

Janet Johnstone School Council Operating Procedures

Amended June 2019

School council	Structured group of parents, the school principal, teachers, and community members who advise the principal and school board on school matters and work together to support and enhance student learning
School	Janet Johnstone School
Parents	Parent, guardian, or legal custodian of any child enrolled in either kindergarten or at grade level at the school
Community members	Persons other than parents who have an interest in the well-being of the students and the school
School community	Collective group of school administration and staff, parents, students, and community members who have an interest in the well-being of the students and the school
CBE	Calgary Board of Education

1. Name

The name of the school council is Janet Johnstone School Council (JJSC).

2. Mission

To support the mission of Janet Johnstone School, "Our school community strives for excellence in learning within an inclusive environment."

3. Goals and Objectives

- a. Advise the principal and the board of trustees on school matters;
- b. Help to ensure students have the opportunity to meet the standards of education established by Alberta Education;
- c. Provide input for parents on the development of the mission of the school and in the attainment of that mission;
- d. Seek and receive reports and suggestions from parents and community on school-related matters and communicate feedback to the school;
- e. Promote parent understanding of the education system and teaching and learning processes;
- f. Promote and support educational activities of the school and school community, including parent education programs;
- g. Foster communication, a sense of community, and a spirit of cooperation within the school community;
- h. Work with the Friends of Janet Johnstone School Association (FJISA) in support of fundraising activities for the school and assist in ensuring the fiscal management of the school meets requirements;
- i. Represents the viewpoints of parents from each of the school's programs.

4. Governance

- a. Town Hall Model - Decisions are made at regular, open meetings of the entire school community. The executive members act only to carry out the wishes of the assembly.
- b. The executive may hold special meetings if required as in Section 8. h. i. of the Operating Procedures.

5. Membership (AR 5001, Section 5, 11-14)

- a. The membership of the school council consists of:
 - i. The parents of students enrolled in the school;
 - ii. The principal of the school;

- iii. At least one teacher at the school;
 - iv. Any interested community members and Calgary Board of Education (CBE) employees at the discretion of the chair.
- b. To avoid potential conflict of interest, CBE employees must not form a majority of the members of a school council for the school in which they work (AR 5001, Section 5, 14).
- c. The majority of the members of JJSC must be parents of children enrolled in the school (AR 5001, Section 5, 13). Quorum is attained when this is achieved.

6. **Executive Positions**

- a. JJSC executive members are:

i. Chair	maximum 1 position	2-year term;
ii. Vice-Chair	maximum 1 position	2-year term;
iii. Secretary	maximum 1 position	2-year term;
iv. Key Communicator	maximum 2 positions	2-year term;
v. Volunteer Coordinator	maximum 2 positions	1-year term.
- b. Where possible, terms of duty should be staggered for executive knowledge retention.
- c. Any member in good standing shall be eligible for any office on the JJSC executive with the following exceptions for the position of chair:
 - i. CBE employees must not be signing officers of the school council for the school in which they work, unless they have received advanced approval of the Area Director (AR 5001, Section 14-15).
 - ii. A parent of a student enrolled in the school must be elected chair of the executive. If no parent is willing to be nominated as chair, a member of the school council who is not a parent may be elected as chair of the school council executive (AR 5001, Section 5, 17).
- d. Executive members may be re-elected.

7. **Executive Duties**

Each member of the executive keeps and updates a detailed explanation of his/her duties. Brief descriptions are as follows:

- a. The Chair will:
 - i. Be the principal executive officer and supervise the affairs of the council;
 - ii. Coordinate with the principal to establish JJSC meeting agendas;
 - iii. Preside at all meetings, declare the votes, and cast the deciding vote in case of a tie;
 - iv. Ensure school council Operating Procedures are current and followed and meetings are conducted properly;
 - v. Ensure the annual report is submitted to the school principal and board of trustees no later than September 30th;
 - vi. Communicate with the principal on a regular basis;
 - vii. May act as signing authority on FJISA bank accounts.
- b. The Vice-Chair will:
 - i. Assume all responsibilities of the chair in the event of resignation, incapacity, or leave of absence;
 - ii. Support and work with the chair to prepare for school council meetings;
 - iii. Keep informed of relevant school and school board policies.
- c. The Secretary will:
 - i. Attend all JJSC meetings or ensure an alternative is present to assume duties;
 - ii. Take attendance and record minutes at each meeting and post minutes on the school bulletin board and website;
 - iii. Maintain a list of the current JJSC executive and distribute as required;
 - iv. Carry out JJSC correspondence as required and maintain the JJSC email account;

