



Doing  
What's  
**Best**  
For Kids

# SCHOOL COUNCIL RESOURCE GUIDE

**2025-2026**



Adopted from the Alberta School Councils Association  
Adapted for the FMPSD School Councils

*Updated October 2024*

**Fort McMurray**  
Public Schools





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## **School Councils in Alberta**

School councils are structured groups of parents, principals, teachers, secondary students and community representatives who work together to effectively support and enhance student learning. They provide a means for members of the school community to consult with and provide advice to the principal and the school board.

School councils were legislated in 1995 under Alberta's Education Act and are mandatory for all schools in the public education system, including charter schools.

The Government of Alberta recognizes the value of parents and the community to be engaged in the education of children. It is through school council that parents, community members and school staff have a means of participating in decisions that impact student learning success.

Legislation relevant to school councils in Alberta is contained in [Section 55](#) of the [Education Act](#) and further defined in the [School Councils Regulation](#) outlining requirements.

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# Getting Started

## About FMPSD

Fort McMurray Public School Division is home to 16 schools. We offer a variety of programming for our youngest three-year-old Early Childhood Development Program students to our graduating Grade 12 students.

From French Immersion to innovative fine arts programming and from coding, and power engineering to sports academies – Fort McMurray Public School Division is a learning community dedicated to educating all students for personal excellence.

## Our Goals

Alberta Education has identified four goals for School Boards to focus on:

### 1. High-Quality Learning Opportunities for All

- 1.1. Schools provide a safe and caring environment.
- 1.2. The education system meets the needs of all K-12 students, society and the economy.
- 1.3. Children and youth at risk have their needs addressed through effective programs and supports.
- 1.4. Students complete programs so that they are ready to attend post-secondary institutions and/or contribute as members of society and economy.

### 2. Excellence in Student Learning Outcomes

- 2.1. Students demonstrate high standards in learner outcomes
- 2.2. Students are well prepared for lifelong learning.
- 2.3. Students are well prepared for employment.
- 2.4. Students model the characteristics of active citizenship.

### 3. First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students

- 3.1. First Nations, Métis and Inuit students are well prepared for citizenship, the workplace and post-secondary education and training.
- 3.2. Key learning outcomes for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students to improve.

### 4. Highly Responsive and Responsible Jurisdiction

- 4.1. The education system at all levels demonstrates effective working relationships.
- 4.2. The education system at all levels demonstrates leadership and continuous improvement.

## School Council

School councils are an important forum through which members of school communities play an advisory role in school improvement planning. Key factors in collaborative relationships are building meaningful, two-way communication and supporting respectful interactions among education partners.

School council is a structured group of parents, principals, teachers, secondary students and community representatives whose purpose is to advise the principal and the school board respecting matters relating to the school. It is a means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning.

A school council is a vehicle to support meaningful parental involvement in decisions that affect the school and its operations. School council provides the venue for parents to reflect the wishes of the broader community for the education of its students and to actively participate in giving advice and support to the principal in the operations of the school. The actual decision-making authority of the school council is limited to:

- determining the school council operating procedures
- setting policies to govern school council activities at the school level, as described in the *Education Act*
- planning engagement activities that align with school council's legislated purpose
- choosing to provide advice to the principal and school board

## Core Activities

- Advises the principal and board on educational issues that pertain to the school.
- Establishes and reviews school council's goals, objectives, action plans and procedures.
- Communicates and consults with parents and the school community.
- Meets regularly.

**Appendix 1:** [Annual Agenda Framework](#)    **Appendix 2:** [Sample School Council Annual Agenda](#)

## Role

A school council should review its mission, vision and goals annually to ensure they reflect the views of the current membership.

School council functions may include:

- consulting with the principal to ensure students have opportunities to meet Ministry standards, fiscal management is sound, and the community is taken into consideration during school-based planning
- advising the principal and the school board on topics as requested
- being involved in school-based planning
- sharing ideas and information with other school councils and provincial organizations
- communicating information to the school community and other school councils
- setting policies that relate to school council functions, such as:
  - location of school council meetings
  - mail, email address for school council correspondence
  - school council orientation and development
  - financial management and/or fundraising
  - communications
  - privacy
  - minutes of school council meetings
  - pertinent information unique to the school council

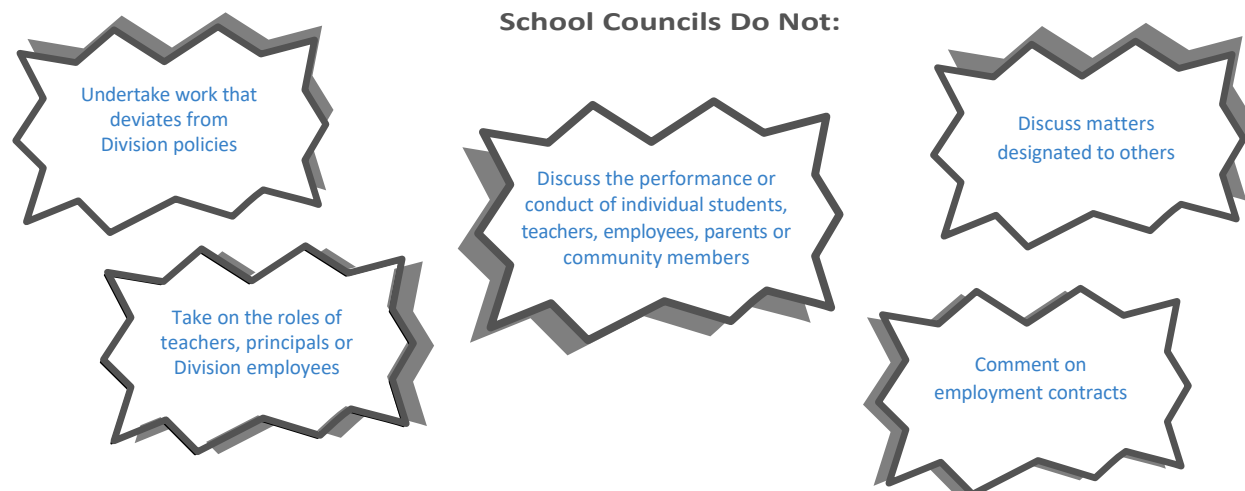
**Appendix 3:** [Effective School Council Checklist](#)

### What School Councils are Not:

As the primary role is advisory, school councils are not eligible to incorporate as societies. It is not the primary intent of school councils to fundraise or lobby.

Roles that are not to be taken on by a school council include:

- school governance
- employment issues
- school management
- listening to complaints



### Advisory

The school council is a legislated structure - a forum for parents and community members to participate in an advisory capacity in their local school decision-making processes. The advisory role is intended to engage parents, high school students and the community in school decision-making for which the principal is responsible.

### Advising the Principal

School council may, at its discretion, advise the principal on matters relating to the school. Some of the more common topics for discussion include:

- school's overall mission, philosophy, policies, rules and goals
- school's improvement planning, including three-year plans
- school division policies (e.g. school fees, school council policies)
- school budget
- school volunteers
- provincial achievement test results and diploma exam results
- guidelines and principles for the school resource allocations
- fundraising
- training and/or information needs of school council members
- school policy on use of facilities by the larger community
- facility renovations
- ways of reporting student achievement results to parents and public
- methods of communicating with parents and the public
- promotion of the school in the community
- programs offered in the school
- extracurricular activities offered in the school
- student attendance procedures, standards of student conduct and bullying issues
- services for students to improve learning, such as assistance from reading specialists and guidance counsellors
- school calendar and adjustments in school hours
- graduation and other school celebrations

### Advising the Board of Trustees and Charter Boards

School council may, at its discretion, advise the school board/charter board on matters relating to the school.

Typical topics include:

- division's three-year plan
- school division budget
- fundraising issues and methods of generating additional revenue, as identified by the schools fundraising society.
- school council policies
- division-wide programming priorities
- school infrastructure priorities
- safety issues that affect students/schools in the division
- advocacy for students, parents and public education
- transportation issues
- suggested criteria for hiring a school principal
- Participate on Board/Committees as requested, such as: Networks and Joint-Networks.

### Advising the Minister of Education

School councils may also come together to advise the Minister of Education on matters that pertain to provincial educational policy and directions. When advice with the potential to affect change in schools across the province is given, it becomes **advocacy**. This form of advising or advocacy can be undertaken through the government recognized provincial association that represents the voice of parents in public education - the **Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)**.

**ASCA members bring forward issues, in the form of resolutions, at the annual general meeting. If a resolution is endorsed or voted in by the majority of the assembly at the meeting, it becomes a policy of the association. This policy forms the basis for advocating change to the Minister of Education.**

### Responsibility

While individual members of school council may have specific duties, all members are responsible for creating a culture of respect, collaboration and inclusion.

Each school council must decide how to fulfill its responsibility in the school community through activities, such as:

- seeking the views of the school community (through questionnaires, informal discussions, topic-specific meetings)
- representing the views of the school community actively and accurately (through consulting as widely as possible with parents, teachers, students and community before making major decisions or providing conclusive advice to the principal or board)
- informing the school community of items, such as meetings, committee work, news and surveys (through newsletters, bulletin boards, emails)
- involving the school community (by inviting, supporting, including)
- encouraging and promoting parental engagement and support (by publicizing opportunities for ways to get involved, not just school council meetings)
- becoming well informed (by asking questions, reading, critically examining what is presented)
- focusing on the best interests of all students (by considering a wide variety of students and families when making decisions and formulating advice)
- becoming familiar with the policies of the local school board and understanding how they impact the school community [Board Policies and Administrative Procedures](#)
- maintaining ethical standards and setting ground rules of respect for meetings (adopting a code of conduct for school council members, rules of order for meetings)

### **School Councils Supporting the Assurance Framework**

Alberta Education changed the way it demonstrates confidence in meeting the needs of students and enabling their success, with the adoption of a new *Assurance Framework*, implemented alongside funding changes in 2020.

