

Student Senate of the Halton District School Board The Constitution and Terms of Reference

1. Name

- 1.1. The name of the organization outlined in this document shall be the Student Senate of the Halton District School Board, hereby referred to as the Student Senate.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. **Student Senators** shall be defined as a voting member of the Student Senate in grades seven to twelve (7-12) and the representative of a school within the jurisdiction of the Halton District School Board.
- 2.2. **Student Trustees** shall be defined as the elected student official(s) who represent the Student Senate and the students of the Halton District School Board to the Board of Trustees. They shall chair and administer all Student Senate affairs. The Student Trustees shall be defined in unison with all other Halton District School Board and Ministry of Education Guidelines.
- 2.3. **Support of the Student Senate** shall be defined as a majority of Student Senators in support of the Student Trustees during a vote of support in order to maintain the ability to act as the chief executives and representatives of the Student Senate.
- 2.4. **Advisory Committee** shall be defined as a collection of Trustees, and Staff, who advise the Student Senate and the Student Trustees on their initiatives, plans, and other matters regarding Student Senate affairs.
- 2.5. **The Executive Committee** is comprised of appointed Student Senators and may be comprised of the following roles Secretary, Regional Directors Social Media Manager, Website Manager, Treasurer, Professional Development Coordinator, Operations Coordinator, Elections Officer, Director of Operations, and shall function as *The Cabinet*.
- 2.6. **Regional Committees** shall be defined as a collection of students in grade seven to twelve from elementary and secondary schools within one of four townships in the Halton Region (Milton, Burlington, Oakville, Halton Hills).

The Regional Committee shall focus on identifying and addressing region-specific issues, expand outreach to students, and ensure representation of the different regions of Halton in the Student Senate.

- 2.7. **Subcommittees** shall be defined as a group of student senators and Non-Senate Members who are appointed to work on a specific topic.
- 2.8. **Subcommittee Co-Chairs** shall be defined as member(s) of the subcommittee who are responsible for organizing committee meetings, setting the agenda, facilitating meetings and carrying out the goals of the Student Senate.
- 2.9. **Non-Senate Members** shall be defined as a member of Student Senate Subcommittees and other student teams in grades seven to twelve (7-12) who are not members of the Student Senate and are appointed by the Co-Chairs of the Senate subcommittee or team. They attend subcommittee or team meetings where they are held to the same standards as a Student Senator, but are not a member of the Student Senate and do not attend Student Senate meetings.
- 2.10. **Junior Council** shall be defined as a collection of students in grades five or six (5-6) who provide feedback on the student experience from K-5 or K-6 elementary schools within the jurisdiction of the Halton District School Board during HDSB Junior Council meetings. The Junior Council acts as an advisory council to the Student Senate and Student Trustees.
- 2.11. **Junior Council Members** shall be defined as members of the HDSB Junior Council in grades five or six (5-6) and are representatives of a K-5 or K-6 elementary school within the jurisdiction of the Halton District School Board.

3. **Objective**

- 3.1. The Student Senate shall serve the following purposes and mandates:
 - 3.1.1. a. To represent the voices and perspectives of all students in the Halton District School Board in alignment with the Multi-Year Plan;
 - 3.1.2. To hold the elected Student Trustees and the Executive Committee accountable for their actions on behalf of the Student Senate and the students of the Halton District School Board;
 - 3.1.3. To act as the centralized student government for all student population within the Halton District School Board, allowing for diplomatic communications between the student population and bridging student voice and board policies, administrative procedures, and any new Ministry policies/directives that may arise during the school year;

