Director of Education will oversee the vote and will announce the successful new community representative member(s). Other recommended community representative members may remain at the meeting without speaking privileges.
- e) Appointment of other members:
  - i. The Trustee representative member will be appointed by the Board of Trustees.
  - ii. If a Board employee member has served fewer than three one-year terms, and wishes to continue for another term, the Director of Education will decide if the member will be invited to remain a PIC member for an additional year.
- f) New Board employee members
  - i. Where vacancies in Board employee members exist at the first PIC meeting of the year (or where the Director of Education does not wish to invite Board employee members to remain members for another year), the Director of Education shall, prior to the first PIC meeting of the year, invite Board employees to join PIC. Once that invitation is accepted, the person shall attend the first PIC meeting of the year.
  - ii. Once appointed Board employee members will be invited to join PIC subcommittees.

## 2.7 Remuneration

- a) A person shall not receive any remuneration and/or compensation for serving as a member of PIC with the exception of an honorarium for a member of the Board of Trustees as stipulated in section 191 of the Education Act.

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## 2.8 Election of PIC Officers

- a) Co-Chairperson
  - i. After the completion of all parent member elections or appointments, if a PIC Co-Chairperson office is vacant at the first PIC meeting of the year, then parent members may nominate any of the eligible PIC parent members to serve as a PIC Co-Chairperson.
  - ii. If there is more than one parent nominated then parent members will vote by secret ballot to determine the PIC Co-Chairperson. If there is only one parent nominated then that person will be acclaimed.
  - iii. After being acclaimed or elected, the PIC Co-Chairpersons will chair the remainder of the first meeting of the year.
- b) Treasurer
  - i. After the completion of all member elections or appointments, if the PIC Treasurer office is vacant at the first PIC meeting of the year, then parent members may nominate any of the eligible PIC parent members to serve as the PIC Treasurer.
  - ii. If there is more than one parent nominated then parent members will vote by secret ballot to determine the PIC Treasurer. If there is only one parent nominated then that person will be acclaimed.

## 2.9 Vacancies

- a) PIC members who leave in the course of their term will be replaced in a timely manner and is the same as the Appointment Process outlined in Section 2.6.
- b) PIC parent members, community members and Board employee members who choose to vacate their position prior to the end of their term must provide notice of resignation in writing to the PIC Co-Chairpersons. Notice may be provided via email.
- c) Vacancies for PIC parent members and community members will be advertised by the PIC membership subcommittee using a variety of methods with the support of the Board.
- d) When a member joins PIC to fill a vacancy for a member who left in the course of a term, the new member's term will end when the term of the member they are replacing was due to end.

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- e) The process for filling vacancies in officers is as follows:
  - i. Whenever possible, vacancies of officer positions will be filled at the next PIC meeting.
  - ii. If the PIC Co-Chairperson vacates the position prior to the end of the term then nominations from PIC parent members will be brought forward. If there is only one nomination, this member will be acclaimed. If there is more than one nomination, there will be a vote by the PIC parent members by secret ballot.
- f) PIC may continue to exercise its authority while experiencing a vacancy in membership.
  - i. No PIC meeting will proceed if PIC parent members number less than 50% of overall PIC membership.
  - ii. PIC subcommittees and PIC events will continue.
  - iii. As soon as practical, the PIC membership subcommittee will find new PIC members to recommend.
  - iv. Once new PIC parent members are recommended, a special PIC meeting will be held with parent members, the Director of Education and the trustee member only in order to acclaim or elect new PIC parent members.
  - v. Once there is sufficient PIC parent member representation, a full PIC meeting can be held.

## Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities of Members

### 3.1 Officers

- a) Co-Chairpersons will:
  - i. Communicate with parent members the schedule of PIC meetings for the coming year as given by the Director of Education.
  - ii. Set the schedule for initial standing subcommittee meetings and communicate with parent members.
  - iii. Set the agenda for PIC meetings in consultation with the Director of Education and PIC members.
  - iv. Chair the meetings, ensuring all members have a chance to speak and keep the meetings on schedule and on topic.
  - v. From time to time, represent PIC at Board, Ministry and community functions. Wherever possible, the co-chairpersons are encouraged to actively participate in these opportunities or to send a PIC member representative.
- b) The Treasurer will:

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- i. Keep accurate records of transactions involving PIC funds.
- ii. Review expenditures of PIC members, providing regular financial reports at PIC meetings.
- iii. Prepare an annual budget summary.

## 3.2 Board Personnel/Staff

- a) Board staff may join PIC as parent members or as Board employee members. If they join as Board employee members they may not vote during PIC meetings or serve in an officer position. They may serve on PIC subcommittees.
- b) Personnel and Services
  - i. A board staff person will take minutes at PIC meetings and will provide draft minutes to PIC for approval. Once approved, minutes are sent to the board of Trustees for approval and then a board staff person will post the minutes on the PIC webpage.
  - ii. Board staff will assist PIC members with administrative support for the functioning of PIC and its subcommittees.
- c) The Board will provide a meeting place and virtual platform for PIC meetings and subcommittee meetings.
- d) When requested to do so, the Board will provide the equipment needed for parent members to participate in PIC and subcommittee meetings by electronic means.
- e) Through the Director of Education, PIC members and subcommittee members may request information and resources from Board staff. Board staff may provide a response to the request directly or through the Director of Education.
- f) Board staff will assist with the distribution of PIC meeting dates and associated agendas through various means including posting on the Board website.
- g) In accordance with Board Administrative Procedure 4690 School Funds, Board staff will be responsible for retaining PIC's financial records and for ensuring these records are available for four years without charge to any person wishing to examine them at the Board office.

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## Section 4 - Meetings

### 4.1 PIC shall meet a minimum of four times in each school year.

- a) A meeting cannot be held unless:
  - i. The majority of members present are parent members,
  - ii. The Director of Education or designate is present, and
  - iii. A Trustee is present.
- b) Access to Meetings
  - i. All meetings shall be open to the public and be held at a location that is accessible to the public. Members of the public will not have speaking privileges at meetings.
  - ii. In camera meetings will not be open to the public.
- c) Quorum
  - i. A majority of the members who are eligible to vote must be present in order for any vote to count. Members who are present by virtual means are eligible to vote. Meetings can proceed without quorum; however, no votes may be held.
- d) Voting
  - i. Only parent members and the community representative member(s) are entitled to vote. Votes related to officer positions can be made by parent members only.
  - ii. For all votes, a motion is approved when there is a vote of more than 50% in favour.
  - iii. Voting members who are present by electronic means are entitled to vote.
- e) Attendance by Virtual Means
  - i. The Board shall enable members to participate fully in PIC meetings and subcommittee meetings by virtual means.
  - ii. A member who participates in a PIC meeting or subcommittee meeting through virtual means shall be deemed to be present at the meeting.
- f) Subcommittee Meetings
  - i. Subcommittee meetings will be open to the public and either held at a location that is accessible to the public or made available through virtual means.

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- ii. The membership subcommittee may hold in camera meetings when applications for membership are considered.
- iii. The governance subcommittee may hold in camera meetings as necessary with the approval of the PIC Co-Chairpersons.

## Section 5 - Reporting

### 5.1 Minutes and Financial Records

- a) PIC meeting dates and subcommittee meeting dates will be provided to all PIC members by email (or regular mail), and will be posted on the PIC page of the Board website at least five days before the meeting.
- b) The agenda will be set by the PIC Co-Chairpersons in consultation with the Director of Education. The agenda, including the meeting location, will be distributed by email (or regular mail) to members, and will be posted on the PIC page of the Board website at least two (2) days prior to the meeting. The agenda must remain on the website for four (4) years.
- c) The Committee will keep minutes of all of its meetings and records of all of its financial transactions, if any, in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Board.
- d) The minutes of the Committee's meetings and the records of its financial transactions will be available for examination at the Administration Building by any person in accordance with the records retention schedule.
- e) PIC meeting minutes will be taken by a Board staff person.
- f) The minutes will be approved at the subsequent PIC meeting and then will be considered for approval by the Board of Trustees at their next monthly Board meeting.
- g) Minutes will be posted on the PIC page of the Board website within a week of approval by Trustees and will remain on the website for four (4) years.
- h) Within a week of approval of the minutes by the Trustees, the minutes will be distributed electronically to all School Council chairs with the request that they be posted on the school website and on the School Council bulletin board, if available.