- v. Keep a record of all minutes, correspondence, records, and other school council documents, and ensure all relevant JJSC documents for the preceding 7 years are available to the public in an accessible location in the school (AR 5001, Section 5, 25).
- d. The Key Communicator will:
 - i. Attend CBE's Council of School Councils (COSC) meetings which occur several times per school year;
 - ii. Relate new information learned at COSC meetings by reporting regularly at JJSC meetings;
 - iii. Circulate CBE's "Key Communique News for School Councils" e-newsletters to members of school council and any other interested parents or community members;
 - iv. Share information, ideas, and concerns about public schooling with the school community;
 - v. Provide individual feedback and parental input, as required, on educational issues and activities as requested by the CBE;
 - vi. Become an informed advocate of effective public school education.
- e. The Volunteer Coordinator will:
 - i. Prepare the volunteer request form for inclusion in the September parent information package;
 - ii. Create and maintain the school's security clearance volunteer list and ensure each volunteer has an ID badge;
 - iii. Supply teachers with a list of volunteers for each class and arrange room parents;
 - iv. Ensure all scheduled events and fundraising campaigns have a coordinator(s);
 - v. Fill requests from the school for volunteer assistance;
 - vi. Attend JJSC meetings and relay any pertinent information to volunteers;
 - vii. Assist school staff with a volunteer presentation for kindergarten orientation;
 - viii. Protect personal information according to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA);
 - ix. Ensure that volunteer information on the school website is accurate;
 - x. Maintain the volunteer coordinator's files with up to date information;
 - xi. Keep an open dialogue with current and future volunteers to ensure all members of the school community feel comfortable and welcome to volunteer.

8. Meetings

- a. All meetings are open to the general JJSC membership.
- b. The meeting must be publicized to membership via the school website, email, or other written means.
- c. Meetings are held at the school the second Tuesday of each month school is in session, with the possible exception of December. Meeting dates may be changed if adequate notice is given to the school community.
- d. School administration and a teacher representative are present at meetings to foster communication and provide input on relevant issues.
 - i. The principal seeks advice and input from the school council about policies, the school development plan, annual education results, and budget during meetings. The principal also provides council with the school's provincial testing program results, other provincial measures, and an interpretation of those results and measures (AR 5001, Section 5, 18-21).
- e. In the absence of quorum, if school council members present agree to proceed, they may discuss issues, but no motions are considered.
- f. JJSC meetings must not overlap FJJS meetings, and minutes must be kept separately.
- g. Meeting minutes are posted on the school bulletin board and school website.

- h. A special meeting may be called if the purpose relates to the goals and objectives of JJSC as outlined in section 3 of the Operating Procedures.
 - i. If an urgent decision needs to be made between meetings, the executive may hold a special meeting in person or via email. Votes held solely by the executive in special meetings must be unanimous, and meeting minutes taken.
- i. A member of the JJSC executive must be in attendance at planning meetings where FJJS and school administration discuss fundraising goals and events (AR 5001, section 5, 33, 36).

9. Annual General Meeting (AGM)

- a. JJSC will hold an AGM on or before September 30th each year.
- b. Nominees for the available executive positions are presented to the membership. Nominations are also accepted from the floor. Nominees must give consent for their name to stand for election.
- c. If vacancies remain on the executive after the AGM, elections may be held at subsequent school council meetings until the vacancies are filled.
- d. The chair will submit the Annual Report and Treasurers Report to membership at the AGM.
- e. JJSC membership may remove officers from the executive at the AGM.

10. Decision Making

- a. To make a decision by a vote, a motion must be moved, seconded, and passed by the majority of school council members.
- b. Members in good standing have the right to vote at any meeting. Votes are made in person and each member has one vote. Voting results are recorded in the minutes.
- c. In the event of a tie vote, the chair or person chairing the meeting casts the deciding vote.

