

# CONSTITUTION OF THE DURHAM DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD STUDENT SENATE

## Article I: Name

- 1.1 The name of the organization shall be “Durham District School Board Student Senate”, hereby referred to as the “Student Senate”.

## Article II: Mandate

- 2.1 The Student Senate shall operate under the auspices of the Durham District School Board (DDSB), hereby referred to as the “Board”.
- 2.2 The Student Senate shall uphold and promote the Board’s mission and values in the performance of its duties.
- 2.3 The Student Senate shall remain a non-partisan and independent voice in the interests of the students under its jurisdiction.
- 2.4 The Student Senate shall provide consistent, responsive representation of all DDSB students, and help ensure students’ needs and interests are met with the proper attention.

## Article III: Functions

- 3.1 The functions of the Student Senate are to:
  - a. Advocate for the needs, interests, and welfare of DDSB students as a whole and as individuals,
  - b. Represent, empower, and encourage the consideration of diverse student voices,
  - c. Run initiatives and events that advance the interests of DDSB students,
  - d. Act as an advisory body for the DDSB Student Trustees, and hold them accountable for their actions,
  - e. Promote and uphold student councils/governments of the DDSB,
  - f. Provide leadership training and professional development for Senators,
  - g. Provide a forum to voice opinions and thoughts related to the Board and their schools.
  - h. Review Board policies to provide feedback to staff and the Board of Trustees,
  - i. Provide staff with opportunities to present information to Senators.

## Article IV: Membership

- 4.1 All secondary schools under the jurisdiction of the DDSB are member schools of the Student Senate.

- 4.2** All members of the Student Senate, hereby referred to as “Senators”, shall be elected no later than May 30 each year and shall be full-time students of their respective member schools.
- 4.3** Student organizations under the auspices of the DDSB and any school not under the auspices of the DDSB may apply for observer status, to be approved by a majority vote of the Student Senate, whereby they may participate in discussions, but may not move or vote on a motion.

#### **Article V: Structure**

- 5.1** The Student Senate shall consist of the following bodies:
- a. Senior Executive,
  - b. Executive Council,
  - c. General Assembly.

#### **Article VI: Senior Executive**

- 6.1** The Senior Executive shall consist of the DDSB Student Trustees.
- 6.2** The Senior Executive shall be responsible for:
- a. Ensuring the Student Senate is organized,
  - b. Frequently reporting their activities to the Student Senate,
  - c. Promptly informing the Student Senate of recent policies and decisions made by the Board of Trustees that affect DDSB students,
  - d. Monitoring the Student Senate budget,
  - e. Enforcing a standard of conduct for Senators through a Code of Conduct,
  - f. Interpreting the Constitution impartially,
  - g. Approving media discussion,
  - h. Liaising with the Staff Advisors,
  - i. Any other tasks assigned to them by the Student Senate.

#### **Article VII: Executive Council**

- 7.1** The Executive Council, individually and collectively, shall be directly responsible to the Student Senate as a whole and the bodies that elected them. Accordingly, the Student Senate may remove any member of the Executive Council with a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority vote given there is one (1) week of notice prior to voting on the motion.
- 7.2** The term of office of the Executive Council shall begin August 1 in the year they are elected and end July 31 of the following year.
- 7.3** The Executive Council shall consist of:
- a. President,
  - b. Vice-President,

- c. Regional Representative (Uxbridge-Scugog-Brock),
  - d. Regional Representative (Pickering-Ajax),
  - e. Regional Representative (Whitby),
  - f. Regional Representative (Oshawa)
  - g. Working Group Chairs,
  - h. Secretary, who shall not have a vote on the Executive Council,
  - i. any other position deemed necessary by the Executive Council, who shall not have a vote on the Executive Council.
- 7.4** The Executive Council shall be collectively responsible for:
- a. Managing the day-to-day operations and administrative work of the Student Senate,
  - b. Executing on the Student Senate's goals and initiatives,
  - c. Setting meeting dates and agenda for the General Assembly,
  - d. Approving all official communications of the Student Senate,
  - e. Approving meeting minutes,
  - f. Delegating responsibilities to Senators and Executive Council members,
  - g. Any other responsibilities as laid out in the Constitution.
- 7.5** The President shall be responsible for:
- a. Leading the Executive Council in executing the Student Senate's goals and initiatives,
  - b. Chairing all General Assembly meetings,
  - c. Acting as the primary spokesperson of the Student Senate,
  - d. Speaking on behalf of the Student Senate, whereby they shall not contradict Student Senate policies,
  - e. Receiving all motions and submitting them for discussion,
  - f. Being an ex-officio member of all committees,
  - g. Any other tasks delegated to them by the Executive Council.
- 7.6** The Vice-President shall be responsible for:
- a. Assisting the President in leading the Executive Council in executing the Student Senate's goals and initiatives,
  - b. Being an ex-officio member of all committees,
  - c. Filling in for the President when absent,
  - d. Any other tasks delegated to them by the Executive Council.
- 7.7** The Working Group Chairs shall be responsible for:
- a. Leading advocacy in their respective area of focus,
  - b. Advising the Executive Council on issues related to their area of focus,
  - c. Chairing all meetings of their respective working group,
  - d. Setting agenda for their respective working group,
  - e. Any other tasks delegated to them by the Executive Council.

- 7.8** The Regional Representatives shall be responsible for:
- a. Representing their respective regions on the Executive Council,
  - b. Liaising with the Senators in their respective regions,
  - c. Any other tasks delegated to them by the Executive Council.

