



# STUDENT PARLIAMENT CONSTITUTION

Adopted December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007  
Printed: August 26, 2014

*First Parliament officially opened February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008, by*

The Honourable David C. Onley  
Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

This Constitution was written during Semester One of 2007, in consultation with the Elected Student Government, as well as the Student Body and Faculty of Waterdown District High School.

This Constitution is based on the Canadian Constitution, and models its concepts and officers (both outlined in the Constitution of Canada and established through tradition in the Canadian Constitutional Monarchy):

<b>Canada's Tradition</b>	<b>Student Parliament</b>
Sovereign	Principal
Governor General	Staff Advisor
Head of Government (Prime Minister)	Prime Minister
Cabinet	Cabinet
Member of Parliament	Member of Student Parliament

A Student Referendum was held at Waterdown District High School on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2007. Of all ballots cast 82.4% voted for the proposed Constitution, 15.8% voted against, and 0.02% spoiled their ballots.

Organized by Mr. Nathan Tidridge, History Department

2007 Waterdown Constitutional Committee:

Scott Jackson (Chairperson)  
Laura Head (Warrior's Den Master)  
Trish Riddell (Student Council President)  
Becky Harkness  
Hilary Carter (Vice-President)

Special thanks are owed to:

Mr. C. Draksler, Head of History, Waterdown District High School  
Mr. Eddie Enriquez, Grade 12 Student  
Mr. K. MacLeod, C.V.O., Chief of Protocol, Department of Canadian Heritage  
Mrs. Nancy Millar, LLB, Teacher of Law, Waterdown District High School  
Miss Janet Rudzroga, Grade 12 Student

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In October, 2009, 56 copies of this constitution were distributed to schools across Canada (British Columbia, Ontario, & Newfoundland and Labrador) as a framework for schools who wanted to change their Student Governments for the Royal Visit of the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall.



## Order in Council

Be it resolved that, effective at the beginning of the second semester of 2008, student government at Waterdown District High School shall adopt the proposed Student Constitution as presented and voted upon December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

Recommended by:

Scott Jackson – Chairman of the Waterdown Constitutional Committee

Sponsored by:

Patricia Riddell – Student Council President

Ordered by:

Mrs. McKeen – Principal

Witnessed by:

The Honourable Ted McMeekin, Minister of Government and Consumer Services



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

16th November, 2007

*Dear Mr Tidbridge,*

I am writing in response to your letter to Mr. Christopher Geidt, in which you say that your Student Government have been doing a project to rewrite their Constitution, and you kindly enclose a working draft of this.

I am to tell you that Her Majesty, as Queen of Canada, was interested to hear of the students' initiative, and is most grateful for the support she has received from the nation throughout her long reign. Although The Queen is unable to send a personal message to the Student Parliament, Her Majesty hopes that they have enjoyed discussing the Canadian Constitutional Monarchy, and putting together this new Constitution.

It was kind of you to write, and I am to thank you very much for your thought.

*Yours sincerely  
Richenda Elton*

Lady-in-Waiting





LA GOUVERNEURE GÉNÉRALE  
THE GOVERNOR GENERAL

RIDEAU HALL  
OTTAWA

December 11, 2007

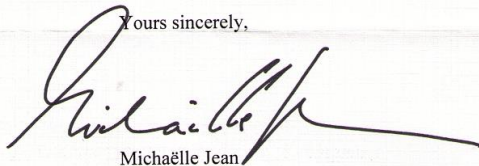
Dear Mr. Tidridge,

Thank you for taking the time to share your school's draft constitution with me. It is wonderful to see youth take an interest in our country's government and endeavour to learn about our political system. Our traditions, ceremonies and laws have been masterfully translated to fit the needs of your school.

I would like to wish the students good luck with this initiative. In particular, I also wish the best to the principal and staff advisor, who will play the roles of sovereign and governor general respectively. There is much responsibility associated with these positions, as I well know, but I am confident that they, as well as the students, will perform their tasks successfully.

I urge all students at Waterdown District High School to continue to take an interest in how government works and to keep asking questions to teachers and parents. I congratulate all of you on your drive and your ingenuity.



Yours sincerely,  
  
Michaëlle Jean



PRIME MINISTER • PREMIER MINISTRE

*I am pleased to offer my sincere congratulations to the students and staff of Waterdown District High School upon the occasion of the adoption of a new student constitution that will better reflect Canada's form of government.*

*Canada inherited its parliamentary structure from the United Kingdom where, over the centuries, it evolved into the institution we now enjoy. At its heart, this form of representational government is designed to uphold the core values of the pursuit of democracy, good governance, human rights and the rule of law.*

*As you embark upon your new path of governance, I hope that you will always remember that, as representatives of the student body, you are accountable to those who elected you, while maintaining your own principles and leadership abilities. Often, good governance requires difficult decisions; do not be afraid to rely upon the wisdom of others, and be prepared to stand for what is right.*

*On behalf of the Government of Canada, please accept my best wishes for every future success.*



A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be "Stephen Harper".





THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR OF ONTARIO  
LE LIEUTENANT GOUVERNEUR DE L'ONTARIO

17 December 2007

It is with pleasure that I send greetings to the Student Parliament of Waterdown District High School.

I commend you for changing your Student Constitution to better represent the form of government of this country. I am sure that the students who have the privilege of undertaking the positions of Prime Minister, Speaker, Whip and Black Rod will be well-versed in the various responsibilities of the many roles that exist within the organization of government.

I applaud the faculty advisors for committing to this important educational undertaking. You are providing opportunities for your students to learn first hand the many aspects of citizenship and community.

As The Queen's representative in Ontario, I congratulate the teachers for creating a living lesson for the students of the Waterdown District High School.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'David C. Onley'.

David C. Onley





*December 14, 2007*

*In the words of Abraham Lincoln, "democracy is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."*

*On behalf of the province and myself, I'm pleased to join you today and to congratulate you on the Waterdown District High School Student Parliament proposed Constitution.*

*Clearly, many hours have been spent creating this Constitution. You have included input from many teachers and students alike. This is a wonderful, well thought out document you should all be proud of. It is exciting for me to see that you are as enthusiastic as I am about this democratic process.*

*It is my hope that politics and public service continue to excite you for many years to come.*

*Kindest regards,*

*Ted McMeekin, MPP  
Ancaster Dundas Flamborough Westdale*





## Preamble

Our school is a community, and as students, we are all citizens of this community. The WDHS Student Government believes that all members of the school community should be respectful of others and the school property, and accept and care for one another with the utmost integrity. It is not the number of people, but the values of the community members that make it strong. Only when these values are upheld by the community, can the school be successful and flourish. It is the responsibility of each student to maintain the values and the integrity of the school.

**Our Student Government strives to make a school based on informed, active and purposeful decisions by all students.**

With this attitude, we will inspire active citizenship within our student community.<sup>1</sup>

## ARTICLE I – MEMBERSHIP

A person shall be a member of the Waterdown District High School Student Body, hereinafter called the Student Body, if:

- i) He or she is enrolled in day classes at Waterdown District High School; and
- ii) He or she is in possession of the Student Activity Card issued to him/her for that academic year of study.

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<sup>1</sup> On November 5th, 2007, the Assembled Student Council voted 12-2 in favour of this preamble for the Constitution of the proposed Student Parliament. This preamble was constructed by Janet Rudzroga from statements written during Camp Edgewood, 2007.

## ARTICLE II - AUTHORITY

### Section one

- i) The Waterdown District High School Student Parliament (hereby referred to as the “Student Parliament”) shall be made up of two components: The Principal (represented by the Teacher Advisors) and the elected representatives of the Student Body.<sup>2</sup>
- ii) All the power and authority of the Student Parliament is vested in the Principal who lends authority to the elected representatives of the Student Body, who are headed by the Prime Minister.<sup>3</sup>
- iii) The Principal, and his/her representatives, reserve the right to be consulted, to encourage, and to warn the Student Parliament.<sup>4</sup>

### Section Two

- i) Acts of the Student Parliament shall be subject to existing and future rules and policies of the Principal of Waterdown District High School as outlined in Article II.

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<sup>2</sup> Canada’s Parliament consists of The Queen, House of Commons and The Senate.

<sup>3</sup> This loosely mimics the relationship that exists between the Crown and Canada’s elected representatives.

<sup>4</sup> Based on the principles of Constitutional Monarchy developed by Walter Bagehot in *The English Constitution*. There is an assumption that the Principal will usually follow the conventions of Responsible Government as it has developed in Canada.

- ii) All events organized by the Student Parliament are subject to the approval, or assent, of the Principal, or Vice-Principals, of Waterdown District High School as outlined in Article VII, Section Four, Sub-Section ii.

### Section Three

- i) A Mace shall be made to represent the authority given to the Student Parliament by the Principal.<sup>5</sup>
- ii) The Principal will give the Mace to a Sergeant-at-Arms at the beginning of the school year as outlined in Article XII, symbolically giving the council its authority.
- iii) The Speaker will be in charge of the Mace for the duration of the school year. **Only the Sergeant-at-Arms may touch the Mace (and do so wearing white gloves).**
- iv) The mace must be present at all meetings of the Student Parliament.

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<sup>5</sup> Crafted by Mr. Colin Davis in 2008, the Mace represents the authority of The Queen in the Waterdown District High School Student Parliament. The WDHS Mace is made out of mahogany wood, stained with Danish oil finish. The coins surrounding the head of the Mace consist of three medallions depicting the effigy of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II (the monarch of Canada), and one depicting Queen Victoria minted in 1853 (the year Waterdown High School was founded). This Mace was presented to the student body by **His Honour, The Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario**, on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008, after His Honour officially opened Waterdown's first Student Parliament. Griffin Elliott was the school's first Sergeant-at-Arms.

