

Fisher Park Summit Alternative Public School Council Constitution

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1.0 Overview

- 1.1 The organization shall be called the Fisher Park Summit Alternative Public School (“FPSA”) Council (“Council”) of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
- 1.2 The Constitution and By-Laws are intended to be in accordance with the Ontario Regulation 612/00 (created under the Education Act) which describes provisions for school councils and Parent Involvement Committees.
- 1.3 FPSA is an intermediate elementary school located in central Ottawa which offers four grade 7 and grade 8 programs (“Programs”):
 - (a) Summit Alternative;
 - (b) Early and Middle French Immersion;
 - (c) Regular English; and
 - (d) General Learning Program.
- 1.4 Council supports all Students at FPSA to achieve positive outcomes, such as improved Student achievement, improved Student engagement, improved Student behaviour, reduced Student absenteeism, and greater sense of inclusion, belonging and confidence among Students and/or Families.
- 1.5 Council plays a vital role in the life of FPSA with fundraising activities and organizing school events which foster a positive school climate, and each Member of Council works together on issues for the betterment of FPSA and our Students.

2.0 Purpose and Objectives

- 2.1 The purpose of Council is to improve, support, and enhance the educational environment and well-being of Students at FPSA, including by advising the Principal; communicating and providing a voice for Families within the local educational system including the Board; increasing awareness and advocating on relevant issues in various forums including before government and non-government organizations; enhancing accountability of the educational system; and providing a forum for Students, Families, Staff and the School Community to achieve objectives.
- 2.2 The “education environment and well-being” includes academic, social, financial, psychological and physical aspects that contribute positively toward each Student’s educational experience and achievement.

2.3 The objectives of Council are to include:

- (a) to enhance and support educational opportunities and overall school experience for all Students, and develop a strong relationship between the Members of Council and the School Community;
- (b) to enhance and support the Alternative program which is based on a concept of student-centered learning; a philosophy that translates into all aspects of a student's experience at school and to meet Ministry expectations through seven core alternative tenets (included in Appendix A) which set the program apart from others in the OCDSB;
- (c) to contribute to the wider City of Ottawa community by communicating and working on matters that are in the best interest of Students;
- (d) to provide advice and recommendations to the Principal and, as appropriate, to the Board or any other person(s) or organization(s) on any matter affecting FPSA and/or its Students.
- (e) to be an effective voice for promoting the interests of FPSA and its four educational Programs, and to actively support FPSA in meeting the educational, social and recreational needs of the Students;
- (f) to review and advocate on issues not met by the Board, and determine which priorities require Council action and/or fundraising efforts;
- (g) to promote and enhance the accountability of the education system to Families;
- (h) to provide a forum for Students, Families, Staff and the School Community for input, consultation, information, communication, discussion, cooperation, participation and involvement on matters relevant to school experience;
- (i) to provide or support events, opportunities and activities to enrich the educational environment and well-being of Students and to fundraise therefor;
- (j) to ensure funds raised are used lawfully and in accordance with the purpose and objectives of Council;
- (k) to foster goodwill, a positive educational experience and achievement for Students, without discrimination and in the spirit of equality of opportunity and inclusion;
- (l) to otherwise take steps to improve, support and enhance the educational environment and well-being of Students at FPSA as may be agreed upon and approved by Council from time to time.

3.0 Membership and Affiliations

3.1 Council may seek membership in, or affiliation with, other organizations that have similar purposes, such as membership in the Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) and the Alternative Schools Advisory Committee (ASAC).