*Assurance is a concept that encompasses accountability, engagement, transparency and reporting.*

The assurance model creates new opportunities for parents to engage with the education system and help shape local priorities and initiatives. This new process (*or mindset*) affects school council activities.

The new approach changes the focus of the work of School Boards and schools from being *accountable* to the Ministry - to that of *demonstrating* to (local and provincial) Albertans that the system is meeting the needs of students, and that students are successful.

The concept is about *continuous improvement* – not a reaction to yearly results, but *ongoing reviews* of actions being taken, and sharing these reviews.

It is about conferring with stakeholders, including parents, about what is expected – in the LOCAL context as well as Provincial – creating and initiating plans that correspond to those expectations, following up those plans on a constant basis, to find out if there is success or a need to change direction, and checking in with stakeholders to demonstrate the results, and asking “*Did we get it right?*”.

School Boards are also expected to include evidence of stakeholder engagement in their planning documents. This approach relies on creating strong relationships between education partners and stakeholders, and a commitment to transparency.

The new framework is an excellent opportunity for school councils to be engaged. Alberta Education sees the involvement of school councils contributing to assurance in valuable ways, including the following:

- Become familiar with the *Assurance Framework* and the related school authority planning and reporting requirements
- Review the School Board’s education plan and annual education report (*posted annually on Board’s website by November 30 and May 31, respectively*) and those of the school (*posted annually on either the school or School Board website*)
- Participate in engagement opportunities surrounding the development of school and School Board education plan priorities
- Participate in engagement opportunities respecting results and progress towards meeting the School Board’s priorities
- Participate in the development of school education plans, annual education results reports, and budget
- Educate Grade 4, 7 and 10 parents about the *Alberta Education Assurance Parent Survey* and encourage their input

### **Appendix 4: [How do SCHOOL COUNCILS contribute to Alberta Education’s ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK?](#)**



## School Councils supporting the Professional Practice Standards (PPS)

Three *Professional Practice Standards* for Alberta's teaching profession came into effect in September 2019.

- The *Teaching Quality Standard* (TQS) describing the professional expectations for teachers who work directly with students (an updated version)
- The *Superintendent Leadership Quality Standard* (SLQS) which defines the professional expectations that superintendents must demonstrate to create the conditions under which school leaders and teachers can do their best work,

### **and – of particular interest to School Councils:**

- The *Leadership Quality Standard* (LQS) that outlines the professional expectations that principals and school jurisdiction leaders must demonstrate to create the conditions under which teachers can do their best work.

*A professional practice standard identifies the competency requirements for members of a profession.*

As the *Principal* is a legislated member of School Council, and the person in charge of administration at the school, *(and the person who is the receiver of most of School Councils' work - the receiver of advice)*, it is imperative that School Council understand the expectations of the Principal role associated with the relationship, as defined in the **Appendix 5: [Leadership Quality Standard](#)** (LQS).

Competency #7, reads:

***"A leader provides opportunities for members of the school community to develop leadership capacity and to support others in fulfilling their educational roles."***

One of this competency's indicators is:

*"c. promoting the engagement of parents in school council(s) and facilitating the constructive involvement of school council(s) in school life";*

In the nine competencies outlined, a comprehensive 22 indicators relate specifically to school councils and the school community (*highlighted in the document link here*). This is why it is so important for members of school councils to be aware of, and understand, the LQS.

## Education Planning

Accountability in the education system is an ongoing cycle that enables continuous improvement and critical reflection. Key components are measuring progress and using results to inform decision-making. Plans are developed on a three-year cycle and updated each year to respond to the past year's performance results and changes in the operating environment.

With the goal of encouraging continuous improvement in learning for children, Alberta Education mandates province-wide, three-year education planning and results reporting for school boards and schools. It is fundamental that each level of education strive to ensure the success of children and that planning is aligned.

School councils are important forums through which members of school communities play a role in school improvement planning. To increase meaningful engagement of parents, school councils should be aware of the three-year education plan of their school and consider developing a complementary school council plan.

### **School councils can participate in levels of planning and results reporting in three ways:**

- provide advice in the development of the division's plan and results report
- provide advice on the school's plan and results report
- create a school council's plan

Designing plans and results reports involves vision, decision-making, evaluation and critical thinking, all of which is done best with the participation of all those who have an interest in the success of the school.

The **Government of Alberta** outlines its goals for the future and strategies to achieve goals in a three-year business plan. Each Ministry or government department must also develop three-year plans, with goals that are connected to and aligned with those of the province.

**Alberta Education** has a three-year business plan that identifies goals aligned with the Government of Alberta's business plan. Alberta Education is required to report the achievement of its goals, on an annual basis, as part of the government's accountability to the public.

**Parents** are involved in the development of goals and a review of Alberta Education's business plan each year, through the **Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)**. The ASCA is invited, along with other education partner organizations, to send representatives to the provincial table when items are under discussion. Parents bring a valuable perspective to the establishment and review of provincial goals for education.

The **school board** develops three-year plans that must align with provincial goals as well as address local needs and issues. The school board is responsible for submitting an annual results report to Alberta Education, which provides information on the division and schools' major accomplishments and results of the past year. It includes results from surveys, provincial achievement tests and diploma exams, along with other information.

*Councils of School Councils (COSC) or groups of school council representatives that have division-wide membership are ideal for providing input into the development of the division's three-year plan.*

#### **Appendix 6:** [School Improvement Planning](#)

**Schools** plan and implement three-year education plans that are aligned with the school division and provincial direction. Education plans for schools are developed by school administrators and staff, in consultation with school councils. The school's three-year education plan must complement the division's three-year plan and address the unique context and issues at the school level. The school's plan reflects the culture, opportunities, challenges and values of the school community.

Some components of a plan, such as strategies and priorities, are revamped annually. Thus, one year is completed and another is added to maintain a three-year time frame. Near the end of each year, schools must prepare an education results report for their division.

School and division plans must describe how the school council was involved in the development of the plan. *"School councils must have the opportunity to participate in the development and implementation of the school's plan and the opportunity to develop and include strategies the council intends to pursue to support the achievement of the outcomes in the school's plan."*

It is important that staff, students, parents and community members have an opportunity to provide input into a plan and have the results interpreted to encourage broad ownership of the plan and results.

## School Council Planning

Some school councils develop a three-year plan that supports or parallels the goals of the school. It provides continuity of focus and purpose from year to year. A school council develops a three-year plan based on goals that align with the school's plan and reflect the interests of the community. Planning begins with reviewing what's already in place:

- schools council's plan
- school's three-year plan and results report
- division's three-year plan and results report

Once a school council plan has been created and the goals accomplished, it can be shared with the school, school board and school community. The more who know and understand the work of the school council, the more the school council work will be supported.

**Appendix 7:** [School Council Planning Status Update](#)

## Levels of Engagement

Legislation created school councils, but it cannot make them work. That is up to the members, including parents, staff, principals, school boards and, in some cases, students. The experience of members, the leadership of the principal and chair and the goals of the group play a role in defining the discussions and the level of engagement of a school council. The means by which a school council defines its meaningful engagement is up to each school council.

There are different levels of engagement for school councils. It is suggested that each school council decide the preferred level of engagement at the first school council meeting of the year.

**Appendix 8:** [Types of Engagement](#)

## Building a School Council

The *Education Act* and the *School Councils Regulation* provide a school council with parameters to create their own operating procedures. The following outlines what school councils should consider in their operations.

### School Council Mission

What is the purpose of the school council?

### School Council Goals

The purpose made more specific - what will school council do?

### Governance of School Council

What model of governance will the school council adopt?

### Decision Making

What will be the decision-making model for the school council? Who is permitted to vote? Does the school council need a quorum? How will the quorum be defined?

### Meetings

What will be the procedures for regular meetings, annual general meetings and special meetings?

### Members of School Council

Who are the members of the school council? Are members elected or is every parent of a student enrolled in the school a member of school council?

What will be the executive positions? What will be their term of office? Does the executive have authority beyond other school council members? How will vacancies be filled?

**Roles and Responsibilities of School Council Members**

What are the roles and responsibilities of the members and the executive?

**Committees**

What committees, if any, will the school council have?

How will the school council create committees and their terms of reference?

**Relationship with Fundraising Association/Society**

What will be the relationship of school council with the fundraising association, if there is an association/society?

**Reporting**

What reporting is required?

**Funds from Fundraising**

What is the policy of the school board regarding school council funds?

What will be the purpose of a fundraising activity? How will school council funds be managed? Who will manage the funds? Who will decide how the funds are distributed?

**Amendments**

How and when will the school council's operating procedures be amended?

**Policies**

Will the school council develop policy in addition to the operating procedures to assist it in its year-to-year operation? How will policy be created?

**Code of Ethics**

What will be the code of ethics?