11. Reports

- a. The JJSC Chair prepares and provides the board a report by September 30th of each year summarizing the activities of the school council in the previous year, and includes the financial statement relating to money handled by the school council in the preceding year, and how the funds were used. A copy of the annual report is provided to the principal. A template for the report is included in the CBE's School Council Handbook (AR 5001, Section 5, 22-24).
- b. JJSC must retain and make available upon request:
 - i. The Operating Procedures;
 - ii. The school council annual report;
 - iii. The annual financial statement;
 - iv. The minutes of each meeting of the school council for at least seven years preceding the current year (AR 5001, Section 5, 25-26).

12. Dispute Resolution

- a. JJSC members:
 - i. Sit in a circle at meeting;
 - ii. Avoid judgement and respect each member's opinions and thoughts;
 - iii. Allow people to feel comfortable to voice their opinions at meetings;
 - iv. Allow every member a voice and treat every member as equal;
 - v. Have the school's mission statement visible at all meetings and use it as a guide for decision making ;
 - vi. Allow members freedom and encouragement to delegate tasks as needed;

- vii. Give committees responsibility and decision-making powers within parameters;
 - viii. Survey the whole school community for some decisions;
 - ix. Provide opportunities for members to give private input;
 - x. Put issues on the table at meetings;
 - xi. Separate personalities from issues;
 - xii. Deal with and "put to bed" issues;
 - xiii. Acknowledge the decision-making power of the group and stand by decisions made by the group;
 - xiv. Recognize and appreciate work done by individuals and groups.
- b. If a dispute between the principal and the school council or any of its members about school council operations cannot be resolved, either party may refer the matter to the Area Director who may meet with the parties independently or together as the Area Director determines, for the purpose of attempting to resolve the dispute in a timely manner. If the parties are not satisfied with the resolution of the Area Director, either party may ask the Chief Superintendent or designate for a review of the matter (AR 5001, Section 5, 27-28).
 - c. If an internal school council dispute arises, the school council at its own cost will resolve the issue in a timely manner with the assistance of an outside facilitator trained in dispute resolution techniques (AR 5001, Section 5, 29-30). The CBE may have referral resources for this service.

13. Use of School Name

Prior approval of the principal is required if JJSC wishes to use the name of the school for any reason other than in the name of the council (AR 5001, Section 5, 6).

14. School Staff

The use of school staff and resources by JJSC must have prior approval of the principal (AR 5001, Section 5, 9).

15. School Council Communications

JJSC may communicate through CBE communication channels such as newsletters, websites, or social media as long as the information complies with CBE policies and Administrative Regulations and as the prior approval of the schools principal (AR 5001, Section 5, 31).

16. Operating Procedure Amendments

- a. Notice of intent to amend the Operating Procedures must be given to membership in writing.
- b. The proposed amendments(s) must be provided to membership in writing.
- c. Notice of intent to vote on the proposed amendment(s) at a specific JJSC meeting must be given to membership in writing, and the proposed amendment(s) must be approved by a majority vote at said meeting.
- d. JJSC's Operating Procedures continue in force from year to year unless they are amended according to the guidelines in 16.

17. Suspension of a School Council

- a. If quorum is not available for a JJSC meeting and the meeting is re-scheduled on 2 or more occasions, the board may suspend the operation of the school council until the following year.
- b. If JJSC is suspended, the principal may establish an advisory committee to carry out one or more of the duties or functions of the school council until a new school council is established.
- c. A new school council must be established within 40 days of the start of the next school year.
- d. Policy on advisory committees and establishment meetings must be followed (AR 5001, Section 5, 2, 3, 16, School Act - Section 22, 2-7).

Sources:

- School Act - Section 22 (Government of Alberta)
- Administrative Regulations No. 5001, School Councils and School/Parent

Societies (CBE)

- Best Practices Guide for Parents Societies and Associations (CBE)
- School Council Handbook (CBE)
- School Council Resource Guide (Alberta School Councils' Association)