3.2 Changes in such memberships or affiliations will require Council vote.

4.0 Elections

- 4.1 Council elections will be conducted in accordance with Board Procedure PR.509.SCO and other relevant policies and procedures.
- 4.2 Members of Council will be elected or acclaimed for a one-year renewable term by Families in attendance at a Council meeting within thirty days of the beginning of the current school year (the "Inaugural Meeting").
- 4.3 Elected and appointed Members of Council may seek additional terms of office, subject to the requirements of each role.
- 4.5 Members of Council shall remain in office until their successors are elected or appointed, or they resign, or are removed from office.
- 4.6 The terms of all Members of Council for the previous school year expire as soon as voting commences at the Inaugural Meeting.
- 4.7 If fewer individuals stand for election than are spaces available, all those standing for election will be acclaimed.
- 4.8 In the event of a vacancy, it shall be handled as follows:
 - (a) If any of the Mandatory Council Positions becomes vacant, Members of Council will ask the Principal to advertise the position(s) in the Principal's Newsletter. Members of Council will actively search for candidates to fill the vacant position. At the start of the next Council meeting such vacancies will be announced. If multiple candidates are nominated, Council will fill the vacancy through election with each Family in attendance having one vote, else by acclamation of Council.
 - (b) Any Family Member vacancy or Non-Family Representative vacancy may be filled at a subsequent Council meeting. If multiple candidates are nominated, Council will fill the vacancy through election with each Family in attendance having one vote, else by acclamation of Council.
 - (c) Any Teacher Representative, and Non-Teaching Staff Representative, or Student Representative vacancies shall be elected as described in Section 5.1 (d), (e), or (g), as applicable, and shall become Members of Council upon notification from the Principal.

5.0 Members of Council

- 5.1 Council is composed of the following Members of Council:
- (a) The Executive is composed of the following Mandatory Council Positions:
 - i. Co-Chair (representing Fisher Park);
 - ii. Co-Chair (representing Summit Alternative);
 - iii. Treasurer; and
 - iv. Secretary.
 - (b) A minimum of Two (2) and a maximum of Fourteen (14) additional Family Members;
 - (c) The Principal, or designate;
 - (d) Where possible, one Teacher Representative, employed at FPSA, other than the Principal, elected by the teachers at FPSA;
 - (e) Where possible, one and Non-Teaching Staff Representative, employed at FPSA, elected by the non-teaching employees of FPSA; and
 - (f) Where possible, one Non-Family Community Representative, elected or appointed by Council; and
 - (g) With consent of Council, a Student Representative may be elected by the Students and/or appointed by the Principal.
- 5.2 Members of Council will be elected at the Inaugural Meeting with each Family in attendance having one vote.
- 5.3 Outgoing Members of Council may work together and with the Principal before the Inaugural Meeting to ensure that candidates attend the Inaugural Meeting in the hope of having representation from each of FPSA's four educational programs.
- 5.4 Exceptionally, the same person may hold up to two of the Mandatory Positions.
- 5.5 The Executive may include other positions deemed necessary and as approved by Council.
- 5.6 All Members of Council are voting members and have equal voting rights except the Principal, who participates in Council business as a non-voting member.
- 5.7 There will be no remuneration paid to Members of Council, though Members of Council may be reimbursed for approved expenses incurred as part of Council business.
- 5.8 In furtherance of Section 2.0, members of the Executive are authorized to make monetary decisions up to \$250 without advance approval from Council. Any such expenditure must be reported at the next regular Council Meeting.

- 5.9 Members of Council must seek Council's advance approval before communications or other actions, or representations are made to the School Community or general public. This generally excludes communications to Families.

6.0 Meetings

- 6.1 Council may adopt its own rules of procedure for the conduct of meetings which are consistent with principles of fairness, and democratic principles following Robert's Rules of Order.
- 6.2 Where possible, at the last meeting of the current school year, Council may appoint a nominating committee for the purpose of seeking nominations for the following school year.
- 6.3 Council will meet for regular Council meetings, generally on the third Wednesday of each month from September through June, as established by Council and/or its Co-Chair(s), at least six times per school year,
- 6.4 The Executive will ensure that appropriate notice is given for all Council meetings which may include being posted on the school's physical or digital notice boards, and circulated to Families in the Principal's Newsletter.
- 6.5 Due to extenuating time-sensitive circumstances in the best interest of Council, Special Council meetings may be called by the Co-Chair(s), or by any member of the Executive upon request of at least one-third ($33\frac{1}{3}\%$) of the non-Executive Members of Council.
- 6.6 All Council meetings will be open to Families, Staff, Students, and Members of Council.
- 6.7 The Executive has the discretion to allow members of the general public, who do not have Students enrolled at the school, to attend and/or speak, and has the discretion to allow commercial representations.
- 6.9 Members of Council will make reasonable efforts to attend all Council meetings. In order to achieve quorum and to ensure an effective Council, a Member of Council who misses two consecutive meetings may be contacted by the Co-Chair(s). A Member of Council may be terminated by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of the Executive if three consecutive meetings are missed and the vacant position filled according to Section 4.8.
- 6.10 Members of Council may consult with Families on matters under consideration by Council, and voting may only take place on business stated in an approved agenda.

