



**EDITHVALE  
PRIMARY  
SCHOOL**  
SCHOOL NUMBER 3790

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## CALL FOR SCHOOL COUNCIL NOMINATIONS

12 February 2020

Dear Parents/Guardians

If you are one of the many parents of our great school community who like to be involved with many aspects of Edithvale Primary School - we'd love to have you join us on School Council.

Those with a desire to work with other enthusiastic and creative parents to help shape our School's future are keenly sought after and encouraged to nominate (or be nominated) to become a member of a dynamic School Council.

Nominations are now open for four parent member vacancies and two staff vacancies on our School Council. If you are an enthusiastic parent interested in getting more involved and having a say in what our school is doing, or know someone who is, we would love to hear from you. We are looking for people who are committed to improving the educational outcomes for all our students.

Effective councils have a broad range of experience, skills and expertise. Face-to-face and online training is also available to help councillors develop the skills and knowledge for the job. Parents find their involvement satisfying and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of connection to our great school.

**Nominations close on Wednesday 19 February at 4pm. Nomination forms are available from school reception.**

Participating as a School Council member is a rewarding and challenging experience. The School Council supports us to provide the best possible educational outcomes for our great students.

School Council plays a key role in developing and enacting our vision in collaboration with all members of the school community. Councillors are actively involved in fundraising activities, the school environment- through the buildings and grounds group, and reviewing policies to ensure that Edithvale Primary is an excellent school.

If you are interested in joining us in 2020, please pop in to the office for a chat and I can answer any questions you may have about the election process, the role of School Council and the training that is available. More information is available by following the link below.

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/community/Pages/schoolcouncilselection.aspx>

I look forward to hearing from you and wish you all the very best in this process.

Yours faithfully

**James Whitla - Principal**

## SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS - FUNDAMENTALS:

### ELECTORATES:

Each school council operates according to a constituting order that details the objectives, functions and powers of a council and, for each individual school council, its size and configuration.

There are two separate electorates within a school community:

- Parent electorate; and
- Department of Education and Training (DET) employee electorate.

### A: PARENT ELECTORATE OF THE SCHOOL

The Parent electorate of the school includes each parent of a student of the school, other than those who are DET employees engaged in work at, and for, the school. A parent of a student of the school who is a DET employee, but does not work at and for the school, is included in the Parent electorate.

Parent includes a guardian or person who is liable to maintain or has the actual custody of a student of the school.

If a DET employee is elected to the Parent category where their child is enrolled but where they do not work, they are counted in the DET employee category for school council meeting quorum requirements.

Parent members must comprise more than one third of the council's total membership.

### B: DET EMPLOYEE ELECTORATE OF THE SCHOOL

The DET employee electorate of the school includes the principal of the school and DET employees engaged in work at, and for, the school.

'DET employee' means a person employed for eight hours or more per week in either an ongoing capacity or a fixed term of at least 90 days.

- by the DET under the *Public Administration Act 2004* (Victorian Public Servants employed by DET);
- by the school council of a government school (for example, maintenance or grounds person, casual relief teacher, cleaner);
- under part 2.4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (members of the teaching service including education support officers); or
- under more than one of the paragraphs (i) to (iii) above.

### C: HOW TO VOTE

- Nominations for school council election: Candidates can now choose two ways for nomination:
- Self Nomination (Schedule 5A and 5C)
- Nomination by an eligible person (Schedules 5B and 5D). There is no requirement to have a seconder.
- Where the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies, a ballot is required.
- Votes may be posted to the principal or placed in the ballot box at the school on any day up to the closure of the ballot. Further details on how votes may be lodged will be provided when ballot papers are sent to the electorate of the school.