- v) At the end of the school year the Mace must be returned by the Sergeant-at-Arms to the Principal, thus proroguing<sup>6</sup> Parliament for the school year.

## Section Four

- i) Every resolution made by the Student Parliament shall be made available to the Student Body in the form of printed minutes.

## ARTICLE III – THE STUDENT PARLIAMENT

### Section One

i) The Student Parliament shall consist of:

- a. Elected representatives from each grade<sup>7</sup>;
- b. One Representative<sup>8</sup> from each school club and/or association;
- c. A Cabinet consisting of:<sup>9</sup>
  - An elected Prime Minister
  - An elected Deputy Prime Minister
  - An elected Secretary
  - An elected Minister of Finance
  - An elected Minister of Events

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<sup>6</sup> Or “dissolving”

<sup>7</sup> The Grade Nine Representatives are automatically members of the Grade Nine Council (*added September 2009*).

<sup>8</sup> Chosen by the respective club/association.

<sup>9</sup> It is interesting to note that the Canadian Constitution (as a collection of documents) makes no mention of a Cabinet, or prime minister. These institutions have developed over time on their own.

- An elected Minister of Public Relations
  - An elected Whip<sup>10</sup>
  - An elected Minister of the Warriors Den
  - An appointed Minister Emeritus (which is automatically the prime minister from the previous year).
- d. A Speaker, as outlined in Section Three.
- e. Any positions (ministers) that the Prime Minister<sup>11</sup> deems necessary may be created for the next year's Student Parliament;
- f. Two Staff Advisors appointed by The Principal, one of whom shall also function as a financial advisor.
- g. An appointed Sergeant-at-Arms

## Section Two

- i) The Prime Minister shall be the head of the Student Parliament, and is responsible to fulfill the duties and expectations outlined in this constitution.
- ii) The Prime Minister is responsible for keeping the Staff Advisors fully up-to-date on the proceedings of the Student Parliament.

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<sup>10</sup> The Office of Whip is based on the Canadian Tradition of a "Party Whip." This individual is in charge of attendance and inter-club relations.

<sup>11</sup> This follows the tradition of the Canadian Prime Minister forming a Cabinet.

### Section Three (The Office of Speaker of the Student Parliament)

- i) The Student Parliament, on its first assembling after a General Election, shall elect one of its Members to be Speaker.<sup>12</sup> This Member cannot be a member of Cabinet.
- ii) The Speaker shall preside at all meetings of the Student Parliament and be charged with maintaining order in its proceedings. The Speaker's job is to ensure that everyone has a chance to speak, and that all points on the agenda are addressed.
- iii) If the Speaker is away during a session of the Student Parliament the Members of Student Parliament shall elect a Member to sit in his/her place for the duration of the meeting.
- iv) The Speaker has the responsibility to be familiar with this Constitution, and ensure that the Student Parliament is run according to its guidelines.
- v) The Speaker, at their discretion, may instruct The Whip to do the following:<sup>13</sup>
  - a) "Caution" individuals who are disrupting the debate (people who are talking out of turn, people who are forcing their views on others, etc.)

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<sup>12</sup> This mimics the first act of a newly elected government in the Canadian House of Commons.

<sup>13</sup> If The Whip is absent, The Speaker may undertake a) & b) themselves.



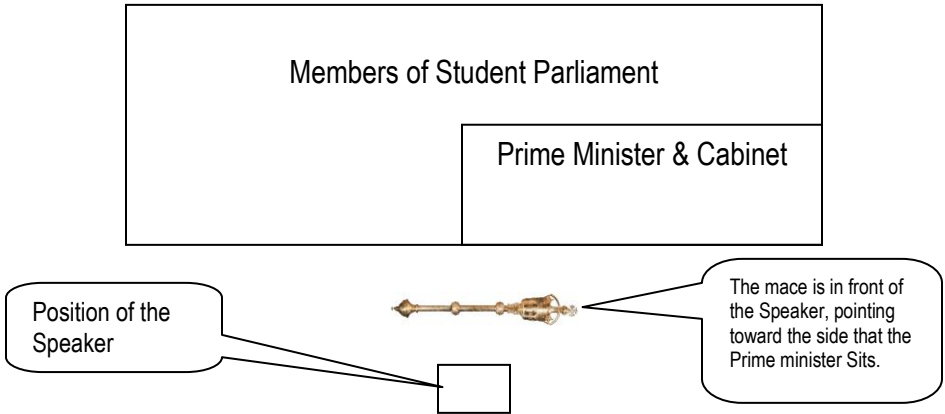
- b) "Warn" individuals whom they continue to deem to be disrupting the debate
- c) If the Member of Student Parliament does not heed the caution and warning issued, The Speaker may ask the person to leave.
- d) Once a Member of Student Parliament has been asked to leave The Whip may consider disciplinary measures in accordance with Article V.