**Appendix 9:** [Code of Ethics for School Council Members](#)

**Appendix 10:** [Conflict Management in School Councils](#)

**Privacy**

Who will be the school council member designated to ensure the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) and privacy issues are understood and implemented for the school council? Who will be the school council member responsible to manage the personal information of school council members and school community members involved with school council?

**Operating Procedures**

A school council creates operating procedures or bylaws to assist it in functioning effectively and can decide what will be included in its operating procedures.

Operating procedures or bylaws are the guidelines that inform a school council of the expected way to conduct its business. Operating procedures are less formal and serve the same function as bylaws. Operating procedures should be aligned with government legislation and local school board policy. They typically detail items, such as:

- membership of the school council
- members of the executive of the school council; e.g. chair or co-chairs, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer
- duties of the officers, their role descriptions
- types of committees that may be established
- meeting times and descriptions
- quorum necessary to make school council decisions
- decision-making style
- when the annual meeting will be held and who should attend
- annual report details, including when it is filed and the information it should contain
- methods to amend the bylaws/operating procedures
- which officers have signing authority
- processes to deal with conflict, should it arise

**Appendix 11:** [School Council Operating Procedures Checklist](#) **Appendix 12:** [School Council Operating Procedures Template](#)



## Models of Governance/Operational Style

School councils choose the model of governance that will work best for their communities and indicate the selected model in their operating procedures. Two common models are the ***town hall*** model and the ***representative*** model.

In a ***town hall*** model, decisions are made at regular meetings open to the entire school community and the executive members of the school council act only to carry out the wishes of the assembly. All parents that attend meetings are welcome to participate and vote. Individuals are elected or appointed (executive and others) to manage meetings and coordinate school council business.

A ***representative*** model acts like a board of directors to conduct the day-to-day business and reports back to the wider school community one or more times a year. The school community elects or appoints individuals to specific positions (representing a particular responsibility or activity area). Only individuals (parents, staff, students, community members) that are designated will have a vote and are considered to be “the school council.” All other attendees are welcome to attend, and participate in discussion at meetings but are not eligible to vote.

Many school councils have taken aspects of each model and created a ***combined*** model that reflects their community and serves their purposes. Some meetings, or specific agenda items, may allow for all attendees to participate and vote.

### Appendix 13: [Governance Types](#)

## Membership

Membership in the school council is defined in *Regulation* and in the *Education Act*. The majority of the members must be parents of children enrolled at the school. Other members are the principal, one or more teacher representatives and a high school student, if the school has a high school. A school council may also have *Early Childhood Services* (ECS) parents, if the school has an ECS program, and community members.

## Executive

The *Regulation* refers to “the executive” of a school council, and requires the school community to decide what size and which positions are to be included. Generally, the “executive” are the primary members needed to ensure the operations of the school council are managed: chair, vice-chair, secretary and treasurer (if required).

Other positions may be filled by individuals considered to part of the “executive committee” or apart from it (at the discretion of the school community). These individuals may be called “officers” of the school council or have a title assigned; e.g. Communications Officer, Event Organizer, Reading Club Coordinator, Volunteer Officer, Fundraising Chair.

## Member Roles

### School Council Chair

It is expected that the school council chairperson will be a parent of a student attending the school. The chair should be someone who can work collaboratively and knows how to organize both programs and people. The chair should actively encourage others to become engaged in meaningful ways.

Typical chairing duties include:

- chair all meetings of the school council
- coordinate with the principal to establish meeting agendas
- ensure that the operating procedures are current and followed
- be the official spokesperson of the school council
- ensure there is regular communication with the whole school community

- stay informed about school board policy that impacts school council
- comply with the *School Councils Regulation* by providing the school board with an annual report that summarizes the school council's activities for the previous school year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the school council

### **Chair's Relationship with the Principal**

The chair's role is key to the success of the school council. An important responsibility is regular and ongoing communication with the school principal. This relationship of mutual trust and respect must be nurtured and supportive of common goals for the learning community.

### **Principal**

The principal is the instructional leader who manages the day-to-day operations of the school and is a key member on school council who promotes cooperation between the school and the community. As a provincially mandated member of the school council, the principal:

- may be identified as a member of the executive
- works in collaboration with the chair to prepare school council agendas
- supports the chair in running efficient school council meetings
- provides contextual information, as requested by the school council, on matters relating to the school
- seeks input from the school council, parents and community on major decisions that affect the school
- encourages and supports the formation and continuous improvement of school council
- interprets and shares results of provincial achievement tests and diploma exams
- enables the school council to provide input into the school's education plan, policies and budget

## **Appendix 14: [School Council Participant Roles](#)**

### **Vice-Chair**

On some school councils, the role of chair is shared, either through the creation of co-chairing positions or through the chair's dependence on the vice-chair to undertake part of the work.

Typically, the vice-chair's duties are, in the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the chair, to fulfill the chair's responsibilities, and in the absence of the chair, supervise the affairs and preside at meetings of the school council.

### **Secretary**

The school council secretary typically acts as a recorder at each meeting and ensures that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting.

### **Teacher**

Each school council must have at least one teacher representative, as per the legislation. A teacher representative contributes to a successful school council by sharing professional knowledge with school council members and presenting the teachers' perspective.

**Parents/Guardians**

Parents of children enrolled at the school form the majority of the members of school council, and:

- encourage participation of parents and representatives from the school community
- share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience
- encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals
- communicate information of interest to the school council and the school community
- share information from school council meetings with the community
- have a clear understanding of the school council objectives
- attend school council meetings and create an inviting environment
- identify possible topics for agendas and recommend training sessions on school council effectiveness

**Community Member**

School councils are encouraged to have a community member attend meetings. The community representative can play a strong role in bringing the community perspective into the school. The member helps the school and school council build partnerships with the larger community and, in many instances, acts as a resource to promote cooperative ventures between community and school to enhance student learning.

**Student**

The student is the centre of the education system and, in high school, has an important role to play as a participant on school council. A student presents the student perspective on issues, helps with school policies, seeks other students' views to share with school council and communicates school council's information to fellow students.

**Education Community**

When everyone has a clear understanding of roles on school council, it fosters mutual respect and collaboration. Others have distinct responsibilities in the education environment, which school councils should be aware of and support as well.

**Superintendent**

The superintendent, as the chief executive and educational officer of the board/charter board, is responsible to the board/charter board and to the Minister of Education for the overall achievement and success of the students within the division.

**School Boards and Charter Boards**

The school board consists of elected community members (trustees) who determine policy and set goals and directions to guide education in the school division. A charter board consists of members that are appointed or elected to the board. The board member can bring the board's perspective and information, as an invited guest, at school council meetings.

**Minister of Education**

The Minister of Education determines the general direction for education policy and is responsible for legislation governing the formation of school councils. In addition to the Province of Alberta's *Education Act*, the Minister sets:

- funding levels for education
- guidelines for curriculum and student assessment
- reports annually about education in the province

**Appendix 15: [School Council Partnerships: Who's Who?](#)**

## Committees

Members who attend school council meetings cannot do everything themselves. Sometimes, it is necessary to delegate to a committee. Parents, teachers or members of the community who are unable to attend regular council meetings may be willing to serve on a short-term specific-task committee.

Effective committee work helps make school council meetings brief and effective. Committees also enable the school council to accomplish much more.

- Committees are formed after initial school council discussion.
- Items requiring more lengthy discussion or research are assigned to a committee.
- Committees make decisions or recommendations, according to the mandate provided by school council.
- Standing committees operate on an ongoing basis, with specified lengths of terms for members.
- Ad hoc committees are formed as necessary and are to work within a specified time period.

## Appendix 16: [Creating Committees-Best Practices](#)

## Meetings

If a school had a school council the previous year, the school council is **renewed** (not re-established) at the beginning of the next school year, as per the *School Councils Regulation*, or at a time agreed upon by members.

## Establishment Meeting

In schools where there is no school council, the principal arranges an establishment meeting, following the process outlined in the *School Councils Regulation*. The *Regulation* identifies who the principal must notify, when the notification must occur, and who is to act as the chair and as the secretary. The agenda for the establishment meeting must include discussion about the:

- school council membership
- size of the school council and the executive positions
- term of office of each member of the school council
- model of governance to be followed
- adopt, amend or reaffirm By-laws
- preferred decision-making model, including who is able to vote
- frequency of school council meetings
- operating procedures
- any other matters that require clarification
- election of executive members of the school council

## First School Council Meeting of the Year

The agenda for the first meeting should review the relevant legislation, allow discussion of the work of school council and help set the focus for the coming year. Ideally, the agenda is set through collaborative efforts between the principal and chair.

Suggested topics for the first meeting may include one or more of the following:

- review of the legislation, operating procedures
- roles and responsibilities of school councils, principals, teachers and school board
- mission, vision and code of ethics for school council and/or school
- school council's previous year's report to the school board
- rules of order that the school council will use throughout the year, including voting procedures
- school and/or school council's three-year plan and activities
- minutes of the last school council meeting and how to access minutes from previous meetings



- potential school council committees and their responsibilities
- meeting dates and times for the year
- review of the governance model used in previous years, including how decisions are made

### Decision Making

The way school councils make decisions may vary, depending on the issue. Two typical models for making decisions are **consensus** and **majority vote**. School councils may combine both strategies to seek consensus from the school community and then confirm the decision by a majority vote.