- 3.1.4. To collect student voice data for the Board of Trustees with regard to policies in effect, and possible amendments to and/or creations of policies, where appropriate;
 - 3.1.5. To allow for Trustees and staff members to delegate, present, or propose new courses of action with the input of students;
 - 3.1.6. To advocate for student's rights and student engagement within and outside of the Halton District School Board;
 - 3.1.7. To uphold, serve under, and protect the Constitution of the Student Senate;
 - 3.1.8. To encourage the free exchange of ideas between the Board of Trustees and the Student Senators, and;
 - 3.1.9. To organize and manage the running of events with regard to any other of the Student Senate's objectives.
- 3.2. In response to the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action](#) for education and in alignment with Indigenous rights as per the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples ([UNDRIP](#)), as well as respect for Inherent rights holders, the Student Senate shall commit to the following:
- 3.2.1. To protect and uphold Indigenous Rights;
 - 3.2.2. To refer to [HDSB's Indigenous Education Policy](#) on all matters related to Indigenous Education;
 - 3.2.3. To dedicate efforts to continuous knowledge building with respect to the ongoing impacts of colonialism that continue to negatively impact the lives of Indigenous Peoples;
 - 3.2.4. To build relationships with Indigenous Peoples and students based on the recognition and implementation of their right to self-determination; and
 - 3.2.5. To meaningfully engage with Halton's Treaty Partner -The Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation through the HDSB's Indigenous Education Department.

4. Composition

- 4.1. The Student Senate shall consist of the Student Senators, the Junior Council, the Executive Committee, the Advisory Committee, and the Student Trustees.
- 4.2. Each elementary school within the Halton District School Board that holds
- 4.3. students from grades seven to eight (7-8) shall receive one (1) position to fill with a student senator.
 - 4.3.1. Elementary Schools with populations in excess of 500 shall be given an additional one (1) position to fill with a student senator.

- 4.4. Each elementary school within the Halton District School Board that holds
- 4.5. students from grades kindergarten to grade five (K-5) or kindergarten to grade six (K-6) shall receive one (1) position to fill with a Junior Council Member to sit on the Junior Council.
- 4.6. Each high school within the Halton District School Board that holds students from grades nine through twelve (9-12) shall receive two (2) positions to fill with student senators.
 - 4.6.1. High schools with populations in excess of 1500 shall be given an additional one (1) position to fill with a student senator.
 - 4.6.2. High schools with the Community Pathways Program (CPP) shall be given an additional one (1) position to fill with a student from the program to be a student senator.

5. Senator Selection Process

- 5.1. The Student Senate Selection process shall begin before the end of September and have a resolution by the first Student Senate meeting.
 - 5.1.1. Each school's Student Senator(s) and staff advisor shall be selected and confirmed by the school no later than the first Student Senate meeting.
- 5.2. The Student Senate application process shall be done independently by school and be conducted through the school principal.
- 5.3. All eligibility criteria must be achieved to become a Student Senator:
 - 5.3.1. Be within the grades seven through twelve (7-12) and in a school within the Halton District School Board;
 - 5.3.2. Be an eligible voting member for student trustee elections;
 - 5.3.3. Receive parent/guardian consent and the principal's consent to become a member of the Student Senate;
 - 5.3.4. Adhere to any in-school Student Senator selection processes;
 - 5.3.5. Incumbent Student Trustees are exempt from clauses (b), and (c).
- 5.4. The selection of Student Senators at the school level shall consider a student's lived experience and underrepresentation in leadership.
- 5.5. The principal may consider the [HDSB Student Senate: Selection Process](#) for guidance on the application process.

6. Membership of the Student Senate

- 6.1. Members selected by schools are to remain a Student Senator for the remainder of the school year after attending one Student Senate meeting.
 - 6.1.1. Should a member resign from the Student Senate or be disqualified, the respective school will be tasked with selecting a replacement.

- 6.2. Membership to the Student Senate provides the right to:
 - 6.2.1. Participate in discussions motions, mandates, plans, or proposals within the Student Senate,
 - 6.2.2. Vote on motions of the Student Senate;
 - 6.2.3. Apply to become a Subcommittee Co-Chair a member of the Executive Council, or represent the Senate on a staff led committee and;
 - 6.2.4. Have access to all files pertaining to Student Senate affairs;

7. Student Trustees

- 7.1. The Student Trustees shall chair all meetings of the Student Senate.
- 7.2. The Student Trustees shall act in a non-partisan manner to encourage debate and discussion about the motion, initiative, or plan in question.
- 7.3. The Student Trustees are to be elected via the Halton District School Board policy labeled [Student Trustees Governance Procedure](#).
- 7.4. The Student Trustees are to be held accountable by the Student Senate via the support convention in order to act as the chief executives and representatives of the organization. Should the Student Senate fail a motion of support in the Student Trustees, the Student Trustees shall no longer be able to act on behalf of the Student Senate on the subject matter as described in the motion until they regain the support of the Student Senate.

