

## **SCHOOL COUNCILS**

### **Background**

The Division recognizes School Councils as an integral part of site based decision making. School Councils provide an important advisory role linking the Board, schools and school communities throughout the Division. School Councils can bring constructive perspectives about education, the needs of the school and concerns of the community to the school and the Board.

### **Procedures**

#### **1. Establishment**

- 1.1 The Principal shall annually initiate establishment of a School Council in accordance with the School Councils Regulation (AR 113/2007 and as subsequently amended).
- 1.2 Trustees will attend School Council meetings, as assigned, when possible.
- 1.3 The Principal is encouraged to engage their local trustee in assisting with the annual School Council establishment meeting.
- 1.4 If parents choose not to establish a School Council, the Principal shall establish a school advisory committee which shall serve the function of the School Council until the next establishment meeting.

#### **2. Organization and Operation**

- 2.1 School Councils shall establish By-Laws which may be organized in accordance with the By-Laws attached as Appendix A to this Administrative Procedure.
- 2.2 A School Council wishing to modify By-Laws as an alternate to Appendix A may do so provided the changes are within the discretion provided by the School Councils Regulation.
- 2.3 Consideration is to be given to Administrative Procedure 401 – Employment of Relatives in the appointment of School Council executive officers. Where possible executive officers of School Councils are not to be school employees.
- 2.4 School Councils are encouraged to refer to the NEW School Council Resource Guide.

#### **3. Reporting**

The reporting process is as follows:

- 3.1 Reports from local trustees to the Board on meeting proceedings including but not limited to significant activities and any financial reports.

#### **4. Conflict Resolution Appeals**

- 4.1 School Councils are encouraged to develop a conflict resolution procedure to be

used to resolve conflict situations between School Council members and parents as it relates to School Council operations or in situations that are not subject to Administrative Procedure 152 – Dispute Resolution.

4.1.1 Conflicts which develop shall be dealt with in accordance to the School Council conflict resolution procedure.

4.1.2 The School Council conflict resolution procedure may provide for mediation if the School Council chooses, and the School Council may request that the Superintendent appoint a mediator to assist in resolving the conflict situation.

4.2 Differences between the School Council and the Principal shall be resolved by application of the Division’s Administrative Procedure 152 – Dispute Resolution.

## 5. School Councils and Principals

5.1 The Principal is responsible and accountable to the Superintendent and ultimately to the Board for all activities within the school. The Principal is required to seek support and advice from the community through the School Council. School Council advice is valued in the following areas:

5.1.1 Creating an atmosphere in which community members are encouraged to share their ideas with school staff.

5.1.2 Contributing to the curricular program by sharing their knowledge, expertise and skills with students and staff.

5.1.3 Advocating the Division’s mission, vision, principles and beliefs in the communities around the schools.

5.1.4 Creating a school context for student learning such as providing input relative to:

5.1.4.1 School philosophy;

5.1.4.2 School climate;

5.1.4.3 School rules.

5.1.5 Identifying services in the community to enhance student learning, including:

5.1.5.1 Use of community resources (speakers, materials, sites for visits or partnerships);

5.1.5.2 Counseling;

5.1.5.3 Enhancement of programs;

5.1.5.4 Specialized services.

5.1.6 Helping communicate the meaning, use and dissemination of test scores to parents and the community.

5.1.7 Identifying priorities for use of school facilities and equipment.

5.1.8 Offering suggestions for priorities for education programs within the context of Board mission and mandate and meeting the minimum requirements of

Alberta Education.

- 5.1.9 Offering suggestions on school budget priorities, expenditure allocations, and fees that the school or Division may establish.
- 5.1.10 Identifying student fund-raising activities that would be acceptable to the community and making those recommendations to an appropriate fund raising entity.
- 5.1.11 Reviewing and making recommendations relative to the local selection of learning materials.
- 5.1.12 Recruiting volunteers for activities in support of schools.
- 5.2 Financial Reporting Requirements
  - 5.2.1 The Principal is required to provide the School Council with periodic financial statements on a schedule of dates agreed to by the Principal and the School Council.
  - 5.2.2 The Principal shall ensure that all financial statements are made in accordance with any requirements imposed by the Board and the Superintendent.
- 5.3 Education Standards
  - 5.3.1 The Principal is required to solicit input from the School Council regarding ways to improve education at the school level.
  - 5.3.2 The Principal shall provide the School Council with a summary of data of:
    - 5.3.2.1 Results of achievement tests; and
    - 5.3.2.2 Results of diploma examinations.
  - 5.3.3 The Principal shall make available to the Superintendent a written report containing recommendations and feedback regarding the summary of local test results and any community concerns respecting the results.
  - 5.3.4 The School Council may consult with the Principal regarding the school programs and opportunities of meeting the standards of education set by the Minister.
- 6. Advisory priorities for School Councils
  - 6.1 Vision and mission of the school.
  - 6.2 Local goals, priorities and school plans.
  - 6.3 School budget.
  - 6.4 Program organization.
  - 6.5 Special projects.
  - 6.6 Board Policy/Division Administrative Procedures.
- 7. Communications
  - 7.1 The Board will provide opportunities for dialogue with School Councils through

meetings between the Board and the Council of School Councils.

- 7.1.1 The schedule for these meetings will be determined at the Board's organizational meeting.
- 7.1.2 School Councils will be notified of the meeting schedule.
- 7.1.3 School Councils will be informed of the agenda items that the Board wishes to discuss one (1) month prior to the scheduled meeting date.
  - 7.1.3.1 School Councils shall submit their agenda items two (2) weeks prior to the scheduled meeting date.
  - 7.1.3.2 The Superintendent, in consultation with the Board Chair, shall prepare and circulate the agenda to the Board and School Councils five (5) days prior to the scheduled meeting date.
- 7.1.4 Following the meeting the Superintendent shall ensure that an accurate summary of the discussion is provided to the Board, School Council, the Chair and principals.
- 7.2 School Councils may require a formal route to inform the Board of a concern on a specific matter.
  - 7.2.1 School Councils shall determine whether an issue can be resolved within the administrative structure or must, in their opinion, be discussed with the Board.
  - 7.2.2 The preferred communication channel would ordinarily be:  
School Council → Principal → Superintendent → Board
  - 7.2.3 If the School Council decides that an appearance before the Board is necessary, the School Council Chair shall establish an appointment with the Secretary-Treasurer to determine a time at which to appear before a scheduled meeting of the Board, and provide a written outline of the issue to be discussed.
  - 7.2.4 The School Council request shall be included on the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting and the School Council Chair will be invited to make a presentation to the Board.
  - 7.2.5 The Board will hear the presentation, and deal with it in accordance with the Policy 7 – Board Operations.
  - 7.2.6 In exceptional circumstances, the Board may waive the requirements of Policy 7 – Board Operations.
- 7.3 The Board may by resolution request a School Council or its Chair to meet with the Board.

## 8. Code of Ethics

- 8.1 School Councils are expected to exemplify the Code of Ethics attached as Appendix B to this Administrative Procedure.

Adopted/Revised: JUN 2016/NOV 2019

Reference: Section 33, 52, 53, 55, 197, 222, 251 Education Act

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy  
Personal Information Protection Act  
School Councils Regulation AR113/2007