#### Section Four

- i) The Student Parliament shall pass resolutions and by-laws necessary for the initiation and management of student-run activities
- ii) All such resolutions and by-laws must conform to the provisions of this Constitution.

Section Five

- i) Below is a suggested layout for The Speaker to organize of the Assembled Student Parliament:<sup>14</sup>



ARTICLE IV – ELECTION OF STUDENT PARLIAMENT  
CABINET

Section One

- i) A description of Cabinet positions must be posted for the Student Body, at least one week before nominations.

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<sup>14</sup> This layout is loosely based on the layout of the Canadian House of Commons. The main difference is that Waterdown's Assembled Student Parliament does not have parties – everyone is considered a member of the government and there does not need to be an aisle down the middle dividing them.

- ii) Nominations for Cabinet Members of Student Parliament will be made during the second week of May.
- iii) Cabinet nominees may have a campaign during the third week of May, consisting of posters<sup>15</sup> and one video announcement having a length of maximum, two minutes.
- iv) Elections for Cabinet members of the Parliament will be held during the last week of May.
- v) Within two weeks of the election of the Cabinet, the existing Student Parliament shall cause the election of all grade representatives for Grades 10, 11, 12.
- vi) Within one week of Grade Nine Day in the new school year, the Student Parliament shall cause the election of grade representatives for Grade 9.

## Section Two

- i) Students must have a current academic average of at least 60% in order to run for Student Parliament.
- ii) In order to run for a Cabinet position, a student must be a current Member of Student Parliament, or a part of the Grade 9 Senate.

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<sup>15</sup> These posters, along with any other advertising, must be approved by the Principal, or Vice-Principals.

### Section Three

- i) The Cabinet members shall hold their positions for the school year for which they were elected, on the condition that they fulfill all obligations required.
- ii) An individual can only be elected Prime Minister once.

### ARTICLE V – REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

#### Section One

- i) The Prime Minister serves at the pleasure of the Principal of Waterdown District High School and may be removed by the Principal. Student Parliament may recommend a replacement for The Principal to consider, however such a recommendation is not binding.

- ii) If the Prime Minister fails to conform to the qualifications established for his or her office, a vote of Non-Confidence<sup>16</sup> may be called by any Member of Student Parliament, and must be seconded by another Member of Student Parliament. The Speaker must give the Prime Minister the opportunity to show why he or she should remain in office before calling a vote of the assembled Parliament. If 2/3 of Parliament votes against the Prime Minister he or she must resign from office and the Principal must be immediately notified by The Speaker. Upon a successful Non-Confidence vote the mace must be returned to the Principal. The Principal must then act in accordance with Article V, Section Three.

### Section Three

- i) If a Member of Student Parliament other than the Prime Minister fails to conform to the qualifications established for his or her office, the Prime Minister shall call that member before Parliament to show reason for his or her staying in office. If said reasons are unacceptable, a 2/3 majority vote of Non-Confidence is needed to dismiss the individual.
- ii) A Cabinet member shall be replaced by any means deemed appropriate by the Cabinet. The new Cabinet Member must be a Member of Student Parliament.

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<sup>16</sup> This is modeled after the Canadian tradition of a Vote of Non-Confidence in the House of Commons against the ruling government.

## ARTICLE VI – SELECTION OF STAFF ADVISORS

### Section One

- i) The Prime Minister-elect may in the first week of June, with the assistance of the Principal, ask two staff members to act as Staff Advisors, one of whom shall act as financial advisor to the Student Parliament for the coming year.

### Section Two

- i) The Staff Advisors shall include, whenever possible, at least one advisor from the preceding year.

## ARTICLE VII – PROCEEDINGS & VOTING RIGHTS

### Section One

- i) The Parliament shall convene at least twice a month in regularly scheduled meetings during the school year with all committees represented.
- ii) Emergency sessions shall be called at the discretion of the Prime Minister.

### Section Two

- i) To form a committee, any four members of the Student Body must be present.

### Section Three

- i) Each elected member in attendance shall have one vote in the deliberations of the Student Parliament, except the Speaker (who shall remain neutral).



- ii) A majority is considered to be 50% of the voting Members of Student Parliament plus one more vote.
- iii) The Speaker shall have voting power in the event of a tie.

## Section Four

- i) A *Student Event Planner*<sup>17</sup> Sheet be completed for each Parliament-run event, outlining the purpose, proceedings and suggestions for the event.
- ii) In order for a student-run event to be held at Waterdown District High School it must include the following signatures:

Recommended by: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature of a Member of the Student Parliament, or associated club)

Sponsored by: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature of a Parliament Cabinet Officer, most appropriately the Minister of Events)

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature of the Teacher Advisor)

Ordered by: \_\_\_\_\_ (signature of the principal, or vice-principal)<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Obtained from the Main Office or Teacher Advisors.