When making a decision by majority vote, it is necessary to provide ample time for school council members to become informed on the issue and to discuss it thoroughly. Majority vote is effective when it is not likely that a compromise will be reached.

### Rules of Order

Rules of order help school councils operate effectively. School councils can establish rules of order, according to their culture and needs. Rules of order help manage and direct discussion, debate and decisions for the group. It is important that the school council follows a set of rules and that the chair knows the rules and adheres to them. There are complex official rules, such as *Robert's Rules of Order*, as well as simplified versions better suited for school councils.

### Chairing the Meeting

It is expected that a parent will chair school council meetings. An effective chair or co-chairs will have an agenda that is focused on the business of the school council. The chair should start the meeting on time, encourage or allow opinions on each topic, sum up each discussion item with a view to closing the item and moving on, and end the meeting on time.

### Minutes of the Meeting

Minutes are usually recorded by the secretary of the school council as per the *Regulation*. The minutes should be recorded using a template that matches the agenda in one of three ways:

- verbatim minutes – word for word record of what was said (**not recommended for school council**)
- decision-only minutes – motions or decisions only – no discussions recorded
- anecdotal minutes – decisions and concise discussion summaries (**recommended for school council**)

Accurate anecdotal minutes provide school council members with:

- a clear objective summary of what went on during the meeting
- an historical account of the group's decisions and the rationale behind them, including:
  - objective comments, rather than opinions
  - decisions about action items
  - highlights, rather than narrative accounts
  - motions and resolutions recorded verbatim

The minutes must be consistently recorded, retained at the school (for at least seven years) and made available to the board and/or the public, on request.

[Minutes Template](#) [Sample Minutes](#) [Making Motions](#) [Sample Agenda Template](#) [Three Types of Minutes](#)

## **Annual Meeting**

The annual general meeting (AGM) of the school council will be held within 20 school days after the start of the school year or at an appropriate time during the school year as determined by the school council. The meeting will be advertised throughout the school and the community until the date of the AGM. The business of the AGM may include:

- election of school council members and/or executive members
- proposed operating procedures amendments
- motion to accept a financial statement of the previous year
- plans and budget for the upcoming year
- discussion of major issues in which parents should have input, such as:
  - changes to the vision or mission statement of the school
  - major changes in the school program or focus
  - formal evaluation of the school council

## **Productive Meetings**

One way to ensure school council members feel positive about their role on school council is to have productive and effective school council meetings. Here are five signs of a productive meeting.

1. The meeting has an agenda and is chaired effectively. People know why they're there, what they're hoping to accomplish and feel it's a valuable use of their time.
2. Members understand meeting expectations and participate actively.
3. All participants feel welcome and that their participation is valued.
4. The participants generate creative ideas and solutions and are committed to the decisions and actions they reach.
5. Participants are willing to work together again. Feeling positive about the meeting and maintaining mutual respect is important.

## **Attendance**

Communication is the most useful tool to get people interested in the work of school council. Letting parents and community members know about school council meetings and sharing information about school council decisions, directions and activities helps keep them interested.

- Collect and maintain a list of parents' names, addresses, phone numbers and email addresses.
- Use email to send meeting notices, event announcements, requests for help and updates on school issues.
- Use the school's outdoor sign to advertise and promote school council meetings and events.
- Ask local businesses if they will post school council meeting information and/or distribute the school council newsletter. Ask local churches, seniors' facilities, daycares or community leagues as well.
- Send parents and others the agenda and minutes of the previous meeting several days before each school council meeting.
- Call people a few days before each meeting and encourage them to attend.
- Translate important notices and information into the main languages of the school, when possible.
- Create a school council newsletter.
- Make sure the community knows and understands the goals of the school and school council.
- Thank and recognize participant efforts often and publicly.

## Participation

School councils are forums through which members of school communities play important roles in school improvement planning. It is important that school councils make an effort to reflect the diversity within the school community.

Educators recognize the crucial role that school councils, parents and community members have in enhancing student learning. **Studies identify the benefits of parental involvement in education**, which include:

- higher student achievement
- better student attendance
- more positive student attitudes and behaviours
- higher student graduation rates

Effective recruiting needs to be an ongoing, year-round activity. As with any group, it is important to support the participation of existing participants and to invite newcomers to ensure continued success into the future. Having skilled and committed school council leaders assume key organizing and chairing roles also enhances the success and sustainability of a school council.

Recruitment is about approaching those who may have an interest in school council and matching their skills with the work that needs to be done. Everyone should be encouraged to identify opportunities to involve school community members in the school decision-making process on school council. Parents, teachers, students, administrators, community leaders and trustees may know people who can make positive school council contributions.

It is important to develop and use a variety of methods to encourage involvement on school council.

**Appendix 24:** [Engagement Opportunities](#)    **Appendix 25:** [Why Participate on School Council](#)

## Engagement

Once new school council members have been recruited, efforts need to be made to keep them involved. Developing and implementing procedures to create an environment of inclusion and involvement is essential. **Orienting, mentoring and training** new members promotes a sense of belonging that immediately involves them in the school council. Running productive meetings, **recognizing** participants and **succession planning** for the future are ways to retain school council members.

## Communication and Promotion

A school council is representative of parents and others from the broader school community. It is important that the school council identify ways and means to check the pulse of the school community and ensure the community's wishes, goals and aspirations for its school are articulated through the school council.

It is also important that the work of school council - its advice to the principal on school decisions, the strategies school council uses to enhance school climate and culture, and the ongoing support it gives the principal, staff and students in the school - is shared with the school community.

Open and clear communication is essential in helping everyone feel included as part of the school community.

One of the keys to an effective school council is the ability of the members to communicate well with each other. A responsibility of a school council is to communicate with the parents of the school community. There are several ways to communicate the work of the school council. Outlined below are some suggestions that may be useful.

### Within Council

- Utilize a Permission to Contact form distributed to parents/guardians, maintained securely (in keeping with privacy legislation) to send out school council notices, agendas and minutes.
- Research and develop a list of relevant and interesting website addresses, companies and organizations for distribution to school council members.
- Set up a school council email account, either through the school, or separately (e.g. gmail). Check regularly for messages. Since chairs change from year to year, it is recommended that the email address be generic rather than an individual's name (e.g. *chair@yourschoolname.ca* or *schoolnamechair@gmail.com*).
- Network and communicate with other school councils, through a Council of School Councils (COSC) division group, or provincially, through the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA).

### In the School Community

- Include highlights of school council meetings in the school newsletter or on the school website.
- Seek opportunities to translate school newsletters and other forms of communication into the languages commonly used by parents in the community.
- Send school council bulletins (meeting notices, other important dates) home with students on a regular basis.
- Ask the local newspaper to run an article about your school council.
- Ask a local ethnic newspaper to translate and run an article about your school council.
- Seek networking opportunities within your community - make a presentation to city council or to service clubs about the work of the school council.
- Keep the lines of communication open between your school council and your school board - invite your local trustee/charter board member to your meetings or attend a board meeting.

Effective communication by school council builds support for the success of its goals. It demonstrates that parents and school council are serious about the school, children's learning and engagement as partners in helping create a successful learning environment for students.

### Code of Ethics and Conduct

Having a code of ethics for the school council and a code of conduct for members can dispel misunderstandings about the school council, what it does and how it deals with issues. When those involved in discussion and decision-making at a school embrace both a code of ethics and conduct that speak to collaboration, cooperation, continuous improvement and understanding, conflicts can be dealt with more effectively.

### Fundraising and Accounting

A school council **cannot** be incorporated under the *Societies Act* or Part 9 of the *Companies Act*. Although a school council may fundraise, subject to school board policies, it cannot undertake fundraising endeavours that require a gaming license from the *Alberta Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis* (AGLC), such as bingos, casinos or raffles.

School councils may choose to raise funds through non-gaming activities, and maintain a bank account or utilize the school's account, by following the policies, expectations and use of accounting procedures established by their school board/charter board. *Note - school councils may not be covered by school board insurance if something goes awry with money or a bank account. Signers may have personal liability for the account.*

As a statutory entity, and not a legal authority, school councils should focus on their mandated advisory role, and let the Fundraising Association (incorporated society) handle the money.



## Insurance and Liability

School councils may be covered under the school board's liability insurance. The *Education Act* states that a board must maintain an insurance policy or policies that indemnify the board, its employees and school councils (***operating within their mandated advisory role***). A school council chair is encouraged to check with the superintendent or school board/charter board chairperson to determine the details of coverage. Limitations are identified in the policies.

As an advisory body, school councils should not require a bank account. An insurance company could question their activities, and indicate they are going beyond their legally mandated advisory role (and potential insured coverage).

## Privacy Legislation

Two separate statutes govern the use of personal information within schools:

1. **FOIP**- School boards and school employees operate under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIP). FOIP legislation defines the amount and nature of personal information that can be shared and for what purposes. All division staff are subject to FOIP regulations when handling personal information.
2. **PIPA**- School councils and fundraising associations/societies operate under the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA). PIPA legislation governs the collection and use of personal information for organizations that are not public bodies.

These acts, in their respective ways, govern an individual's right of access to records and how personal information is collected, used and disclosed in school communities.