8. Senate Structure and Committees

- 8.1. The Student Senate shall have 2 types of committees; standing committees, which meet regularly and are not to be dissolved, and special committees, which are created by the Student Senate to deal with a specific task/issue.
- 8.2. The Student Senate shall have the following standing committees, or have representation on these committees:
 - 8.2.1. The Advisory Committee, as defined in article 9 of the Constitution.
 - 8.2.2. The Executive Committee, as defined in article 10 of the Constitution.
 - 8.2.3. Regional Committees, as defined in article 11 of the Constitution.
 - 8.2.4. Multi-Year Plan Subcommittees, as defined in article 12 of the Constitution
 - 8.2.5. Junior Council, as defined in article 13 of the Constitution.
- 8.3. The Student Senate may strike special committees on an as needed basis to address issues that arise during the course of the school year.
 - 8.3.1. Both Student Senators and Non-Senate Members may sit on special committees or task forces led by HDSB staff.
 - 8.3.2. The Student Trustees may appoint Student Senators to represent the Student Senate on the special committees.

- 8.4. 4. A special committee may be created by a majority vote of the Student Senate, so long as the committee has a mission statement and a minimum of 5 senators wishing to take part in the committee.

9. Advisory Committee

- 9.1. The Advisory Committee shall be composed of the Student Trustee Mentors, the Staff Advisors, the Director of Education or designate, and the Chair of the Board.
- 9.2. The Advisory Committee shall be responsible for advising the Student Senate and the Student Trustees on their initiatives, plans, and other matters regarding Student Senate affairs.
- 9.3. The Advisory Committee shall have no authority to override the decisions of the Student Senate, as the Student Senate is an advisory group under the Student Trustees.

10. Executive Committee

- 10.1. The Executive Committee shall function as The Cabinet of the Student Senate. The Student Trustees shall head the Executive Committee, and delegate their authority to the Executive Committee members.
- 10.2. The recommended list of Executive Committee members in order of precedence should include, but is not limited to and is subject to change according to the Student Trustees' judgment:
 - 10.2.1. Secretary, who shall be responsible for the organization of agenda packages, taking minutes of Student Senate and Executive Committee meetings, and counting votes on Student Senate motions;
 - 10.2.2. Regional Directors (Burlington, Oakville, Milton, and Halton Hills), responsible for representing all Student Senators from their municipality to the Executive Committee, as well as representing the Student Senate in their municipality;
 - 10.2.3. Social Media Manager, responsible for all public information on the Student Senate, including, but not limited to, the management of the Student Senate Instagram account and the co-management of the two Student Trustee accounts;
 - 10.2.4. Website Manager, responsible for maintaining and updating the Student Senate website through regular activities such as including Senate Meeting Minutes, posting applications and uploading student trustee reports;

- 10.2.5. Treasurer, responsible for managing the Student Senate budget, reviewing and implementing the budget plan set by the executive and working on purchasing orders;
- 10.2.6. Professional Development Coordinator, responsible for running Student Senate professional development, inviting guest speakers to senate meetings, creating internal communication forums (e.g. group chats) and supporting Student Senators to manage work and projects.
- 10.2.7. Operations Coordinator, responsible to facilitate communication between committee chairs and the executive council through supporting the committee chairs with initiatives, logistics and general management.
- 10.2.8. Elections Officer, responsible for supporting Student Trustee Elections by engaging the eligible voters, supporting student trustee candidates, and working alongside staff advisors and current student trustees to launch trustee elections.
- 10.2.9. Director of Operations, who shall be responsible for all events held by the Student Senate, including the Halton Youth Leadership Symposium.
- 10.3. The Executive Committee members are to be nominated by the Student Trustees.
- 10.4. The nominated Executive Committee membership must be brought forward as a recommendation to the Student Senate via a motion to be approved by a vote. The motion must be passed by the Student Senate in order for the Executive Committee to hold the support of the Student Senate.
- 10.5. The Executive Committee is recommended to meet a minimum of one (1) time every month while school is in session after they have been confirmed.
- 10.6. All members of the Executive Committee must be Student Senators during their tenure as a member of the Executive Committee.
- 10.7. All members of the Executive Committee are to be given a mandate letter by the Student Trustees outlining the duties of each office and the directives and goals the Executive members are to take throughout their term.
 - 10.7.1. The Executive Committee members with a dedicated portfolio may establish their own workgroup to achieve their mandate. Resources permitting, the Executive Committee may have the following special committees or have representation on these committees:
 - 10.7.2. The Operations Committee, to be chaired by the Director(s) of Operations and responsible for the portfolio of the same name.