<sup>18</sup> This model is based on Canadian Orders-in-Council.

## Section Five

- i) The agenda for the meetings of Student Parliament, unless ordered otherwise by the Prime Minister, should consist of:
  - i. Call to Order
  - ii. Roll Call
  - iii. Approval of the agenda
  - iv. Approval of the minutes from the previous meeting
  - v. Minister of Finance's Report
  - vi. Committee Reports
  - vii. Correspondence
  - viii. Bills and Accounts
  - ix. Other Business
  - x. Date of the next meeting
  - xi. Call for adjournment
- ii) During the proceedings there shall be the moving and debating of substantive motions and resolutions.
- iii) Free opinions shall be offered by Student Parliament members, with a limit of five minutes for each speaker or with a limit established at the Speaker's discretion.

## Section Six

- i) A copy of the minutes for each meeting must be kept by the Prime Minister and Secretary, and passed on to their successors.

- ii) A copy of the minutes of every meeting will be posted by the secretary to the Student Body within a week of each meeting in accordance with Article II, Section Four.

## Section Seven

- i) Members of Student Parliament shall keep the Student Body and/or clubs informed of Parliament activities and shall present any problems encountered by the Student Body to the Student Parliament.

## ARTICLE VIII – THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

### Section One

- i) A Student Parliament fund shall be maintained by the Minister of Finance, into which all money paid to the Student Parliament must be deposited.
- ii) Money may be removed from the fund only by order of the Cabinet.

### Section Two

- i) The Student Parliament fund shall be kept in an appropriate account with the Main Office except that portion of the fund which may be invested for the purpose of accruing<sup>19</sup> interest for Student Scholarships wherever the best rate of interest may be obtained, according to the advice of the financial advisor.

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<sup>19</sup> Or “gathering”

- ii) The Cabinet shall hold in trust, at the request of any committee/club/association, money raised for a particular project. Such funds will be placed in the Cabinet's general account at the end of each academic year.
- iii) The signing authority for all Parliamentary accounts shall be with the Principal.

## ARTICLE IX – STANDING COMMITTEES

### Section One

- i) From time to time, the Student Parliament may establish Standing Committees, which shall meet throughout the school year in which they were established.

### Section Two

- i) Each Standing Committee shall be composed of any number of interested students that the Committee feels is appropriate. The members of the Committee shall elect a chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary and any other members as needed, and shall govern themselves according to general school and Parliamentary policies.
- ii) The Chairperson must be a Member of Student Parliament.

### Section Three

- i) Each Standing Committee shall, through a representative, report its progress at the regularly scheduled meetings of Student Parliament.

### Section Four

- i) Before any Standing Committee receives funds, it must present to Student Parliament an outline of its planned activities for the school year and with that, an outline of a budget.

### Section Five

- i) Each Standing Committee may make expenditures of funds held by the Student Parliament up to the current total of such funds with the duly recorded approval of the Cabinet officers of the Standing Committee.

### Section Six

- i) Each Standing Committee must maintain a cashbook showing all receipts and payments. The Treasurer of the committee must be prepared to submit the cashbook to the Minister of Finance as required by the Cabinet.
- ii) The cashbook of all Standing Committees must be presented to Student Parliament for audit at the end of formal classes in June.

## ARTICLE X – RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

### Section One

- i) Each Member of Student Parliament shall be provided with a copy of this constitution, as well as responsibilities and important dates related to Parliament. Those failing to fulfill their responsibilities will be asked by The Whip to meet with the Prime Minister and the Staff Advisors. Extreme cases may be dealt with under Article V.
- ii) Those with poor attendance records will first be warned by The Whip before invoking Article V.

## ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

### Section One

- i) This Constitution may be amended by a two-third vote of Student Parliament or, by a petition of the majority of the Student Body.
- ii) Such amendments must be approved and ordered by the Principal (as outlined in Article VII, Section Four, sub-section ii) and be published by Student Parliament to the Student Body.





Principal Helen McGregor receives the mace while The Honourable David C. Onley, lieutenant governor of Ontario, looks on.

## ARTICLE XII – THE OPENING OF STUDENT PARLIAMENT<sup>20</sup>

### Section One

- i) Deliberations and voting cannot begin until an official opening of the Student Parliament is conducted.

### Section Two

- i) The Prime Minister-elect will appoint a student (typically one of the representatives from the Drama Club) to be *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod*<sup>21</sup> for the opening of Student Parliament. This individual will be responsible for:

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<sup>20</sup> This ceremony is inspired by the Opening of the Canadian Parliament. The ceremony mimics the journey of the Members of the Canadian House of Commons to the Senate to listen to the Speech from the Throne. Waterdown's first Student Parliament was opened by His Honour, David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

<sup>21</sup> Waterdown's first Usher of the Black Rod was Scott Jackson.

