



# Moorebank High School

## Community Focus Group Charter

---

### **Purpose**

The Moorebank High School (MHS) Community Focus Group (CFG) purpose is to work with the MHS Executive Team by providing comments and feedback on issues maintaining a focus on solutions that benefit the school community as a whole and student learning.

### **CFG Goals**

- Advise and discuss with school representatives key aspects or issues in relation to MHS
- Provide a community perspective on key considerations and provide community representation on school teams and at school events
- Be a sounding board for project or program deliverables
- Work towards consensus among members on the desired goals within Departmental governance guidelines
- Discuss any alternatives
- Participate in programs through giving feedback to MHS either at sessions or through surveys as required that enhance the learning experience for students at MHS
- Be active participants in any events organised by the school
- Encourage other parents and community members of MHS to become involved in the CFG.

### **Outcomes**

The group's activities will be considered a success if:

- The CFG establishes clear, consensus-based recommendations on the best outcomes for MHS school community
- The community is engaged in a meaningful way in events at MHS
- All CFG members are given the opportunity to review and comment at meetings on issues tabled
- The group's decisions and initiatives fit into the context of the school and its surrounding communities and recognize and respect the unique needs of the community.

### **Terms of membership**

Open to all interested parents, friends and community members surrounding MHS.

### **CFG Operating Guidelines**

#### Convening of Meetings

- Discussion sessions/meetings will be held at the time and place chosen by the Principal and CFG in the course of the previous meeting.
- It is anticipated that there will be two meetings per term (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month)
- Members will be informed of meeting and agenda items through email at least 2 days prior to the meeting.

#### Communication

- Meetings will be advertised in the school newsletter, school website and via email
- Meeting agenda, minutes and notices will be posted on the school website.

#### Conduct of Meetings

- Meetings will be open to all interested parents, friends and community members
- All cell phones should be muted or silent throughout the meeting
- Meetings will end with a clear understanding of issues discussed and expectations of members and school.
- Meetings are expected to be one to two hours and not exceed two hours
- A record of meeting attendees, key issues raised and actions required will be kept for all meetings.
- Members are encouraged to raise only whole school issues rather than issues relating to individual staff members or individual students.

- The previous meeting minutes and next meeting agenda will be forwarded to members of the CFG at least two days before the next session
- Any changes to the minutes of the past meetings shall be in writing and forwarded prior to the next meeting.

#### Meeting Ground Rules

- Speak one at a time – refrain from interrupting others
- Wait to be recognised by the facilitator before speaking
- Facilitator will call on people who have not yet spoken before calling on someone a second time for a given subject
- Maintain a respectful stance toward towards all participants
- Listen to other points of view and try to understand other interests
- Share information openly, promptly, and respectfully
- Hold questions to the end of each presentation
- Make sure notes taken are accurate
- Members should remain flexible and open-minded, and actively participate in sessions.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

The CFG members work with the principal and agree to:

- Provide specific local expertise, including identifying emerging local issues
- Review any notices, reports documents tabled and comment promptly
- Attend all sessions possible and prepare appropriately
- Relay information to other members after each session and gather information/feedback from any other interested parties as practicable before the next meeting
- Articulate and reflect the interests that CFG members bring to the table
- Maintain a focus on solutions that benefit the school community as a whole
- Present its recommendations to the school in a manner that indicates Purpose and Need
- Elect a representative of the CFG to represent the group throughout the school year at school events as the Principal requires.

Principal and the Executive team agree to:

- Provide members the opportunity to collaborate on making recommendations for the school community
- Keep members informed of any related issues and department recommendations/changes as they arise
- Provide documentation to support discussions (if available)
- Ensure CFG meetings are conducted in a manner to inform and engage the whole school community
- Manage logistics for meetings
- Explain the reasons when deviations are taken from previous recommendations.

#### Decision Making

The CFG's main purpose is to primarily advise and inform the school Principal on key issues affecting the school community. In those areas where it has some decision-making authority, members will strive to reach agreement by consensus at a level that indicates that all members are willing to "live with" the proposed action. Members will strive to work expeditiously and try to avoid revisiting decisions once made. If agreement cannot be reached on a particular issue, the Principal will retain final decision-making authority.

#### Conflict Resolution

When an issue arises that cannot be easily resolved, CFG members agree to:

- Determine if the issue should be resolved within or outside of the CFG and participate however is appropriate.
- Ensure the appropriate decision makers are at the table to resolve the issue.