- 6.11 Council may terminate the membership of a Member of Council, subject to notice and an opportunity to be heard, by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) vote for:
- (a) behaviour that is inappropriate or detrimental to FPSA or Council;
 - (b) for failure to perform his or her duty;
 - (c) for misrepresentation of FPSA or Council to a person, the press, or other organization;
 - (d) for misrepresentation to Council;
 - (e) for ignoring the direction of Council; or
 - (f) for any other reason, including illegal or unlawful conduct, as Council may deem warranted.

7.0 Voting

- 7.1 Unless otherwise provided, a majority of votes of Council is required to pass a motion.
- 7.3 Voting by proxy, or on behalf of another Member of Council is not permitted.
- 7.4 Voting on Council matters, other than the election of a Teacher Representative, a Non-Teaching Staff Representative, or Student Representative as Council member(s), may only take place at a Council meeting.
- 7.5 A Council meeting may be held by e-mail, telephone, or other electronic means at the discretion of the Executive.
- 7.6 Specific to a Special meeting of Council:
- (a) All Members of Council must be given reasonable notice of the issue to be discussed and deadline for the vote which shall be a minimum of 48 hours over regular weekdays and 72 hours over the weekends;
 - (b) Where possible, Families are given reasonable notice as above;
 - (c) If a majority of Members of Council disagree with holding the special meeting, then the meeting, and any associated voting will be canceled;
 - (d) Quorum must be achieved as required by Section 7.7;
 - (e) All meeting protocols will be upheld; and
 - (f) The e-vote will be properly documented and included in the next monthly meeting's minutes.
- 7.7 Quorum for a meeting of Council is achieved if a simple majority of Members of Council are in attendance, with the majority of Members of Council in attendance being Family Members.

- 7.8 If quorum is not achieved, as required by Section 7.7, Council may proceed with the meeting at the discretion of the Co-Chair(s), but no voting may take place until quorum is achieved.

8.0 Financial Oversight

- 8.1 The financial statements of the Council will be presented at each Council Meeting.
- 8.2 All Members of Council and/or Committee members shall follow sound financial practices.
- 8.3 Each month the Treasurer and the Co-Chair(s) shall review the financial records of Council, including bank statement, bank reconciliation, financial statements, and working papers.
- 8.4 The Treasurer shall make the accounting books and bank statements available for review upon request of any Member of Council.
- 8.5 Committees responsible for generating and/or spending Council funds will collaborate with the Treasurer to maintain consistency in reporting and will adhere to Section 9.0.
- 8.6 Fundraising proceeds shall be counted in the presence of at least two people and delivered to the Treasurer (or designate) promptly for deposit or held in the school safe until the deposit can be completed.
- 8.7 All Council funds will be deposited in the established Council bank account prior to being dispersed.
- 8.8 All cheques must be signed by two members of the Executive with signing authority.

9.0 Committees

- 9.1 Council may establish committees, as necessary, by a motion at a Council meeting that includes:
- (a) the committee's name;
 - (b) the committee's mandate; and
 - (c) the Chair or Co-Chairs of the committee, at least one of whom must be a Member of Council.

