

George Bissett Elementary School Advisory Council Bylaws

Membership

The George Bissett Elementary School Advisory Council will have eight voting members which shall include:

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

The principal is a permanent, non-voting member.

Eligibility for membership

Parents/guardians

- must have a child at George Bissett Elementary School and cannot be a Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) employee on staff at George Bissett Elementary School

Teachers

- must be a teacher on staff at George Bissett Elementary

Support staff

- must be on the support staff at George Bissett Elementary

Community members

- must not be an employee of George Bissett Elementary;
- must not have children registered at George Bissett Elementary; and
- must reside in the geographical area served by George Bissett Elementary or provide a service to or within the geographical area served by George Bissett Elementary.

Elections and appointments

Elections will be held in May-June and are usually done by secret ballot. Appointments of community members will occur prior to the October meeting.

Parents/guardians

A call for nominations may be made during the first two weeks of May through the school website, newsletters sent home with children, with a day designated for voting in early June. Nominations will close one week prior to a duly advertised voting day. Nominations will be received by the school principal and forwarded to the school advisory council chair. Election will be by a simple majority vote of eligible parents/guardians on a designated voting day. Those unable to vote on that day can contact the school to make arrangement to vote prior to the voting day. The principal and chair will appoint three individuals to act as scrutineers to count the vote.

Eligible parents/guardians are those who have children enrolled in George Bissett Elementary. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be organized.

Teachers and support staff

Teachers and support staff will elect/choose their own representatives in September by the method of their choice.

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 and may be advertised in the local newspaper. All applicants may be asked to submit, in writing, a brief resume and a letter which explains why the applicant is interested in being on the school advisory council.

In an effort to ensure diverse representation of membership from the African Nova Scotian community and the First Nations community self-identified individuals will be considered as long as they meet the requirements outlined for Community Membership. If the SAC is not able to fill the position(s) a self-identified parent/guardian may be selected to fill the position.

Terms of service

Terms of service for each representative group are the following:

- Parents/guardians are elected for a term of two years. Parents/guardians elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.
- Teachers and support staff are elected/chosen from their respective group for a term of one year. 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.

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, vice 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.

Agenda and meeting summary

The chair will draw up the meeting agenda in consultation with the principal five days prior to each meeting. Copies of the agenda will be distributed to each member by email, along with any other information that is relevant to the agenda items. Agendas from each meeting will be kept in George Bissett Elementary's records, in either print or electronic format. Agendas will be made available to the public upon request and posted on the school website.

The secretary will prepare a meeting summary for each school advisory council meeting which will include highlights of key decisions and actions. Once approved at the subsequent meeting, the meeting summary will be provided to the principal of George Bissett Elementary to be included in the school record in either print or

electronic format. Meeting summaries will be 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 four meetings annually. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the George Bissett Elementary SAC. Meetings will be a maximum of 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.

Quorum

A quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of a minimum of four of the SAC voting members present. Representative groups consist of parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

In addition, the principal or the designate (or vice principal) must be present and are non-voting.

Decision-making process

The following principles and procedures will be used in making decisions.

Principles

- All council members are responsible for making decisions that ensure the best education possible for our students.
- All council members will have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.
- Council decisions will be by consensus whenever possible.

Procedures

- Agenda items will be discussed in a structured way prior to a decision.
- When background information is needed on an agenda item, the principal will provide council members with that information and the time required to review it in advance of a decision.
- Whenever possible, decisions will be made by consensus.
- If consensus cannot be reached, the decision can be delayed until the following meeting, which must occur within 30 days. If at that time consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will be required of those members present.

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

School improvement plan and annual report

The school improvement plan for George Bissett Elementary will be developed by the principal and staff of the school and shared with the SAC. The SAC will work in collaboration with the principal and participate in efforts to improve student achievement and student and community well-being by regularly receiving information on the school improvement plan and monitoring progress and improvements under the plan.

In addition, in accordance with the terms of the school advisory council agreement, the SAC will determine priorities for spending the funds allocated to support the mandate of the school advisory council including student achievement and report annually on the expenditures of funds to the Minister.

The SAC will prepare an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister. The report will be presented at the June SAC meeting and then submitted to the regional centre for education by the end of June.

Adopting and amending bylaws

A notice of motion, given one meeting in advance, is required to amend the bylaws. Bylaws will be amended following the established decision-making process. The amended bylaws will be forwarded to the regional executive director for approval, and the bylaws or amendments become effective upon receipt of this approval.

Parties to the agreement

We, the undersigned, understand and agree to follow these Bylaws.

George Bissett Elementary School Advisory Council Chair

Date

HRCE Regional Executive Director of Education

Date

Appendix A: SAC Membership

SAC Member	SAC Group	Contact Info	Term	Term Finish
April Hill	Parent	aprilhill0808@outlook.com	2 years	June 2024
River Miller	Parent	hellorivermiller@hotmail.com	2 years	June 2024
Geoff Saliani	Parent	geoffreysaliani@icloud.com	2 years	June 2025
Jen Funke	Teacher	jfunke@hrce.ca	1 year	June 2024
Heather Conrad	Teacher	hconrad@hrce.ca	1 year	June 2024
Lori-Ann Betts	Support staff	lbetts@hrce.ca	1 year	June 2024
Gale Downey	Community member	downeyga@yahoo.ca	2 years	June 2024
Jimmy Hurley	Principal	jhurley@hrce.ca		