## Recommendations for School Councils in Relation to PIPA

- Each year, designate a person responsible for responding to questions about the use of personal information by school council.
- Review school council's privacy policy.
- Obtain consent to collect, use and/or disclose personal information from parents, students, school council members or others from the school community.
- Collect only the essential personal information required to fulfill its role in the school.
- State the purpose for and intended use of personal information when consent is sought.
- Use personal information only for the purpose stated when it was collected, unless consent is obtained for an alternative use.
- Ensure that all personal information is protected from unauthorized access and destroyed safely once it is no longer needed.

## Reporting

Apart from a responsibility to report to the larger school community, school councils have a duty to submit an annual report to the school board/charter board. This report helps boards measure and be accountable for parent and community involvement within the division.

The chair of a school council must prepare and provide to the board by September 30 of each year a report:

- summarizing the activities of the school council in the previous school year, and
- including a financial statement relating to money handled by the school council in the previous school year, if any, and how the funds were used

A school council must retain at the school, a copy of the minutes for each meeting of the school council (for at least seven years) and make them available to the board or the public on request.

## School Councils and Fundraising Associations (Societies)

School councils evolved from or replaced Parent Advisory Councils (PACs), advancing the role of parents and others in the community from volunteers supporting the school, usually through extensive fundraising, to collaborative participants in school decision-making. This change raised new questions about how to handle fundraising issues and continue providing enhanced resources and support to the school.

School councils and fundraising associations are completely different entities. School councils are forums through which members of school communities play an important role in school improvement planning.

Fundraising associations are groups of people who have incorporated under the *Societies Act* or Part 9 of the *Companies Act*. Under current legislation, school councils may raise money, but cannot register as fundraising associations. By appreciating the differences between school councils and fundraising associations, school councils can improve their effectiveness to meet the needs of the school community.

Fundraising associations have been directly or indirectly connected with schools for decades. They are often program specific and go by many names, such as *Friends of Neighbourhood School* or *Neighbourhood School Band Society*. Prior to the legislation that created school councils in Alberta, some PACs and Home and School Associations also registered as incorporated societies.

### Making the Distinction

School councils and fundraising associations provide two separate and distinct contexts for parent and community involvement in the school.

**School councils** provide a means for parents and community to work together with administration, staff and high school students to promote the well-being and overall effectiveness of the school community. The main role is advisory.

**Fundraising associations** provide a means for parents and community members to provide additional financial resources and support to the school. Their main role is fundraising.

Members who serve on a school council can also serve on a fundraising association, and vice versa, unless the operating procedures/bylaws of either organization prohibit it.

Fundraising associations are responsible for reporting on their activities and fall within the statutes of the *Societies Act*, *Alberta Corporate Registry* and *Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission*, depending on the group's fundraising activities.

Due to the potential confusion when school communities have both a school council and a fundraising association, membership in each organization should be clearly defined and communicated to parents and guardians.

## Resources

The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) website offers additional resources and information for school councils (*links below*), as well as a calendar of events, latest news, Ministry updates, member benefits, annual conference, education resources, publications and parent links. ***Please note – some links are only accessible by signing in to the [Members Only](#) section of the ASCA website.***

[www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca](http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca)

### Workshops

- Workshops for School Councils/Groups of School Councils
- Workshops for School Division Administration/Principals/School Boards
- Workshops for Fundraising Associations

### Tip Sheets, Templates and Samples

- [Insurance Information for School Councils](#)
- [Parent Engagement Checklist](#)
- [PIPA Summary for Organizations](#)
- [School Council Web Pages](#)
- [Tips for Directing Meeting Discussion](#)
- [Sample Social Media Policy for School Council](#)
- [Name Cards with Ground Rules](#)
- [Glossary of Terms and Education Resources](#)

### Online Learning Resources

- Web clips, Webcasts, Webinars, Recordings
- Webinar Wednesdays
- Meeting Mondays

### Effective School Councils

### Agenda Topics for School Councils

### School Council Advocacy

### Provincial Awards of Recognition

### Student Health and Wellness

### Provincial Education Advocacy

### School Division Resources

### Fundraising Association Resources

### Indigenous Awareness and Advancing Reconciliation

## Alphabetical listing of Resource Links in this Guide

**ASCA Members must be signed into the [Members Only](#) section of the ASCA website to access the resources listed.**

[Annual Agenda Framework](#)  
[Creating Committees-Best Practices](#)  
[Effective School Council Checklist](#)  
[Engagement Opportunities](#)  
[Governance Models](#)  
[How to Recognize Participants](#)  
[Ideas to Engage the School Community](#)  
[Increase Meeting Participation](#)  
[Joint Annual Planning](#)  
[Making Meetings Meaningful](#)  
[Making Motions](#)  
[Minutes Template](#)  
[Personal Information Protection Act \(PIPA\) School Council FAQs](#)  
[Sample Agenda Template](#)  
[Sample Minutes](#)  
[Sample Permission to Contact Form](#)  
[Sample Personal Information Protection Act \(PIPA\) Policy](#)  
[Sample School Council AGM Agenda](#)  
[Sample School Council Annual Agenda](#)  
[Sample School Council Annual Report](#)  
[Sample School Council Code of Ethics and Conduct](#)  
[Sample School Council Financial Statement](#)  
[Sample School Council Rules of Order](#)  
[Education Act & School Councils Regulation](#)  
[School Council & Fundraising Associations Checklist](#)  
[School Council & Fundraising Associations Comparison](#)  
[School Council & Fundraising Associations Distinctions](#)  
[School Council Executive Transition Checklist](#)  
[School Council Operating Procedures Checklist](#)  
[School Council Operating Procedures Template](#)  
[School Council Participant Roles](#)  
[School Council Partnerships: Who's Who?](#)  
[School Council Planning Status Update](#)  
[School Improvement Planning](#)  
[Strategies to Raise the Profile & Awareness of School Council](#)  
[Three Types of Minutes](#)  
[Tips for School Council Chairs](#)  
[Types of Engagement](#)  
[Why Participate on School Council](#)

*For information contact:*

Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA)

207, 11010 – 142 Street NW Edmonton AB T5N 2R1

Website [www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca](http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca) Email [parents@albertaschoolcouncils.ca](mailto:parents@albertaschoolcouncils.ca)

Telephone 780-454-9867 in Edmonton Toll-free in Alberta 1-800-661-3470 Fax 780-455-0167



# APPENDIX 1

***Creating an Annual Agenda or year-at-a-glance is an important step when planning School Council work for the year. A School Council would adapt the annual agenda to reflect their preferred level of engagement using this sample framework, shown below. A School Council would incorporate the activities and initiatives they decide to undertake for the year into the framework. For example, the planning for the School Council's involvement with a winter carnival may be an agenda item for the October/November meeting.***

**Ed. Act 55(5):** Items in black are activities that pertain to the operation of the school council.

**ED. Act 55(4)(a) and (c):** Items in blue are areas of parent engagement that will support Alberta Education's Assurance Framework. Processes, opportunities, and timing for participation will vary by School Division.

**Leadership Quality Standard & Teaching Quality standard:** Items in green relate to competencies identified in these Standards.

**ASCA:** Items in red relate to opportunities for member school councils.

## **1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(September or October)*

- Welcome and orientation of new School Council members
  - Overview of legislation, regulations, policy and School Council operating procedures (addressing governance and the decision-making model), meeting Rules of Order
  - Overview of the current school budget and the process for advising regarding the next school year's budget
  - **Refer to ASCA's School Council Resource Guide and ASCA's website as information sources for School Councils and parents**
- Review School Council plan (if there is one)
- **Discuss ASCA's School Council Engagement Task Force (register or re-register for it on website)**
- **Principal shares key events of upcoming school year**
- **Principal and teacher outline areas School Council may be involved, or their advice will be solicited**
- Review school community needs assessments results from June
- Discussion of what School Council members would like to work on during the school year and their expectations of the School Council and individual School Council members
- Determine which School Council members will be reps with other education stakeholders and organizations and committee assignments (if any)
- Distribute reading materials or website addresses for School Council members to prepare for discussion at the next meeting

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(October or November – possible Annual General Meeting)*

- Elections of Executive, presentation of School Council report (from previous year)
- **Update School Council contact information with ASCA**
- **Discussion of the Jurisdiction's Three-year Education Plan**
- **Discussion of the School's Three-year Education Plan**
- Create or review and update a School Council plan

## **3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(November or December)*

- **Receive highlights of the Division's and School's Results Report**
- **Discuss assessment practices and/or Diploma Exam Results**
- **Accountability Pillar information presented as it pertains to the school, when available**
- **Discuss and submit a provincial education issue to ASCA for consideration at the Annual General Meeting (Proposed Advocacy Resolution)**
- Committee reports

**Ed. Act 55(5):** Items in black are activities that pertain to the operation of the school council.

**ED. Act 55(4)(a) and (c):** Items in blue are areas of parent engagement that will support Alberta Education's Assurance Framework. Processes, opportunities, and timing for participation will vary by School Division.

**Leadership Quality Standard & Teaching Quality standard:** Items in green relate to competencies identified in these Standards.