- 10.7.3. The Social Media Committee, to be chaired by the Social Media Manager(s) and responsible for the portfolio of the same name.
- 10.7.4. The Website Committee, to be chaired by the Website Manager(s) and responsible for the portfolio of the same name.
- 10.7.5. The Elections Committee, to be chaired by the Elections Officer(s) and responsible for the portfolio of the same name.
- 10.8. The Student Trustees reserve the right to dismiss a member of the Executive Committee should their performance or conduct not be inline with their own. The student Trustees shall then request the Student Senate nominate a member to become the successor for the vacant role.

11. Regional Committees

- 11.1. To focus in on region-specific issues, ensure outreach to students, and ensure representation of the different regions of Halton in the Student Senate, Regional Committees for the following regions shall be operate:
 - 11.1.1. Burlington
 - 11.1.2. Halton Hills
 - 11.1.3. Milton
 - 11.1.4. Oakville
- 11.2. Regional Committees shall be composed of elementary and secondary Student Senators from schools of that region and one (1) Regional Director appointed by Student Trustees and voted on by Student Senate.
- 11.3. Regional Committees shall be overseen by the Student Trustees, alongside one (1) staff member attached for guidance.

12. Multi-Year Plan Subcommittees

- 12.1. The Student Senate may consider striking subcommittees to correspond with the commitments of the [Halton District School Board's Multi-Year Plan](#) to ensure efforts are aligned with the broader Halton District School Board community.
- 12.2. Student Senate Subcommittees shall be comprised of Student Senator members, one (1) Elementary Panel Co-Chair and one (1) Secondary Panel Co-Chair appointed by the Student Trustees, and one (1) staff advisor;
- 12.3. The Secondary Panel Co-Chair shall be responsible for organizing committee meetings, setting the agenda, facilitating meetings and carrying out the goals of the Student Senate.
- 12.4. Student Senators are permitted to sit on multiple Subcommittees with the exception of Co-Chairs;

- 12.5. Each Subcommittee shall be open to four (4) Non-Senate Members (2 Elementary and 2 Secondary) from each municipality of Halton (Burlington, Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville);
- 12.6. Student Senate Subcommittees shall meet at the discretion of the Co-Chairs with a minimum of one (1) meeting per month while school is in session with the exception of protected learning time.

13. Junior Council

- 13.1. All eligibility criteria must be achieved to become a Junior Council Member:
 - 13.1.1. Be within the grades of five or six (5-6) and in a school within the Halton District School Board;
 - 13.1.2. Receive parent/guardian and principal consent to become a member of the Junior Council;
 - 13.1.3. Adhere to any in school Junior Council Member selection processes.
- 13.2. The Junior Council shall be composed of Junior Representatives who represent the voices and perspectives of students from K-5 and K-6 elementary schools in the Halton District School Board in alignment with the Multi-Year Plan.
- 13.3. The Junior Council shall follow the same selection process as the Student Senate which is outlined in article 5.
- 13.4. The Junior Council shall meet in-person or virtually a minimum of two (2) times per year while school is in session.
- 13.5. The Junior Council shall open every meeting with Honoring the Land and Territory by reading the Land Acknowledgement in English and/or French.
 - 13.5.1. Personal connections and reflections are encouraged to follow the Land Acknowledgement.
- 13.6. The Junior Council shall have a minimum of one (1) staff member from a K-5 and K-6 elementary school to support the organization, function and supervision of the Junior Council
- 13.7. The Junior Council shall have the Student Trustees or another assigned senior executive member(s) of Student Senate to facilitate the Junior Council.