- a) Setting a day and time (as early as possible into the new school year) for the elected representatives to gather together in a classroom outside of the Main Office. This meeting will be coordinated with the Principal.
- b) Selecting, under the advisement of the Teacher Advisors, a Sergeant-at-Arms.<sup>22</sup>
- c) The *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod* will then walk down to the Main Office to meet with the Principal.<sup>23</sup> When ready, the Principal will ask the *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod* to go and get the elected Student Government.<sup>24</sup>
- d) The *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod* will then walk back to the room where the elected student government is waiting. Then the *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod* will knock on the door three times to be let in.

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<sup>22</sup> Waterdown's first Sergeant-at-Arms was Griffin Elliot.

<sup>23</sup> This act will mimic the Usher of the Black Rod leaving the House of Commons (the classroom) for the Senate (Office) – highlighting the relationship between the two bodies (one to create ideas, the other to review them).

<sup>24</sup> This mimics the Sovereign of Canada, or their representative, summoning the House of Commons to them in the Senate.

e) A member of the elected government will answer the door, and then slam it in the face of the *Usher of the Black Rod*.<sup>25</sup> The *Usher of the Black Rod* will then knock again and be admitted to the classroom.

f) Once in the classroom the *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod* will announce to the room:

*“You have been asked by our principal \_\_\_\_\_, to meet with them in the Main Office.”*

g) At this point the *Master of Ceremonies and Usher of the Black Rod* will lead the elected student government to the Main Office.

h) Once arriving at the main office the Principal will present the prime minister-elect with the mace.<sup>26</sup>

i) With the mace, the elected student government will return to their classroom as a Student Parliament.

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<sup>25</sup> Symbolizing the individual nature of student government and mimicking the British Tradition (now abandoned by Canada).

<sup>26</sup> Just as the Canadian mace represents the authority of the Sovereign, the WDHS mace represents the authority of the Principal. By handing over the mace, the Principal is giving the elected students authority to govern.

They can begin deliberations as such **(It is recommended that their first order of business be the election of a Speaker as outlined in Article III, Section Three).**

## Appendix



The 2013-2014 Student Parliament meet with the Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, and Her Honour, Ruth Ann Onley, in the Vice-Regal Suite of Queen's Park, Toronto. November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013. This picture was featured on the Lieutenant Governor's official website.

I am truly honoured to be a part of Waterdown District High School's Student Parliament.

Seven years ago, several committed teachers at Waterdown decided to transform the average student council into an official student parliament.

Student Parliament was officially opened in 2007 by the Honourable David C. Onley, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

I took the opportunity to read over the constitution that was written while the creating of Student Parliament was in action and I was impressed at the amount of detail and efforts that were placed into writing the constitution.

I find it rewarding to see the vast similarities between our student parliament and our country such as the constitution and government traditions.

On Tuesday, November 5, Waterdown's Student Parliament was invited to the 125th anniversary of the Ontario Historical Society (OHS), hosted by the Honourable David C. Onley at Queens Park in Toronto.

I had an amazing experience, as did the rest of Student Parliament. We met with various members of the OHS as well as the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario.

- Prime Minister Nikki Kumar writing in her weekly column "A Touch of Class" for the *Flamborough Review*. November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013

## HISTORICAL INFORMATION FOR THE WDHS STUDENT PARLIAMENT

### **Monarchs**

Mrs. Helen McGregor	(2007-2009)
Mrs. Michelle Visca	(2009-present)

### **Governors General**

Ms. Julie Buckle	(2007-2010)
Mr. Peter Kott	(2009-2012)
Mr. Mike Allen	(2010-2014)
Mr. Nathan Tidridge	(2007-present)

### **Prime Minister**

Ms. Patricia Riddell	(2007-2008)
Ms. Amanda Geiger & Ms. Amanda Weldon	(2008-2009)
Ms. Mariah Hamilton	(2009-2010)
Ms. Jamie Kosonic	(2010-2011)
Mr. Adam MacDonald	(2011-2012)
Mr. Grant Brierley	(2012-2013)
Ms. Nikki Kumar	(2013-2014)
Mr. Michael Arnason	(2014-present)

### **Speaker of Parliament**

Mr. Terry Soleas	(2007-2008)
Mr. Spencer Porter	(2008-2009)
Mr. Nick Bridges	(2009)
Ms. Kaitlin Juraschka	(2009-2010)
Ms. Hannah Faas	(2011-2012)
Ms. Shauna Deathe	(2013-2014)
Ms. Eryn Green	(2014-2015)

### **Usher of the Black Rod**

Mr. Scott Jackson	(2008-2009)
Mr. Mark Onufer	(2009-June 2010)
Mr. Tyler Adamson	(June 2010)
Mr. Haydan Taterny	(2011)
Mr. Reilly McCleary	(2013-2014)

**Sergeant-at-Arms**

Mr. Griffin Elliot	(2008-2009)
Mr. Esai Bishop	(2009-2010)
Mr. Nick Kosonic	(2010-2011)
Mr. Emmit Brown	(2013-2014)





CLARENCE HOUSE  
LONDON SW1A 1BA

From: The Assistant Private Secretary to HRH The Prince of Wales

**Private and Confidential**

27th October, 2009

Dear Sir,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 8th October to His Royal Highness; I am responding on behalf of The Prince of Wales.