**ASCA:** Items in red relate to opportunities for member school councils.

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(December or January)*

- Provide input for the next year's school budget (this may be an ongoing agenda item as needed)
- Provide input for the next year of the School's Three-year Education Plan (this may be an ongoing agenda item as needed)
- Committee reports

#### **5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(January or February)*

- Alberta School Councils' Association's Conference and AGM registration
- Committee reports

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(February or March)*

- Evaluation of any projects School Council is coordinating or involved in (this function is ongoing as projects are completed and reflecting the cycle of the projects undertaken)
- Discussion of ASCA Proposed Advocacy Resolutions

#### **7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(March or April)*

- Recruitment Strategies and Succession Planning for next year
- Prepare needs assessment
- Discussion of ASCA Proposed Advocacy Resolutions; advise voting delegate

#### **8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Year** *(May or June – possible Annual General Meeting)*

- Annual General Meeting (AGM) Planning (or being held)
- Share information from ASCA conference
- Renew Alberta School Councils' Association membership and other memberships pertinent to the School Council
- Needs Assessments sent to school community
- Celebrate your successes!!

At any School Council meeting during the year, Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) Members may decide to discuss and submit a provincial issue to ASCA for consideration at the Annual General Meeting. Please visit the ASCA website ([www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca](http://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca)) for more details.

### September Meeting

- Welcome and orientation (purpose and role of School Council)
- Principal's Report: key events for the year, opportunities for School Council engagement
- Discuss parent communication protocol (Teacher > Principal > Trustee > Superintendent > Minister of Education)
- Creation or Review of School Council Plan for the year (set goals)
- Overview of current School Budget and Student Learning Goals/Challenges
- **Consider submitting Proposed Advocacy Resolution on provincial education issues for ASCA April AGM**

### October Meeting

- Principal's Report: Student Assessment practices in support of Student Learning
- Overview of the 3 Year Education Plan of the school and the school division
- Elections/ Appointments to key positions (School Council AGM)
- **Host ASCA School Council Purpose workshop**
- **Discuss/draft Proposed Advocacy Resolution for consideration at ASCA AGM**

### November Meeting

- Principal's Report: Initiatives for "at-risk" students in support of Student Learning
- Review of school and school division Annual Results Report
- Analysis and Implementation of School Council Plan to support Student Learning
- **ASCA Fall General Meeting – virtual (mid to late November)**
- **Finalize and submit Proposed Advocacy Resolution for consideration at ASCA AGM (Deadline mid-January)**

### December Meeting

- Principal's Report: Introduction/Overview of the Accountability Pillar for school and school division
- Holiday celebration
- **Finalize and submit Proposed Advocacy Resolution for consideration at ASCA AGM (Deadline mid-January)**

### January Meeting

- Principal's Report: Review of Discipline Policy relating to Student Learning
- Begin discussion relating to upcoming School Budget and Three-Year Educational Plan
- Assessment of School Council Plan relating to supporting Student Learning
- **Mid-January: Deadline – Proposed Advocacy Resolutions for ASCA AGM**
- **Alberta School Councils' Association's Conference/AGM information/registration (late April)**

### February Meeting

- Principal's Report: Mid-year assessment: Student Learning progress results to date
- Special Guest Speaker in support of Student Learning: Topic TBA
- School Council Recruitment Strategies and Succession Planning
- **Review, discuss and pre-vote: all Proposed Advocacy Resolutions for ASCA AGM**

### March Meeting

- Principal's Report: Instructional Practices relating to Student Learning
- Final discussion relating to the upcoming School Budget and Three-Year Educational Plan
- Assessment of School Council Plan relating to supporting Student Learning
- **Review, discuss and pre-vote: all Proposed Advocacy Resolutions for ASCA AGM**
- **Nominations for ASCA Board of Directors – Deadline: 15 days prior to AGM (late April)**

### April Meeting

- Principal's Report: Finalized School Budget and 3 Yr Education Plan
- Finalize School Council Recruitment Strategies and Succession Planning
- Opportunities for recognition of staff, students and parents relating to supporting Student Learning
- **Attend/send delegate to ASCA Conference/AGM (Learning, Networking, Provincial Voice)**

### May Meeting

- Principal's Report: Staffing, Program and Practices Changes in support of Student Learning
- School Council AGM planning
- Final Evaluation of School Council Plan relating to supporting Student Learning
- **Summary of ASCA Conference (Learning/Networking) and AGM (Elections/Advocacy = Provincial Voice)**

### June Meeting

- Celebrate successes!

**The \_\_\_\_\_ School Council meets at \_\_\_\_ a.m. / p.m. on the third Wednesday of every month in the school library. Please join us in supporting our students!**

## Effective School Council Checklist

**Our School Council clearly understands the roles and responsibilities of council and its participants.**

- ☐ We are familiar with the Education Act and the *School Councils Regulation*.
- ☐ We use the Alberta School Council Resource Guide.
- ☐ We participate in workshops and other skill development and training opportunities.
- ☐ We are familiar with and regularly review our school council's operating procedures.
- ☐ We assess and evaluate our school council's work annually.

**Our School Council focuses on supporting and enhancing student learning and sets priorities for student success and/or school improvement planning.**

- ☐ We understand how initiatives and policies of Alberta Education impact student learning in our school.
- ☐ We are knowledgeable about and advise on the school's education plan.
- ☐ We discuss strategies for School Council and parents to support the goals in the school's one-year/3-year plan.
- ☐ We understand the school's Accountability Pillar Report and Annual Results Report.
- ☐ We understand how our school's assessment practices and/or Diploma Exam results relate to school improvement planning.
- ☐ We advise on strategies for improving learning through interpretation of the Accountability Pillar, Annual Results Report and assessment results.
- ☐ We identify opportunities for the Parent Advisory Council (Fundraising Society) to support the school.

**Our School Council promotes meaningful parental engagement. We are inclusive, respectful, demonstrate trust and have high ethical standards.**

- ☐ We communicate regularly with parents and the broader school community.
- ☐ We encourage participation on School Council and recognize and address barriers to participation.
- ☐ We welcome newcomers to the school and build positive, trusting relationships.
- ☐ We conduct efficient meetings and other activities with dignity and respect.
- ☐ We have implemented and adhere to our School Council's Code of Ethics.
- ☐ We strive to build positive relationships with our principal, our Trustee, other parent groups and community members.

## APPENDIX 4

### How do SCHOOL COUNCILS contribute to Alberta Education's ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK?

Alberta Education changed the way it demonstrates confidence in meeting the needs of students and enabling their success with the adoption of a new *Assurance Framework*, implemented alongside funding changes in 2020.

*Assurance is a concept that encompasses accountability, engagement, transparency and reporting.*

The assurance model creates new opportunities for parents to engage with the education system and help shape local priorities and initiatives. This new process (*or mindset*) affects school council activities.

The new approach changes the focus of the work of School Boards and schools from being *accountable* to the Ministry - to that of *demonstrating* to (local and provincial) Albertans that the system is meeting the needs of students, and that students are successful.

*The concept is about continuous improvement – not a reaction to yearly results, but ongoing reviews of actions being taken, and sharing these reviews.*

It is about conferring with stakeholders, including parents, about what is expected – in the LOCAL context as well as Provincial – creating and initiating plans that correspond to those expectations, following up those plans on a constant basis, to find out if there is success or a need to change direction, and checking in with stakeholders to demonstrate the results, and asking “*Did we get it right?*”.

School Boards are also expected to include evidence of stakeholder engagement in their planning documents. This approach relies on creating strong relationships between education partners and stakeholders, and a commitment to transparency.

*The new framework is an excellent opportunity for school councils to be engaged.*

*Alberta Education sees the involvement of school councils contributing to assurance in valuable ways, including the following:*

- Become familiar with the *Assurance Framework* and the related school authority planning and reporting requirements
- Review the School Board's education plan and annual education report (*posted annually on Board's website by November 30 and May 31, respectively*) and those of the school (*posted annually on either the school or School Board website*)
- Participate in engagement opportunities surrounding the development of school and School Board education plan priorities
- Participate in engagement opportunities respecting results and progress towards meeting the School Board's priorities
- Participate in the development of school education plans, annual education results reports, and budget
- Educate Grade 4, 7 and 10 parents about the *Alberta Education Assurance Parent Survey* and encourage their input



Alberta  
School Councils' Association

# Leadership Quality Standard

Alberta Education







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## Leadership Quality Standard

**Whereas** Alberta's teachers, students, parents, educational leaders and members of the public have a strong will to ensure all Alberta students have access to quality learning experiences that enable their achievement of the learning outcomes outlined in programs of study.

**Whereas** the success of all members of the school community requires inclusive environments in which diversity is respected and members of the school community are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe.

**Whereas** principals and school jurisdiction leaders play a fundamental role in establishing and supporting the conditions under which the learning aspirations and the potential of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students will be realized.

**Whereas** principals and school jurisdiction leaders have an important role in fostering collaboration, engagement and empowerment of all partners in the education system to enable all students to achieve their potential.

**Whereas** principals and school jurisdiction leaders in Alberta schools are accomplished teachers able to create the conditions within which quality teaching and optimum learning can occur and be sustained.

**Whereas** the *Leadership Quality Standard* provides a framework to support the professional growth, supervision and evaluation of all principals and school jurisdiction leaders.

**Whereas** students, parents and other partners in education should be confident that Alberta principals and school jurisdiction leaders demonstrate the *Leadership Quality Standard* throughout their careers.

**Whereas** it is important to recognize the value of a consistent standard of professional practice for all principals and school jurisdiction leaders in the province.