### 5.2 Summary of Activities

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- a) PIC will annually submit a written summary of the committee's activities to the Board of Trustees and to the Director of Education. The summary of activities shall include a report on how funding, if any, provided under the Education Act for parent involvement was spent.
- b) The Director of Education will provide the summary of activities to the school councils and post the summary of activities on the Board website.

## Section 6 - Conflict of Interest

Each member of PIC shall avoid situations that could result in a conflict between the purpose of PIC and a personal or monetary interest of that PIC member.

### 6.1 A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived

- a) actual – a private interest may directly or indirectly influence the exercise of the member's duties and responsibilities.
- b) perceived – a well-informed person could believe that a member was in conflict of interest, even if that conflict of interest did not exist.
- c) potential – a private interest could influence the exercise of the member's duties and responsibilities.
- d) Examples of conflicts of interest:
  - i. the member's ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of PIC may be jeopardized, or seen to be jeopardized, due to his or her personal or monetary interest;
  - ii. the member, his or her relatives or friends, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit (either directly or indirectly) as a result of actions that may be taken by PIC or the Board in response to information or advice that PIC provides to the Board;
  - iii. the member, his or her relatives or friends, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit (either

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directly or indirectly) as a result of confidential information that becomes known to the PIC member in the course of carrying out his or her PIC responsibilities; or

- iv. the member might be in a position or be perceived to be in a position, to give preferential treatment to his or her family members, friends, or a business entity in which he or she has an interest, as a result of his or her participation on PIC.
- v. Declaration of conflict

As soon as they are aware of any actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest the PIC member immediately shall inform the PIC Co-Chairperson. The PIC Co-Chairpersons shall inform the other members of such conflict of interest at the next PIC meeting.

If a PIC member believes another PIC member has an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest that hasn't been declared, he or she must bring it to the attention of the member and the PIC Co-Chairpersons.

## 6.2 Exclusion from discussion and votes

A member shall exclude themselves, at PIC meetings and at subcommittee meetings, from discussions and/or votes in which the member has an actual, perceived or potential conflict of interest.

## 6.3 Business contracts with the Board

A member shall not accept favours or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations, or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the Board.

## 6.4 Professional Conduct

The following procedures and practices will be followed when conflicts occur among PIC members:

- a) Every PIC member will be given an opportunity to express their concern or opinion about the issue in dispute and how the dispute has affected them.
- b) Speakers to an issue will maintain a calm and respectful tone and demeanour at all times.
- c) The responsibility of the PIC Co-Chairpersons is to clarify the statements made by all the speakers, to identify similarities among the differing view-points of all members.

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- d) If no common ground can be identified, the PIC Co-Chairpersons will seek to clarify preferences among all members before proceeding further.
- e) If a PIC member becomes disruptive during a meeting, the PIC Co-Chairpersons will ask for order.
- f) If all efforts to restore order fail or the unbecoming behaviour continues, the PIC Co-Chairpersons may direct the disruptive PIC member(s) to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request.
- g) The PIC Co-Chairpersons may request the intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution to the dispute, once attempts at resolving the conflict have been exhausted without success. An independent third party will not be a PIC member. they may be a Board employee or Board of Trustees member or may be another individual, but must be mutually agreed upon by the parties involved in the dispute.
- h) Any resolution reached at a meeting to resolve the conflict shall be recorded and respected by the parties.
- i) If one of the PIC Co-Chairpersons is a party to the conflict, the Director of Education or designate will be asked to facilitate the conflict resolution process.

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