Your kind letter, welcoming Their Royal Highnesses to Canada on their forthcoming visit, is very much appreciated, together with your gracious comments. Their Royal Highnesses are very much looking forward to enjoying the many attractions that Canada has to offer.

I hope your Student Parliament continues to work for the benefit of all it serves and your warmest regards will be passed to Her Majesty The Queen.

This comes with very best wishes and thanks again for taking the trouble to write as you did.

Yours sincerely,

**Jonathan Hellewell**

The Waterdown Student Parliament

Response to a letter sent by the 2009-10 Student Parliament welcoming Their Royal Highnesses The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall to Canada for their Royal Visit (November 2<sup>nd</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>).

## The Political Crisis in November (24-27th, 2009)

During the 2009-10 school year a representative of a group of students from within the Cabinet met with the Teacher Advisor to inform them that the prime minister had lost the confidence of the Parliament. Rather than advising the introduction of a vote of non-confidence, the Teacher issued the following letter (in consultation with The Principal):

*It has come to my attention that Student Parliament is not effectively organizing itself in order to meet the demands of the upcoming holiday season. Food drives and school events that have been tabled are not being acted on.*

*As well, meetings of our Student Parliament are not being productive.*

*It is my advice to the prime minister and deputy prime minister that an EMERGENCY PARLIAMENT MEETING BE CONVENED in order to delegate responsibilities to Cabinet Members who will be able to ensure they are met.*

*The holiday season will be dealt with as a CONFIDENCE MOTION (under Article V of our Student Constitution).*

*If the status quo continues through to December 18<sup>th</sup> I will recommend that the 2009-10 Student Parliament be dissolved, returning power to The Principal.*

This action did not satisfy the dissenting group of students, now forming themselves into a political party (The "Group of Four"). An Emergency Parliament meeting was called for the Friday of that week, and the Group of Four signaled their intention to table a vote of non-confidence under Article V of this constitution. After Parliament was dissolved, the Group of Four intended to draft a letter to The Principal advocating the creation of a new government by a coalition, with the Deputy Prime Minister serving as a puppet Head of Government.

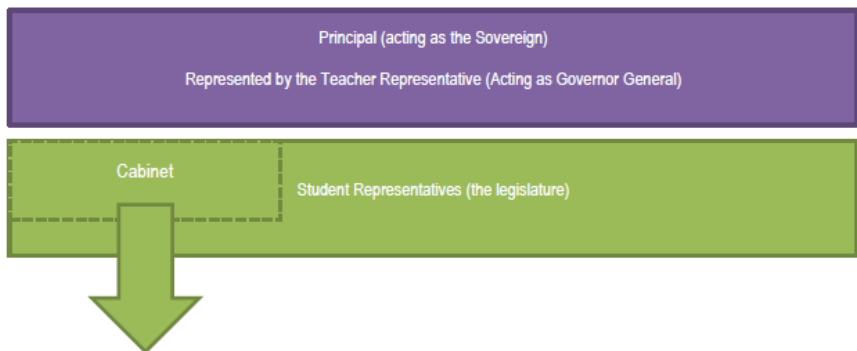
Separate meetings were held by both sides as the school became polarized by the issue. The Principal signaled her intention that if a vote of non-confidence was passed, she would call for fresh elections if the Group of Four could not demonstrate that they had tried to work with the Prime Minister prior to signaling their lack of confidence.

During an Emergency Parliament Meeting the Prime Minister presented a plan that was able to avoid a vote of non-confidence. Even though the ballots had been printed, the consensus of the Group of Four was that an election now would jeopardize Christmas celebrations and thus be too divisive for the Student Body to endure.

Interestingly, this event mirrors a similar situation in the Canadian Parliament during the "Prorogation Issue" of December, 2008. An excellent book on this issue is Professor Peter Russell's Parliamentary Democracy in Crisis.