## 1. In the context of this document:

- a. **“competency”** means an interrelated set of knowledge, skills and attitudes developed over time and drawn upon and applied to a particular leadership context in order to support quality leadership, teaching and optimum learning as required by the *Leadership Quality Standard*;
- b. **“inclusive learning environment”** means a classroom, school, online learning environment or other educational setting structured to anticipate, value and respond to the diverse strengths and needs of all learners;
- c. **“indicators”** means actions that are likely to lead to the achievement of a competency and which, together with the competency, are measurable and observable;
- d. **“leader”** means a principal or school jurisdiction leader;
- e. **“local community”** means community members who have an interest in education and the school community, including neighbouring Métis settlements, First Nations and other members of the public;
- f. **“principal”** means, for the purposes of this standard, principal as defined in the *Education Act*, assistant principal, associate principal or vice principal;
- g. **“reconciliation”** means the process and goal of creating societal change through a fundamental shift in thinking and attitudes, increasing intercultural understanding to build a better society through learning about First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives and experiences, including residential schools and treaties;
- h. **“school authority”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, charter school operator or accredited private school operator;
- i. **“school community”** means the staff of the school authority, along with students, parents/guardians and school council members;
- j. **“school council”** means a school council established under the *Education Act* or a parent advisory council established under the Private Schools Regulation;
- k. **“school jurisdiction”** means a public school board, separate school board, Francophone regional authority, or charter school operator;
- l. **“school jurisdiction leader”** means a central office staff member, other than the superintendent or chief deputy superintendent, required by their leadership position to hold an Alberta teaching certificate;
- m. **“staff”** means all certificated and non-certificated persons whose role in the school is to provide educational and support services to students;
- n. **“student”** means, for the purposes of this standard, an individual enrolled in a school or required by law to attend, and includes a child younger than 6 years of age who is enrolled in an early childhood services program;
- o. **“superintendent”** means a superintendent appointed by a board pursuant to the *Education Act* and the chief deputy superintendent, if any, as referred to in the *Teaching Profession Act*; and
- p. **“teacher”** means an individual who holds a certificate of qualification as a teacher issued under the *Education Act*.

## 2. The Leadership Quality Standard:

**Quality leadership occurs when the leader’s ongoing analysis of the context, and decisions about what leadership knowledge and abilities to apply, result in quality teaching and optimum learning for all school students.**

3. The *Leadership Quality Standard* applies to all leaders employed in a school authority. All leaders are expected to meet the *Leadership Quality Standard* throughout their careers. Principals as defined under the *Education Act* are accountable for the demonstration of all the competencies. Other leaders are responsible for the demonstration of competencies directly related to their assigned role. In any given context, reasoned professional judgment must be used to determine whether the *Leadership Quality Standard* is being met.

4. The *Leadership Quality Standard* is described by the following competencies and indicators:

## Fostering Effective Relationships

### 1 | A leader builds positive working relationships with members of the school community and local community.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. acting with fairness, respect and integrity;
- b. demonstrating empathy and a genuine concern for others;
- c. creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environment;
- d. creating opportunities for parents/guardians, as partners in education, to take an active role in their children's education;
- e. establishing relationships with First Nations, Métis and Inuit parents/guardians, Elders/knowledge keepers, local leaders and community members;
- f. demonstrating a commitment to the health and well-being of all teachers, staff and students;
- g. acting consistently in the best interests of students;
- h. engaging in collegial relationships while modeling and promoting open, collaborative dialogue;
- i. communicating, facilitating and solving problems effectively; and
- j. implementing processes for improving working relationships and dealing with conflict within the school community.

## Modeling Commitment to Professional Learning

### 2 | A leader engages in career-long professional learning and ongoing critical reflection to identify opportunities for improving leadership, teaching and learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. engaging with others such as teachers, principals and other leaders to build personal and collective professional capacities and expertise;

- b. actively seeking out feedback and information from a variety of sources to enhance leadership practice;
- c. seeking, critically reviewing and applying educational research to inform effective practice;
- d. engaging members of the school community to build a shared understanding of current trends and priorities in the education system.

## Embodying Visionary Leadership

### 3 | A leader collaborates with the school community to create and implement a shared vision for student success, engagement, learning and well-being.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. communicating a philosophy of education that is student-centred and based on sound principles of effective teaching and leadership;
- b. recognizing the school community's values and aspirations and demonstrating an appreciation for diversity;
- c. collaborating with other leaders and superintendents to address challenges and priorities;
- d. supporting school community members, including school councils, in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities;
- e. promoting innovation, enabling positive change and fostering commitment to continuous improvement; and
- f. accessing, sharing and using a range of data to determine progress towards achieving goals.

## Leading a Learning Community

### 4 | A leader nurtures and sustains a culture that supports evidence-informed teaching and learning.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. fostering in the school community equality and respect with regard to rights as provided for in the *Alberta Human Rights Act* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- b. creating an inclusive learning environment in which diversity is embraced, a sense of belonging

is emphasized, and all students and staff are welcomed, cared for, respected and safe;

- c. developing a shared responsibility for the success of all students;
- d. cultivating a culture of high expectations for all students and staff;
- e. creating meaningful, collaborative learning opportunities for teachers and support staff;
- f. establishing opportunities and expectations for the positive involvement of parents/guardians in supporting student learning;
- g. creating an environment for the safe and ethical use of technology;
- h. collaborating with community service agencies to provide wrap-around supports for all students who may require them, including those with mental health needs; and
- i. recognizing student and staff accomplishments.

## Supporting the Application of Foundational Knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit

5

**A leader supports the school community in acquiring and applying foundational knowledge about First Nations, Métis and Inuit for the benefit of all students.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. understanding the historical, social, economic and political implications of:
  - treaties and agreements with First Nations;
  - legislation and agreements negotiated with Métis; and
  - residential schools and their legacy;
- b. aligning resources and building the capacity of the school community to support First Nations, Métis and Inuit student achievement;
- c. enabling all school staff and students to gain a knowledge and understanding of, and respect for, the histories, cultures, languages, contributions, perspectives, experiences and contemporary contexts of First Nations, Métis and Inuit; and
- d. pursuing opportunities and engaging in practices to facilitate reconciliation within the school community.

## Providing Instructional Leadership

6

**A leader ensures that every student has access to quality teaching and optimum learning experiences.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. building the capacity of teachers to respond to the learning needs of all students;
- b. implementing professional growth, supervision and evaluation processes to ensure that all teachers meet the *Teaching Quality Standard*;
- c. ensuring that student instruction addresses learning outcomes outlined in programs of study;
- d. facilitating mentorship and induction supports for teachers and principals, as required;
- e. demonstrating a strong understanding of effective pedagogy and curriculum;
- f. facilitating the use of a variety of technologies to support learning for all students;
- g. ensuring that student assessment and evaluation practices are fair, appropriate and evidence-informed;
- h. interpreting a wide range of data to inform school practice and enable success for all students; and
- i. facilitating access to resources, agencies and experts within and outside the school community to enhance student learning and development.

## Developing Leadership Capacity

7

**A leader provides opportunities for members of the school community to develop leadership capacity and to support others in fulfilling their educational roles.**

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. demonstrating consultative and collaborative decision-making that is informed by open dialogue and multiple perspectives;
- b. identifying, mentoring and empowering teachers in educational leadership roles;
- c. promoting the engagement of parents in school council(s) and facilitating the constructive involvement of school council(s) in school life;

- d. creating opportunities for students to participate in leadership activities and to exercise their voice in school leadership and decision making; and
- e. promoting team building and shared leadership among members of the school community.

## Managing School Operations and Resources

### 8 | A leader effectively directs operations and manages resources.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. identifying and planning for areas of need;
- b. applying principles of effective teaching and learning, child development and ethical leadership to all decisions;
- c. aligning practices, procedures, policies, decisions and resources with school and school authority visions, goals and priorities;
- d. following through on decisions made by allocating resources (human, physical, technological and financial) to provide the learning environments and supports needed to enable and/or improve learning for all students;
- e. facilitating access to appropriate technology and digital learning environments; and
- f. ensuring operations align with provincial legislation, regulations and policies, and the policies and processes of the school authority.

## Understanding and Responding to the Larger Societal Context

### 9 | A leader understands and appropriately responds to the political, social, economic, legal and cultural contexts impacting schools and the school authority.

Achievement of this competency is demonstrated by indicators such as:

- a. supporting the school community in understanding the legal frameworks and policies that provide the foundations for the Alberta education system;
- b. representing the needs of students at the community, school authority and provincial levels;
- c. engaging local community partners to understand local contexts;
- d. demonstrating an understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends and their implications for education; and
- e. facilitating school community members' understanding of local, provincial, national and international issues and trends related to education.





## Alberta Education's Ministry Business Plan:

- Aligns its business plan to the Government of Alberta's Strategic Business Plan and fiscal plans
- The [Alberta Education Business Plan 2021 - 2024](#) provides details on the following 4 education goals in Alberta
  - Alberta's students are successful
  - First Nations, Métis, and Inuit students in Alberta are successful
  - Alberta has excellent teachers, school leaders, and school authority leaders
  - Alberta's K-12 education system is well governed and managed
- Sets direction and focus for all divisions in the province
- Alberta Education goals have strategies and performance measures
- Alberta School Councils' Association is the vehicle for school council input at this level of planning

## School Board's Three-year Education Plan:

- Aligns their three-year plan with Alberta Education's Ministry Business Plan
- Sets direction and focus for all the schools in their divisions
- Includes schools' proposed Three-year Education Plans and budgets (mid January – early February)
- Accountability results

- Community Engagement opportunities



## School's Three-year Education Plan:

- Aligns the School's Three-year Education Plan with School Board's Three-year Education Plan
- Begins planning process with staff and School Council (late February – mid March)
- Considers 'identified priorities' and 'budget planning' documents from previous year
- Considers the year of the three-year term and the following:
  - Changes in school community demographics
  - Programming needs
  - School Authority (division/jurisdiction/board) focus and priorities
  - School Council input
  - Fiscal realities
  - Accountability results
  - Community Engagement Opportunities

## School Council's Three-year Plan:

- Aligns School Council's Three-year Plan with the School's Three-year Education Plan
- Begins planning process with staff and School Council (late February – mid March)
- Considers 'identified priorities' from previous year
- Community Engagement opportunities
- Considers the year of the three-year term and the results of School Council's Needs Assessment Survey to the school community.