- 9.2 Membership on Council committees is open to anyone from the School Community, although each committee will maintain at least one Family Member as Chair or Co-Chair.
- 9.3 Committees may include, but are not limited to, the following:
- (a) Committees specific to any of the FPSA Programs:
 - i. Summit Alternative;
 - ii. Early and Middle French Immersion;
 - iii. Regular English;
 - iv. General Learning;
 - (b) Arts and Events Committee;
 - (c) Fundraising and Volunteer Committee;
 - (d) Diversity & Inclusion Committee;
 - (e) Exceptional Long-term Projects.
- 9.4 Committees are terminated at the earliest by:
- (a) a vote at a Council meeting to terminate the committee; or
 - (b) at the Inaugural Meeting.
- 9.5 Committees are expected to keep Council well informed of their activities at each regular Council meeting. Committees will report to Council and provide an update on their recent activities, and upcoming plans. This report will also include a financial update, and details of expenditures over \$250, if/as applicable.
- 9.6 Committees do not represent Council and must seek Council's advance approval before communications or other actions, or representations are made to the School Community or general public. This generally excludes communications to Families.
- 9.7 Committees may receive money from Council through procedures set by Council. Committee Chairs or Co-Chairs have discretion to spend up to the limit of their committee budget. For greater certainty, Committees are not permitted to spend more money than allocated by Council.
- 9.8 The Executive will ensure that appropriate notice is given for Committee meetings. Committee meetings will be open to Families, and/or the School Community, as applicable.

10.0 Council Roles and Responsibilities

In addition to the roles and responsibilities stipulated in Board Policy P.014.SCO, attachment 2, section 1.22, additional roles and responsibilities are described below.

10.1 Co-Chair

- (a) Calls Council meetings;
- (b) Prepares the agenda for Council meetings;
- (c) Chairs Council meetings;
- (d) Ensures that the minutes of Council meetings are recorded and maintained which shall include, or have attached to them, any advice provided in writing to the Principal, Board and/or senior staff by Council and the written response(s) in reply;
- (e) May participate or assign an alternate to participate in information and training programs;
- (f) Communicates with the Principal;
- (g) Ensures that there is regular communication with Families;
- (h) Consults with senior Board staff and trustees, as required;
- (i) Prepares the annual report of Council, including, if Council engages in fund-raising activities, a report of these activities (which may be prepared by the Treasurer), for submission to the Principal and the Director of Education;
- (j) Ensures that a Principal profile is on file with the Board by October 31 of each year;
- (k) Ensures that all Families are consulted about matters under consideration by Council;
- (l) Works collaboratively with Members of Council to assign and delegate the roles and responsibilities of Council;
- (m) Acts as a signing officer for Council.

10.2 Secretary

- (a) Ensures that adequate notice of meetings, the agenda, and previous minutes are circulated to all Members of Council within prescribed timelines;
- (b) Maintains a full and accurate account of Council meetings, and ensures that the minutes are signed by the Co-Chair(s) following their adoption by Council;
- (c) Prepares correspondence as required;
- (d) Ensures the safe keeping of Council records;
- (e) Provides for inspection of the minutes and records of Council to any Member of Council or Families, on request;
- (f) Ensures that a copy of all minutes for the current school year are maintained in a location accessible to any Family;
- (g) Ensures that the minutes and records of Council during Council's tenure are passed on to the successor Council and to FPSA.

10.3 Treasurer

- (a) Takes charge of any finances of Council, ensures the safe keeping of Council finances as in accordance with the policies and procedures of the Board, and provides an accounting thereof at each regular Council Meeting;

- (b) Completes an annual financial report to Council and Families;
- (c) Ensures that regular audits on the financial reports are performed in accordance with Board policies;
- (d) Performs such other related duties as may be assigned by the Co-Chair(s) from time to time;
- (e) Acts as a signing officer for Council.

In addition to the Mandatory positions, there are several other opportunities for Family involvement including:

10.4 Communications Coordinator

- (a) Maintains and updates Council website
- (b) Maintains and updates other Council external communication media and social media platforms to increase awareness and engagement leveraging school website, School Cash On-Line, Principal's Newsletter, etc.
- (c) Supports Secretary, as required

10.5 Fundraising Coordinator

- (a) Recommends fundraising events to Council
- (b) Oversees committees conducting Council fundraising events
- (c) Responsible for revenue and expense plans/budgets and to evaluate events
- (d) Reviews new fundraising opportunities/events to be considered by Council
- (e) Ensure compliance and adherence to relevant Board policies and procedures

10.6 Volunteer Coordinator

- (a) Collect names of volunteers for various school and Council activities
- (b) Organize and schedule volunteers for school events
- (c) Organizes refreshments to be served at Council-sponsored activities