14. Meetings and Rules of Procedure

- 14.1. 1. The Student Senate shall meet in-person or virtually a minimum of one (1) time per month while school is in session. The preferred time shall be Tuesday evenings.
- 14.2. Student Senate meetings shall rotate between educational spaces in each of Halton's four municipalities (Oakville, Burlington, Milton, Halton Hills).

- 14.3. The Student Senate shall open every meeting with Honoring the Land and Territory by reading the Land Acknowledgement in English and/or French.
 - 14.3.1. Personal connections and reflections are encouraged to follow the Land Acknowledgement.
- 14.4. The Student Senate shall operate under Robert's Rules of Order as far as applicable and under the discretion of the Student Trustees and the Advisory Committee.
- 14.5. Motions of the Student Senate shall require a two-thirds majority vote in order to pass.
 - 14.5.1. The Student Trustees shall call for a vote by all elementary and secondary panel Student Senators to cast their vote during the joint session of the Student Senate meeting.
- 14.6. 6. The Student Trustees are to allow for a question period during each meeting of the Student Senate.
- 14.7. If a Student Senate Subcommittee meeting, Regional meeting, or any meeting attached to Student Senate is to be held in-person, there is to be a staff member present at said meeting.

15. Term

- 15.1. The term of the Student Trustees shall be from August 1 to July 31 of every year.
- 15.2. Student Trustees shall begin planning for Student Senate at the beginning of their term, August 1st.
- 15.3. The term of the Student Senators shall begin when the Student Trustees of that school year request nominations and the administrators appoint Student Senators.

16. Vacancies

- 16.1. Should the position of Student Trustee become vacant, the Halton District School Board's [Student Trustee Governance Procedure](#) shall be used as a guide to fill the vacancy.
- 16.2. Should a position of Student Senator become vacant, the Student Trustee(s) shall ask the principal of that school to appoint an interim Student Senator for the remainder of the year.
- 16.3. Should a position of Subcommittee Co-Chair become vacant, the Student Trustee(s) shall ask the members of the subcommittee to appoint an interim Subcommittee Co-Chair for the remainder of the year.
- 16.4. Should a position on the Executive Committee become vacant, the Student Trustee(s) shall appoint an interim Executive Committee member in that

position for the remainder of the year, from a pool of interested Student Senator candidates.

17. Student Trustee Elections

- 17.1. If a motion regarding recommendations to amend the Halton District School Board's [Student Trustees Policy](#) is successful in passing through the Student Senate, the Student Trustees must provide the Student Senate's recommendation for amendment(s) forward to the Board of Trustees at the next available session for information.
- 17.2. An Elections Officer may be selected, as defined in article 10, along with an Elections Committee, as defined in article 10, in order to plan for the annual Student Trustee Elections in February.

18. Amendments

- 18.1. Should the Student Senate express intent to make an amendment to the Student Senate Constitution, the following steps must be taken:
 - 18.1.1. a. A written proposal for an amendment to the Constitution must be submitted to the Student Trustees and the Secretary one week before the Student Senator wishes to table the motion.
 - 18.1.2. The recommendation to open the constitution for amendment must receive a majority vote.
 - 18.1.3. The amendment will then be brought forth to the Student Senate for debate and discussion, following all Student Senate procedure and protocol, and;
 - 18.1.4. Following debate, a four-fifths (%) majority vote of the Student Senate must be reached in order to make the amendment to the constitution.
 - 18.1.5. The Student Trustees shall provide the amended Student Senate Constitution to the Board of Trustees for information, on behalf of the Student Senate.
- 19. The Student Senate Constitution shall come into effect upon the signature of the Student Trustees of the Halton District School Board and the signature of the Director of Education.

Signatures of the Constitution of the Student Senate

_____ (Date) _____

Ethan Ruggiero, Halton District School Board Student Trustee 2022-2023

_____ (Date) _____

Cindy Wang, Halton District School Board Student Trustee 2022-2023

_____ (Date) _____

Curtis Ennis, Director of Education of the Halton District School Board