- 7.9** The Secretary shall be responsible for:
- a. Taking attendance and meeting minutes of the Student Senate,
  - b. Maintaining Student Senate membership lists,
  - c. Maintaining Student Senate records,
  - d. Any other tasks delegated to them by the Executive Council.

### **Article VIII: Executive Council Elections & Appointments**

- 8.1** Subject to sections 8.2 to 8.5, election and appointment rules and procedures shall be decided by the Executive Council.
- 8.2** Every incoming Senator may run or apply for any position in the Student Senate.
- 8.3** The President, Vice-Presidents, Regional Representatives, and Working Group Chairs shall be elected for the following term at the June General Assembly meeting.
- 8.4** The President, Vice-President, and Working Group Chairs shall be elected from and by the whole of the incoming and outgoing Student Senate.
- 8.5** The Regional Representatives shall be from and elected by the incoming and outgoing Senators in their respective regions.

### **Article IX: General Assembly**

- 9.1** The General Assembly shall consist of no more than three (3) students per member school.
- 9.2** Students elected to the General Assembly shall be elected through a process that is open to all eligible students. Up to one (1) student per member school may be appointed by their Principal, in consultation with the school staff advisor.

### **Article X: Staff Advisor**

- 10.1** The Staff Advisor shall be responsible for:
- a. Assisting and advising the Student Senate,
  - b. Supervising all Student Senate meetings and events,
  - c. Monitoring the budget.
- 10.2** Actions and decisions of the Student Senate and its members shall be promptly sent to the Staff Advisor. Actions that are public will be taken three (3) working days after the notification. All other actions can be taken immediately.

- 10.3** The Staff Advisor shall not override decisions made by the Student Senate unless it is contrary to federal or provincial laws, or Board policies or procedures.

#### **Article XI: Senators**

- 11.1** Senators' term of office shall begin on the first day of school in the calendar year that they are elected in and end on the last day of that school year.
- 11.2** Senators shall be responsible for:
- a. Attending all meetings,
  - b. Acting as a liaison between the Student Senate and their individual school,
  - c. Periodically updating their student councils/governments on the work of the Student Senate,
  - d. Complying with the Code of Conduct,
  - e. Performing all delegated or agreed upon duties.

#### **Article XII: Working Groups**

- 12.1** The Executive Council shall establish working groups, which shall be led by elected Chairs, and on which Senators shall sit.
- 12.2** The Executive Council shall create a mandate for each working group, which will guide the advocacy and work of the working group.

#### **Article XIII: Committees**

- 13.1** The Executive Council may establish committees, and approve its membership and terms of reference.
- 13.2** The Executive Council shall designate a Senator or Student Trustee as Chair of the committee.
- 13.3** The President and Vice-President shall be ex-officio members of all committees.

#### **Article XIV: Meetings**

- 14.1** General Assembly meetings shall occur at least once per month, from September to June.
- 14.2** Executive Council meetings shall occur at least twice per month, from September to June. This may be waived by a vote of the Executive Council.
- 14.3** Special meetings may be called by the President.
- 14.4** Meetings of the Student Senate shall follow a modified version of Robert's Rules of Order, at the discretion of the Chair, provided they are not inconsistent with the bylaws and Constitution.

- 14.5** During all meetings of the Student Senate, every Senator may introduce a motion and shall have one (1) vote each.
- 14.6** Senators shall be able to attend all meetings virtually.

#### **Article XV: Vacancies of Office**

- 15.1** The office of Senator shall be vacated immediately if they:
- a. Resign by written notice to the President and Staff Advisor,
  - b. Die,
  - c. Get suspended or expelled from school,
  - d. Get convicted of a criminal offense.
- 15.2** The office of Senator may be vacated under the processes described in Article XVI.
- 15.3** The Executive Council shall determine how to fill vacancies of office, whereby successful candidates shall assume their duties immediately following their election or appointment.

#### **Article XVI: Removal**

- 16.1** Subject to sections 16.2 to 16.5, removal procedures shall be determined by the Executive Council.
- 16.2** The Executive Council may remove a Senator if it receives a serious disturbance regarding a Senator's performance or conduct, the President exercises the following steps, and misconduct persists:
- a. Inform the Executive Council and Staff Advisor in writing,
  - b. Communicate to the respective Senator in writing about their performance and inform them of the possibility of removal.
- 16.3** The Executive Council may, with a two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) majority, remove a Senator from their position or from the Student Senate if they are not or are not able to fulfill their duties, after consultations with the Staff Advisor and any other necessary person.
- 16.4** The Senior Executive may remove a Senator from the Student Senate, if the Executive Council, by a four-fifths ( $\frac{4}{5}$ ) majority, deems a situation to be extraordinary and to require immediate attention.
- 16.5** The Staff Advisor may remove a Senator from the Student Senate if they believe the Senator has acted inappropriately and in a way that compromises the integrity of the Student Senate, including but not limited to breaching the Code of Conduct or Board policies or procedures.

## Article XVII: Policies & Bylaws

- 17.1 The General Assembly may establish policies to lay out its values and goals and guide the work of the Executive Council to achieve those goals.
- 17.2 The Executive Council shall establish bylaws to operationalize and regulate its affairs and exercise its authority under this Constitution.
- 17.3 Senators shall be promptly informed whenever the bylaws are amended.

## Article XVIII: Amendments

- 18.1 The Constitution may be amended by two-thirds ( $\frac{2}{3}$ ) of the Student Senate present.
- 18.2 All proposed amendments to the Constitution must have the support of the Executive Council.
- 18.3 An amendment that is deemed to be a “major amendment” by the Executive Council may be decided to take effect at a later date.

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