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Stratford College

Co-educational Secondary School

Student Council Constitution

October 2019

Article One (Name)

The name of this organisation shall be *Stratford College Student Council*, hereinafter called the Student Council. It is a group of democratically elected representatives of the student body.

Article Two (Purpose)

The purpose of the Council shall be to:

1. Strive for exemplary & active citizenship.
2. Respect the ethos of the school and all members of the school community.
3. Involve all students in sharing ideas to make our school the best it can be.
4. Make suggestions and present proposals on behalf of the student body.
5. Encourage all students to work together in our school community.
6. Give all students practice in democracy in action.
7. Help other citizens and groups in our community.
8. Organise and assist in the organisation of school activities. (such as the Awards Ceremony, 6th Year Graduation)
9. Encourage the participation in extra-curricular activities

Article Three (Membership)

Section 1: All students in each Year Group shall have the opportunity to be nominated, to vote, and to offer ideas for Student Council action.

Section 2: The members of the Student Council shall be representatives of each year group and elected by the same group. (Two representatives from Years 1st- 4th, that represent the mixed student body & four Prefects/ Student Council Representatives from 5th Year)

Section 3: The Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer/ Public Relations Officer & Green Schools Liaison Officer are four prefects that are 5th Year students & are elected by 5th year, 6th year and teachers.

Section 4: The principal of Stratford College Secondary School, shall be the final authority over all actions and decisions of the Student Council.

Article Four (Representatives)

Section 1: (Qualifications)

A student who wishes to be a candidate for the Student Council shall:

1. Be a good citizen and Stratford College student.
2. Be hard-working, diligent, punctual, interested in improving the lives of fellow students, as well as local, national and global communities.
3. Relate well to other students and adults.
4. Be interested in being a Council representative.
5. Have an excellent disciplinary record
6. Be willing to represent the school as required
7. Be an advisory body on students' views
8. Inform class groups of Student Council activities and wider community affairs
9. Meet the Liaison Teacher and Council weekly and Prefects meet the Principal on a weekly basis too or as the need requires.
10. Assist with school promotion and the promotion of student wellbeing
11. Assist with fundraising and school activities

Section 2: 1: (Nominations):

Student Council Representatives: Interested students for Student Council from each group put their name forward to the Prefects/Senior Student Council and the Liaison Teacher. The class vote in order of preference. The teachers and principal will then have a final weighted vote before a representative is elected.

2.2. Prefect Selection Process:

Any student in 5th Year who wishes to be a Prefect and Senior Student Council Representative (dual role) must write a short letter of application to the principal. Students in Fourth, Fifth & Sixth Years vote in the Prefect Election. The teachers then have a weighted vote before the prefects are elected. The principal is the final authority.

Section 3: (Elections)

Elections take place in early December. They are facilitated by the incumbent Prefects. Votes are counted using First Past the Post.

Section 4:

(Powers and Duties) Each representative shall be responsible for performing the duties of the representative as listed in this Student Council Constitution.

Section 5:

(Term of Office) The term of office shall be for one calendar year starting in December and ending in December the following year. First Year Elections take place in the October of 1st Year and end in December of the following year.

Article Five (Liaison Teacher)

Section 1:

The Student Council Liaison Teacher shall be a member of the school staff who shall be responsible for fulfilling the duties and responsibilities of a Liaison Teacher in accordance with School policy. The Principal will choose the Student Council Liaison Teacher.

Section 2:

The duties of the teacher include: to facilitate 'Student Voice', encourage active citizenship and student wellbeing, promote the ethos of the school, uphold school policy, be present at all Student Council Meetings and liaise with students, the principal, Board of Management and teachers, organise elections with the executive committee (principal & prefects), organise training, both external body and internal support with outgoing Student Council, inform students of current affairs and assist in student-led activities (such as Mitzvah Week food collection) .

Article Six (Removal from office)

Any prefect or representative may be removed from office by a majority vote of the Student Council membership for poor attendance at Council meetings, failure to perform required/requested duties, or failure to follow school rules or class rules, and with the approval of the principal and liaison teacher.

Student Council Representatives are obliged to adhere to the Constitution and work in the interests of the student body and school community. If a representative fails to do so, they will receive a verbal warning. If the situation does not improve, a formal written warning will be given. If the situation still does not improve the remainder of the Student Council may ask the representative to resign or vote to remove the representative. The principal reserves the right to dismiss any unfit representative.