## Notice of election and call for nominations

**An election is to be conducted for members of the school council of**

Edithvale Primary School

**Nomination forms may be obtained from the school from *Wednesday February 12, 2020*.**

**The ballot will close at 4.00pm on Wednesday February 19, 2020. Nominations must be lodged by this time.**

The terms of office, membership categories and number of positions in each membership category open for election are as follows:

### **Membership category**

Parent member

<b>Term of office</b>	<b>Year</b>
From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in	<b>2020</b>
to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in	<b>2022</b>

**Number of positions:**

**4**

### **Membership category**

DET employee member

<b>Term of office</b>	<b>Year</b>
From the day after the date of the declaration of the poll in	<b>2020</b>
to and inclusive of the date of the declaration of the poll in	<b>2022</b>

**Number of positions:**

**1**

Following the closing of nominations, a list of the nominations received will be posted at the school.

If the number of nominations is less than the number of vacancies, a notice to that effect and calling for further nominations will be posted in a prominent position at the school.

### **Principal signature**



James Whitla

## Appendix A:

### Fact Sheet No 1. School council elections – Information for parents

#### What is a school council and what does it do?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the broad directions of a school in accordance with their constituting Order and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

#### Who is on the school council?

For most primary school councils, there are three possible categories of membership:

- A mandated elected Parent member category – more than one-third of the total members must be from this category. DET employees can be Parent members at their child's school as long as they are not engaged in work at the school
- A mandated elected DET employee member category – members of this category may make up no more than one-third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members
- An optional Community member category – members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DET employees are not eligible to be Community members.
- For all schools with a year 7 and above cohort, there is a fourth category of membership:
- A mandated elected Student member category, 2 positions.

Generally, the term of office for all members is two years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

#### Why is parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help inform and shape the direction of the school.

Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

#### Do I need special experience to be on school council?

Each member brings their own valuable life skills and knowledge to the role. However, councillors may need to develop skills and acquire knowledge in areas that are unfamiliar to them. What you do need is an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

#### How can you become involved?

The most obvious way is to vote in the school council elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant.

In view of this, you might consider:

standing for election as a member of the school council  
encouraging another person to stand for election.

## Code of conduct for school councillors

School councils in Victoria are public entities as defined by the *Public Administration Act 2004*. School councillors must abide by the *Code of Conduct for Directors of Victorian Public Entities* issued by the Victorian Public Sector Commission. The Code of Conduct is based on the Victorian public sector values and requires councillors to:

- **act with honesty and integrity** (be truthful, open and clear about their motives and declare any real, potential or perceived conflict of interest and duty)
- **act in good faith** in the best interests of the school (work cooperatively with other councillors and the school community, be reasonable, and make all decisions with the best interests of students foremost in their minds)
- **act fairly and impartially** (consider all relevant facts of an issue before making a decision, seek to have a balanced view, never give special treatment to a person or group and never act from self interest)
- **use information appropriately** (respect confidentiality and use information for the purpose for which it was made available)
- **exercise due care, diligence and skill** (accept responsibility for decisions and do what is best for the school)
- **use the position appropriately** (not use the position as a councillor to gain an advantage)
- **act in a financially responsible manner** (observe all the above principles when making financial decisions)
- **comply with relevant legislation and policies** (know what legislation and policies are relevant for which decisions and obey the law)
- **demonstrate leadership and stewardship** (set a good example, encourage a culture of accountability, manage risks effectively, exercise care and responsibility to keep the school strong and sustainable).

## Indemnity for school council members

School councillors are indemnified against any liability in respect of any loss or damage suffered by the council or any other person in respect of anything necessarily or reasonably done, or omitted to be done by the councillor in good faith in:

- the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a councillor, or
- the reasonable belief that the act or omission was in the exercise of a power or the performance of a function of a council.

In other words, school councillors are not legally liable for any loss or damage suffered by council or others as a result of reasonable actions taken in good faith.

## What do you need to do to stand for election?

The principal will issue a Notice of Election and Call for Nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March unless the usual time line has been varied by the Minister.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent member category.

DET employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not engaged in work, are eligible to nominate for Parent membership of the school council at that school.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt via post, email or by hand following the receipt of your completed nomination.

If there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

## Remember

Consider standing for election to school council this year.

Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do.

Be sure to vote in the elections.

Contact the principal for further information.