## Explanation of Student Parliament created by Mr. Tidridge for 2015 election:

Student Parliament is made up of two, equal parts:



### Cabinet Members

Prime Minister	Head of Student Government for Waterdown DHS – sets the agenda and tone for the year.
Deputy Prime Minister	Acts as the prime minister when he/she is unable to perform their duties. Assists the prime minister.
Minister of Finance	In charge of managing the finances of the Student Parliament.
Minister of Events	In charge of coordinating all special events within the school.
Minister of Public Relations	Coordinates all school-wide announcements, posters, and other media (including media within the Waterdown/Hamilton community – i.e. Flamborough Review).
Minister of Warrior's Den	In charge of managing the affairs of the Warrior's Den.
Parliamentary Whip	In charge of attendance and discipline within the Student Parliament.
Parliamentary Secretary	In charge of writing up (and posting) minutes for every Student Parliament/Cabinet meeting.

\*The prime minister may create or dissolve Cabinet positions at their discretion. A prime minister also has the ability to appoint individuals from the student body to vacant ministries.

### Student Representatives

Represents the concerns and interests of their particular grade (constituency) in Student Parliament

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Under the WDHS Student Parliament Constitution the principal has the following powers/responsibilities:

- the right to be consulted
- the right to encourage
- the right to warn

In the normal course of student government the principal will adhere to the convention of responsible government, but is not bound to do so.

# History in the making at WDHS

Flamborough Review

February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008

As a former student council president at his Scarborough high school, Ontario's Lieutenant Governor, David Onley, could well appreciate the historical significance of opening a new Student Parliament during his official visit to Waterdown District High School (WDHS) Wednesday morning. Lauding students and staff for creating a student governing body modeled after the Canadian government, he told a student assembly that "it was fitting" for them to have their own parliament to observe how democracy works. As the Queen's representative, he also noted the importance of the partnership between the Crown and the Canadian Parliament.

With more than 1,000 students looking on, Onley and members of the school's new parliament took part in opening ceremonies that included the presentation of the Mace to members of the student governing body. The Mace represents the authority given by the Queen to the House of Commons to meet and decide on the laws of the country. The high school ceremony officially opening the Student Parliament mirrored events that occur when the Canadian Parliament sits.

Onley told students that the House of Commons cannot meet unless the Mace is present. He urged them to look on it as a reminder "that the purpose of parliament is to provide a free exchange of ideas."

Having lived with polio and post-polio syndrome since the age of three, the Lieutenant Governor is known for championing disability issues. He said that at least part of the definition of accessibility, that of reaching one's full potential, is achieved through the creation of the WDHS's Student Parliament because it gives all students a chance to have a voice in their governance.

"I encourage you to participate in the ongoing development of your Student Parliament," he said before leaving the student assembly to tour classrooms that hold unique programs, such as the school's own television studio (WINTV) and the Teaching Youth Respect (TRY) class which promotes student retention.

Minutes before attending the student assembly, Onley dedicated, in the name of Queen Elizabeth II, the high school's war memorial, erected in the foyer three years ago to commemorate students who served during the Boer War, and the First and Second World wars. Calling the memorial "a wonderful gesture" by students, staff and the board to recognize individuals who died in

foreign conflicts, Onley unveiled a dedication plaque bearing his name and that of the Queen.

In an interview with the Review at the close of his two-hour visit, he noted a connection between the two ceremonies that he had taken part in that morning. The opening of the Student Parliament is an experience that might not have been afforded to students had it not been for the willingness of Canada's military to fight for the democratic system of government we enjoy today, he observed.

Onley hailed the creation of a Student Parliament, as a replacement for the traditional student council, as "a great concept." Now instead of a school council president, the students' governing body is headed by a Prime Minister. He said he doesn't know of any other high school in Ontario that has such a unique system of government.

The Lieutenant Governor's visit was Waterdown's first vice-regal visit. It was spearheaded by history teacher Nathan Tidridge, who was also instrumental in establishing the Student Parliament at WDHS. Tidridge put in a request for a visit from Onley last November and learned about a month ago that the invitation had been accepted.

His students were as enthused about the news as Tidridge was. "It's a huge honour that he came here," said Grade 10 student Ellen Hyslop. "Not many other schools get this opportunity."

Classmate Lisa Christmas was equally enthusiastic. "It's important that someone so big (in government) came to Waterdown," she said.

Onley said he was impressed and moved by the warm welcome that he received. He said he felt "privileged" to participate in the ceremonies.

He was welcomed by several dignitaries and special guests, including WDHS principal Helen McGregor, Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board chair Judith Bishop and Flamborough archivist Sylvia Wray.

Wray, who spoke briefly at the assembly, talked about WDHS's proud 150-year history and told of Waterdown's connection to the vice-regal office. A former Waterdown businessman and politician, Sir William Pearce Howland, served as Lieutenant Governor from 1868 to 1873. Howland, who had the distinction of being the only American-born Father of Confederation, lived in a house on Mill Street that still stands to this day.

Shortly after Wray's speech, another bit of history was made as the WDHS's newly formed Student Parliament held its first meeting. The topic--how to engage students into the current community dialogue surrounding expansion plans for the high school.