

---

# **WESTMOUNT SCHOOL LETTER OF AGREEMENT 2015**

---

The purpose of this letter is to establish the terms and conditions of the agreement between Westmount School Advisory Council, the Halifax Regional School Board and the Department of Education to operate an advisory council at the school level.

The parties agree to the following:

## **DURATION OF THE AGREEMENT**

The agreement begins October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. The agreement will be reviewed annually by SAC members before June 1 of each year. Any mutually agreed-upon revisions can be made at that time, and submitted to the school board and the Department of Education, to become effective upon approval of all partners.

## **STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL**

The membership of the advisory council will include a minimum of five members. Westmount School aims to have equal representation from each of three groups: community members, parents and school staff, for a total of up to three representatives from each group.

Efforts will be made to include individuals who reflect the diversity of the community including Aboriginal, African-Canadian, racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities. Efforts will also be made to include individuals who reflect the geographical diversity of Westmount school boundaries.

Parents:        Must have a child enrolled in Westmount Elementary School

Teachers/Support Staff:    Must be a staff member (teacher, secretary, custodian, Educational Program Assistant) of Westmount Elementary

Community Member:        Must reside and/or work in the Westmount Elementary School community and not have children attending Westmount Elementary

## STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

Council members will serve for the duration of a three year term with the option of extending their term:

MEMBER	NAME	TERM END DATE
Principal	Lesley MacInnis	Ex Officio
Vice Principal	Tom Cleary	Ex Officio
Teacher/Support Staff	Joan MacNaughton	June 2018
Teacher/Support Staff	Helen Totton	June 2019
Teacher/Support Staff	Mark Harnish	June 2019
Parent	Stacie Rimmer	June 2018
Parent & Vice Chair	Torquil Duncan	June 2017
Parent & Chair	Natalia Diaz-Insense	June 2017
Community Member	Marie March	June 2018
Community Member	Joan Malay	June 2017
Community Member	Nadine Smillie	June 2017

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS WILL BE MADE AS FOLLOWS:

- All decisions will be made by consensus.
- If a consensus cannot be reached, the decisions will be delayed until the next meeting. During this time, there will be consultation and discussion with the appropriate partners and information brought back to the next meeting
- If a consensus cannot be reached, a decision will be made by a two-thirds majority vote. For the purposes of this Agreement, there must be a quorum that is constituted by one half of the Council.
- All decisions reached during meetings will be supported publicly by all council members.
- Only decisions that have support of the School Advisory Council will go forward to the school principal
- Information on important issues and the agenda will be distributed and emailed one week prior to the monthly meeting.
- The principal, as a non-voting member, participates in the decision makings of the School Advisory Council in a consultative role.

## MEETING SCHEDULE

The meeting dates will be confirmed by Council at the September meeting. The council will meet at least six times a school year with the meetings to last no longer than one and one-half hours. Meetings at this time are held on the last Monday evening of each month at 6:00 p.m.

## **SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL COMMITMENTS**

Westmount School Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- Providing all partners with a voice in decision making
- Collaborating with all school staff in developing a school improvement plan
- Assisting with advice in developing school policies which promote academic excellence and a positive learning environment
- Preparing an annual accountability report as defined by the Education Act that describes school improvement activities undertaken during the year, specific achievements and factors that influenced the results
- Advising the principal and staff on curriculum and programs, school practices and policies, student discipline, fundraising and parent-school communication
- Maintaining effective communication among the partners by holding regular, open public meetings and circulating written information
- Participating in the selection of the principal in accordance with provincial and school board guidelines
- Developing ways and strategies to improve and support the extra curricular program and special projects in the school
- Advising the school board on program changes, student support services, policy development, funding and communication strategies
- Establishing a School Discipline Committee in accordance with School Board Policy and the Education Act
- Contributing to the annual report that describes school improvement activities undertaken during the year
- Participating in the ongoing efforts of the school to continuously improve student achievement and school performance

## **SCHOOL BOARD COMMITMENT**

The Halifax Regional School Board will make a commitment to support the Westmount School Advisory Council by:

- Developing school board policies and procedures that support effective SACs
- Supporting the ongoing work of School Advisory Councils
- Reviewing and approving the Letters of Agreement
- Consulting with SACs on educational issues, as set out in the Act
- Organizing leadership development opportunities for SACs
- Monitoring and supporting School Advisory Council performance
- Advising on or resolving conflicts within SACs in regard to membership on SACs, election of SAC members, and adherence to the terms of the SACs Letter of Agreement and its by-laws

- Approving school improvement plans and school annual reports
- Requesting advice from SACs on policy or other matters, in accordance with the Act

## **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMITMENTS**

The Department of Education will support the Westmount School Advisory Council by:

- Providing information on new curriculum and policy initiatives
- Developing and maintaining materials to support school advisory councils
- Providing a School Advisory Council Handbook
- Providing a provincial model and framework for school improvement, the Nova Scotia School Accreditation Program
- Providing guidance, structure and monitoring of annual reports
- Accrediting schools that demonstrate improvement in relation to their goals
- Assisting school boards to organize SAC leadership development opportunities
- Approving the Letter of Agreement
- Maintaining an on-line data base for schools to record school improvement plans

## **PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT**

We clearly understand and agree to follow through on the commitments made in this Letter of Agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Westmount School Advisory Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Halifax Regional School Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date