The Council in consultation with the principal and liaison teacher will decide if a new representative will be elected, if a position becomes vacant or should a representative leave the school or resign. If a member of the council wishes to resign, s/he must inform the remainder of the council and his/her class.

Article Seven (Meetings)

Section 1:

Student Council meetings shall take place each week and at least twice monthly, as agreeable with the liaison teacher or principal who must be present at such meetings. The Student Council Liaison Teacher in consultation with the prefects and representatives will decide each year the appropriate meeting day and times – an agreed lunchtime. Sufficient notice should be received by all parties regarding the cancellation of a meeting and the rescheduling of a meeting. Apologies must be sent to the secretary and an explanation of absence if possible. Regular attendance is necessary, see removal of representatives in Article Six.

An agenda shall be prepared and handed out to each member of the Student Council at least one day before each meeting. Student Council members may initiate agenda items. All items for agenda must be submitted to the liaison teacher or principal prior to a meeting. Additional agenda items may be added at the beginning of each Student Council meeting. If a quorum (half of Council members plus one) is not present for a meeting, no Council action may be voted upon. A record of each meeting must be recorded by the Student Council Secretary or another member of the executive/prefects in their absence.

Section 2:

The Executive Committee shall be the prefects, the principal and the liaison teacher. No meeting of the Executive Committee shall take place without either the Liaison Teacher or the Principal in attendance. This committee is responsible for making arrangements for elections, including notifying teachers when elections are to take place, and conducting the election.

Section 3:

Student Voice is paramount and the council facilitates this. However, discussions at Student Council lead to recommendations not decisions. Any suggestions and ideas are presented to the Principal and School Management.

Section 4:

An annual meeting of Student Council, the Parents' Association and Board of Management is facilitated by the principal. An annual report is submitted to the principal on the successes and challenges of the Student Council.

Section 5:

This Constitution may only be changed in consultation with all members of the Student Council, the Principal and the Liaison Teacher. The principal is the final authority. The Constitution is signed off by the Chairperson of the Board of Management.

Article Eight (Training)

New prefects and newly elected Student Council Representatives receive training, observe the final meetings of Student Council, read the Constitution and receive briefing with the liaison teacher and decide on the prefect/executive positions.

Article Nine (Privileges)

Student prefects have certain privileges, including permission to leave the school grounds during lunch break.

Article Ten (Roles on Student Council)

The role of the chairperson is to actively participate in committee meetings, to call and chair meetings, assist in the drawing up of the agenda which must be passed by the liaison teacher or principal prior to the meeting, uphold democracy, help generate interest, enthusiasm and involvement in creating programmes, organise action to follow decisions within a reasonable amount of time, help the council evaluate and reflect on programmes and performance and promote good relations and co-operation with teachers, the principal and school community.

The role of the Secretary is to take an active part in committee meetings, work in the drawing up of an agenda which must be passed by the liaison teacher or principal prior to the meeting, take minutes which must be discussed with the liaison teacher or principal, monitor and post on the Student Council notice board and school blog/website.

The minutes should include: the names of members and teachers present, proposals made, decisions made & details of discussion, 'Any Other Business' (A.O.B.) and time of next meeting. They should also deal with the council's external or internal correspondence through letters, phone calls, etc, keep an attendance book, make appointments with the principal.

The role of the Public Relations Officer is to: arrange and welcome any speakers, monitor notice boards and inform students and the school body of events, liaise with the secretary and teacher, be present and inform at school assembly, liaise with executive (Student Council, Prefects, Teacher & Principal) about blogs on the school website.

The role of the Treasurer is to keep proper accounts relating to all sums of money, inform members of the financial state, take a leading role in fundraising. This role may be performed with another role such as Public Relations' Officer or secretary.

The role of the Green Schools Liaison Officer is to provide a link between the Green Schools Committee and Student Council and to play an active role in generating interest in Green Schools Committee throughout the student body.

The role of the Student Council Class Representative is to attend all meetings, carry out assigned tasks, report to their class on the meeting and report any concerns to Student Council on behalf of their year group.

Signed: Cormac Murphy

Chairperson of the Board of Management

Dated: 18th October 2019

Signed: Patricia Gordon

Secretary to Board of Management

Dated: 18th October 2019