10.7 Education Coordinator

- (a) Works with Council and Staff to identify potential workshops, guest speakers for Families and/or Students
- (b) Establishes and maintains relationships representatives from other schools
- (c) Working with Communications Coordinator, encourage participation, increases awareness, and seeks on-going feedback

10.8 Arts Coordinator

- (a) Works with Council and Staff to identify potential workshops, guest speakers and other means to expose Students to broad range of arts
- (b) Establishes and maintains relationships with arts groups and representatives from other schools

- (c) Working with Communications Coordinator, encourage participation, increases awareness, and seeks on-going feedback

10.9 Safe Travel Planning Coordinator

- (a) Works with School Travel Planning committee, the City, etc. to affect change in how Students get to school safely
- (b) Consult with the neighbourhood associations also working to improve traffic concerns
- (c) Encourage the use of sustainable transportation modes of travel

10.10 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Coordinator

- (a) In conjunction with the Board, collaborates with School Community to support and implement diversity and inclusion programs
- (b) Organizes training and development programs
- (c) Encourages and promotes diversity in all facets of Council activities, including but not limited to Council Meetings, communications, and events

10.11 Alternative Schools Advisory Committee Representative (ASAC)

- (a) Attends ASAC monthly meetings and votes on behalf of Council
- (b) Informs Council and Families of issues being addressed by ASAC

10.12 Ottawa Carleton Assembly of School Council Representative (OCASC)

- (a) Attends OCASC monthly meetings and votes on behalf of Council
- (b) Informs Council and Families of issues being addressed by OCASC

10.13 Community Representative

- (a) Should have no children currently at FPSA School but reside within school's catchment zone
- (b) Appointed by Council to represent the community's point of view
- (c) Promotes school and Council activities with the community
- (d) Participates in Council discussions and may sit on committees or sub-committees

10.14 Members at Large

- (a) Participate in Council meetings;
- (b) May participate in information and training programs;
- (c) Serve as a link between Council and the School Community;
- (d) Encourage the participation of Families from all Programs, and as required, from others within the School Community.

As well there are defined roles for Staff, including the Principal, Teacher Representative(s), and Non-Teaching Staff Representative:

10.15 The Principal

The Board requires all principals to work in a meaningful and cooperative way with school councils. The Principal shall:

- (a) Facilitate the establishment of Council and assist in its operation;
- (b) Support and promote Council's activities;
- (c) Seek input from Council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory
- (d) Function as a resource on laws, regulations, Board policies, and collective agreements;
- (e) Obtain and provide information, including the budgets for the school and for school-generated funds, required by Council to enable it to make informed decisions;
- (f) Communicate with the Co-Chair(s), as required;
- (g) Ensure that accurate minutes and records, including records of all financial transactions, are kept available for at least four years at the school for examination without charge by any person;
- (h) Assists Council in communicating with the school community;
- (i) Encourage the participation of Families from all Programs and from the School Community to ensure representation from all, in the life of the school and the activities of Council, and that Council is fulfilling its Purpose and Objectives.

10.16 Teacher Representative(s)

- (a) Designated by Principal and teaching staff through process established by them
- (b) Contributes to Council discussion and may participate on committee or subcommittees
- (c) May be more than one representative, but only one will have voting privileges

10.17 Non-Teaching Staff Representative

- (a) Designated by non-teaching and administrative staff through process established by them
- (b) Contributes to Council discussion and may participate on committees

11.0 Conflict of Interest

11.1 A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential.

11.2 Members of Council will declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they have an interest, stand to benefit financially or otherwise either directly or indirectly by decisions of Council.

- 11.3 Should an issue or agenda item arise during a Council meeting where a Member of Council is in a conflict-of-interest situation, he or she will declare the conflict of interest immediately and he or she will abstain from the discussion and resolution.
- 11.4 Members of Council must keep the discussion confidential, and the minutes will reflect the decision and resolution.
- 11.5 If a conflict of interest is discovered after a Council decision is made, contact is made with the person in conflict, other Members of Council are notified, and an agenda item is added at the next scheduled Council meeting for further discussion and resolution.

