



Garden Ave. School Council Needs You!

A strong school community creates the foundation for our children to learn and thrive. The School Council* plays an important role bringing together school staff, administration and interested parents to create a place for discussion, idea sharing and planning of initiatives.

The school council operates with a Council Executive (elected roles) and interested parents who participate in monthly meetings over the course of the school year.

Each school year in September, all Council Executive roles are open for election however each year there are certain roles that have no incumbent. ***This year the Council Chair role has no incumbent.*** In addition we have added two important new elected positions to the Council Executive: “*Director of Parent Engagement*” and “*Director of Communications*”.

Outlined below are each of the Council Executive roles, their approximate time commitment and responsibilities. Please consider how you can make a difference for your child(ren) and community by volunteering for one of these important roles.

Interested parents - please identify yourself to Ms. Hardy or one of the current council members or by emailing gardenavenews@gmail.com

Council Chair(s) - No incumbent

Role: This role can be done by one or two people. Oversee all meetings and council activities. Meet with Principal monthly or as needed to keep informed and discuss school climate and priorities.

Time commitment: Averages 1-3 hours per week plus 6 X 90 minute Garden Parent Council meetings annually. Can vary greatly depending what activities are happening and on the level of support from other council members and school community.

Comments: “I had never before imagined this as something I would take on but have thoroughly enjoyed it. The amount I have learned about the school and how things work has been tremendous. My daughter also enjoyed how informed and involved she was as a result of my being co-chair. It has also been great getting to know all the staff and feeling very much a part of this wonderful school.” (Heather Johnston, Outgoing Co-Chair)

Treasurer - Incumbent: Madeleine Cruickshank

Role: Balance the Council’s books, collect, count and deposit proceeds from fundraisers, make payments, prepare and present budget to council.

Time commitment: Averages 1-3 hours per week plus 6 X 90 minute Garden Parent Council meetings annually.

Comments: You don’t need to be an accountant to take on this role! In fact some have really appreciated how much they learned in this role about finances and preparing statements. It’s also a great way to get to know the school staff.

**Please note that simply by being the parent/guardian of a current Garden Avenue student you are a member at large of the School Council. As a member at large you are always welcome to participate in the monthly Council meetings.*

Ward 7 Representative - Incumbent: Katherine Ball

Role: Attend Ward 7 meetings and report back to the Council with current Ward 7 issues or educational concerns.

Time commitment: 2 hour meeting every month (Sept - June) at various Ward 7 Schools. 6 X 90 minute Garden Parent Council meetings annually; and, Preparing the update for council: 1-2 hours per month. This is a role that can be shared between a few reps who can take it in turns to attend the monthly meetings.

Comments: "I highly recommend taking a turn as the Ward 7 Rep. I found the Trustee meetings to be interesting for me as a member of the community, and as a parent. As the meeting is attended by parents, educators and administrators, attendees get great access to the education thought leaders in the community and learn about TDSB initiatives." (Heather Johnston, former Ward 7 Representative)

"Ward 7 Rep is a great way to learn more about the wider School community that Garden belongs to within the TDSB. The Ward 7 meetings take place once a month at schools around the area and include discussions and presentations on many interesting issues; special needs education, gifted learning, extra curricular education, French language etc. Representing Garden is a great way to get involved and join in the debate!" (Katherine Ball, current Ward 7 Representative)

Secretary - Incumbent: Erica Spencer

Role: Attend all council meetings and take notes. Circulate notes for approval at following meeting, make any needed edits and forward for posting on website.

Time commitment: Attend 6 – 90 minute council meetings and take notes, send a couple of follow-up emails. If notes are taken on a laptop there is little to do outside of the meetings.

Comments: This role is a great way to learn about how the school council works. The time commitment is low and it is a great way to meet other parents and staff and see what areas may be of interest to become more involved in the future.

Director of Parent Engagement - No incumbent

Role: Work with the council executive to advise on initiatives related to Parent Engagement. Work with the Director of Communications to ensure ongoing contact with the parent community. Liaise with other neighbourhood school councils to understand and advertise local parent engagement opportunities.

Time commitment: Attend 6 X 90 minute council meetings (optional). Attend council executive meetings 1 per month. Organize parent participation in events 2-4 hours per month via email.

Director of Communications - No incumbent

Role: Take the lead to define and create/organize content for the school council website. Review content for clarity and accuracy. Ensure that key aspects of school life are well documented and understood by the parent community.

Time commitment: Attend 6 X 90 minute council meetings annually (optional).

Comments: This new role is great for a parent who cannot commit to regular meetings, but is able to stay in touch with the council executive via email. Strong written/verbal communication and computer skills are necessary for this role.

Interested parents - please identify yourself to Ms. Hardy or one of the current council members or by emailing gardenavenews@gmail.com