12.0 Conflict Resolution

- 12.1 Council should resolve disagreements collaboratively and ideally through consensus; or failing that by voting on specific issues.
- 12.2 It is the goal of Council to achieve consensus through discussion, in the event that a conflict arises, the conflict will be dealt with as follows:
 - (a) If a resolution is not attained at Council, by Members of Council, the Co-Chair(s) will request the Principal's assistance to mediate the disagreement.
 - (b) If a resolution is not attained by the Principal, the Co-Chair(s) or Principal will request the appropriate Superintendent of Schools to mediate the disagreement.
 - (c) If a resolution is not attained by the appropriate Superintendent of Schools, the Co-Chair(s), Principal, appropriate Superintendent of Schools will refer the matter to the Director of Education for final resolution.
- 12.3 If a Member of Council or participant(s) becomes disruptive, the Co-Chair(s) will ask for order. If order is not restored, the conflict will be dealt with as follows:
 - (a) The Co-Chair(s) may direct the individual(s) to leave the meeting. Removal from one meeting does not prevent individual(s) from participating in future meetings of Council.
 - (b) The Co-Chair(s) may request the disputing individual(s) to participate in a special meeting to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute and where the Principal, and at least one non-invested Member(s) of Council is present to help mediate the dispute. Such a meeting should not be construed as a Council meeting.

- (c) If a resolution is not attained by the Principal, the Co-Chair(s) or Principal will request the appropriate Superintendent of Schools to mediate the disagreement.
- (d) If the Superintendent of Schools cannot mediate the conflict, the individual(s) can be removed from Council by majority vote of Members of Council present.

13.0 Code of Conduct for all Participants at Council

- 13.1 Consider the best interests of all Students.
- 13.2 Be guided by FPSA's and the Board's mission statements.
- 13.3 Become familiar with the FPSA's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.
- 13.4 Maintain the highest standards of integrity
- 13.5 Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School Community.
- 13.6 Treat everyone with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.
- 13.7 Encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.
- 13.8 Acknowledge democratic principles following Robert's Rules of Order, and accept the consensus of Council.
- 13.9 Do not disclose confidential information.
- 13.10 Limit discussions at Council meetings to matters of individual concern and instead focus on matters that impact multiple members of the School Community.
- 13.11 Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School Community.
- 13.12 Declare any conflict of interest.

14.0 Signing Authority

- 14.1 Any formal communication from Council, or a Council committee, where that communication advances a position on FPSA or Board or Ministry policy or procedure or action, actual or proposed, must be signed or co-signed by the Co-Chair(s).

15.0 Amending the Constitution

- 15.1 The Constitution and Bylaws may be amended by approval of a motion by a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority of voting Members of Council and Families present at a meeting called for that purpose, provided that at least two weeks' notice is given for such a motion and details of the proposed amendments are circulated to all Families with that notice.

16.0 Effective Date

- 16.1 This Constitution shall be effective and will come into force immediately upon the passing of a motion at a Council meeting to approve this Constitution.

17.0 Definitions

“Board” shall mean the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board, and where appropriate the Board's senior staff.

“Co-Chair” shall mean member who presides over the meeting.

“Council” shall mean the Fisher Park Summit Alternative Public School Council.

"Fisher Park Summit Alternative School" or **“FPSA”** shall mean Fisher Park Summit Alternative Public School located at 250 Holland Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y 0Y5.

"Executive" shall mean the mandatory officers of Council.

"Non-Family Representative" shall mean a person who has a connection and a commitment to the wellbeing of FPSA, resides in the School Community, does not have a Student(s) enrolled at FPSA, and who is elected by Council.

“Family” or **“Families”** shall mean parent(s), guardian(s), and/or caregiver(s) of Student(s) enrolled at FPSA.

“Family Members” shall mean Members of Council who are parent(s), guardian(s), and/or caregiver(s) of Student(s) enrolled at FPSA.

“Principal” shall include the principal, or vice-principal if applicable at FPSA.

“School Community” shall mean persons, businesses and organizations living, working, or operating within the attendance boundaries of Fisher Park Public School and/or Summit Alternative Public School; Staff, Students, and Families; and guests invited by Council.

"Staff" shall mean individual(s) employed by the Board working at FPSA.

"Student" or **"Students"** shall mean individual(s) enrolled at FPSA.

Appendix A