## School Council Planning Status Update

**Three Year Plan** Year 1 - Year 3

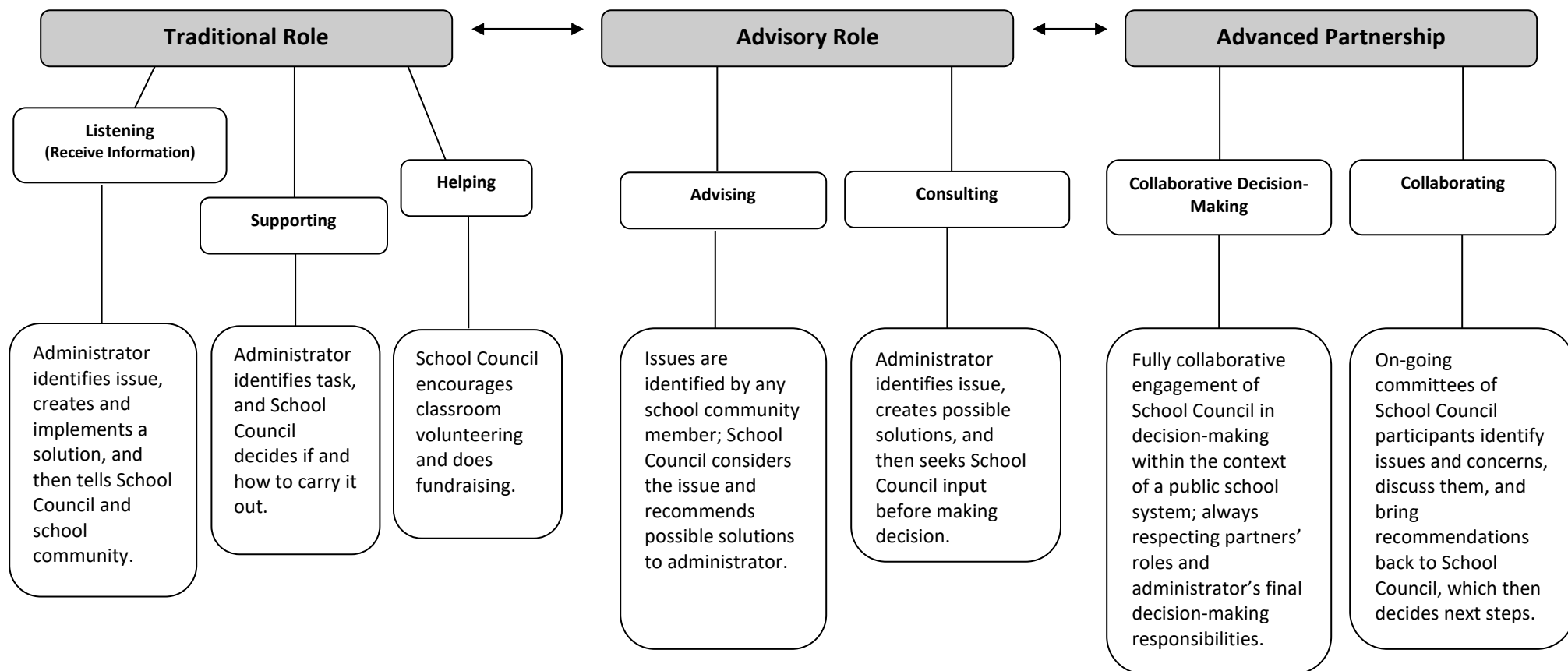
**Use this form/table to track the status of the strategies in your School Council Plan**

<b>Goal #1</b>	<i>Year1 Status</i>	<i>Year2 Status</i>	<i>Year3 Status</i>
<i>Strategy 1</i>			
<i>Strategy 2</i>			
<i>Strategy 3</i>			
<i>Strategy 4</i>			
<b>Goal #2</b>	<i>Year1 Status</i>	<i>Year2 Status</i>	<i>Year3 Status</i>
<i>Strategy 1</i>			
<i>Strategy 2</i>			
<i>Strategy 3</i>			
<i>Strategy 4</i>			
<b>Goal #3</b>	<i>Year1 Status</i>	<i>Year2 Status</i>	<i>Year3 Status</i>
<i>Strategy 1</i>			
<i>Strategy 2</i>			
<i>Strategy 3</i>			
<i>Strategy 4</i>			



## Types of Engagement for School Councils

*Alberta School Councils were mandated (1995) as forums to involve members of the school community in advising the principal and the board respecting matters related to the school, focusing on supporting and enhancing student achievement and participating in school improvement planning. Each year, a School Council will determine its own types of engagement, based on the people participating that year, their interests and ideas. The flowchart below may be used as a tool to determine if the current levels of engagement meet expectations of the school community, and specifically those serving on School Council. Such a discussion may also acknowledge the significant contributions made by past and current School Councils, as well as help to plan for future growth.*



### Code of Ethics for School Council Members

A Code of Ethics guides councils' behavior and protects the integrity of their position of trust. Members, who act on behalf of a school council, must:

- Abide by the legislation that governs school councils
- Live by the school's, council's and division's mission
- Become familiar and act in accordance with school and division policies
- Practice the highest standard of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth
- Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community
- Declare any conflict of interest
- Encourage a positive atmosphere in which others value and encourage individual contributions
- Apply democratic principles
- Consider the best interests of all students
- Respect the confidential nature of some school business and the limitations this may place on the operation of a school council
- Not disclose confidential information
- Limit discussion at meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community
- Respect decisions made collectively
- Not accept payments for council activities.

#### Resources

Education Act, RSA 2012, Chapter S-3

Link: [alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations](http://alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations)

School Councils Regulation, Alberta Regulation 94/2019

Link: [alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations](http://alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations)

## APPENDIX 10

# Conflict Management in School Councils

### Council meetings

If conflict happens during a school council meeting, the Chair and principal will:

- Intercede
- Determine the nature of the conflict
- Schedule a meeting with individual member(s) to address the conflict
- Schedule a meeting with the council to address the conflict
- Guide discussion, redirect concerns, or address the issue in the meeting.

### Outside council meetings

If conflict happens outside a school council meeting, the Chair will:

- Address and review the roles and responsibilities of school council members at the next meeting
- Direct the parent concern(s) to the principal.

### Between council members

If conflict happens between members of the school council executive and members, the principal must be made aware. The principal will:

- Sit down with executive members and attempt to resolve the conflict before the next regularly scheduled meeting
- Draft a letter of concern, if necessary, and distribute it to council executive or members or
- Provide support to resolve issues.

### Parent concerns

If a parent has a concern about a classroom or teacher, the principal and teacher must be made aware. The principal will:

- Sit down with the parent and teacher and attempt to resolve the conflict
- Provide support to resolve the issue

Should the issue escalate further, refer to AP 110 – School Councils.

***School Council Operating Procedures should include:***

- ☐ The name of the school council
- ☐ The purpose of the school council (as defined in legislation)
- ☐ Governance Model (Representative or Town Hall or hybrid)
- ☐ A definition of membership for the school council, including;
  - ☐ The rights and limitations of school council members
  - ☐ Requirements of members
- ☐ A description of the Executive of the school council, including;
  - ☐ Their correct titles
  - ☐ Required duties specifically outlined
  - ☐ How long their terms should run
- ☐ Procedures for filling and vacating offices, including;
  - ☐ If an office is to be elected, who votes on it and how
  - ☐ If an office is to be appointed, who makes the appointment
  - ☐ What must happen in order to remove someone from office
  - ☐ How will filling vacant positions be handled
- ☐ Information about school council committees, possibly including;
  - ☐ What, if any, standing committees (committees that are ongoing) there will be
  - ☐ How “ad hoc” committees (committees that only exist for the duration of completing a specific task or project) will be formed
  - ☐ How committee chairs will be chosen
  - ☐ How members will be appointed to committees
- ☐ How decisions are made by the school council, including;
  - ☐ Motions
  - ☐ Voting, including who can vote and how the vote must be done (electronic voting, ballot, show of hands, proxy, email etc)
  - ☐ Consensus
  - ☐ How many members and/or Executive members are required for quorum (the number that must be present for official business to take place or for decisions to be made)



- ☐ How changes to the operating procedures should be made, including;
  - ☐ How changes will be brought forward and by whom
  - ☐ Notice required (for example, telling members at two consecutive meetings that an amendment will be voted on at the third meeting, or sending out a letter, website posting or email to all members telling them what the proposed change is, and when/how the decision will be made.)
- ☐ Information about regular school council meetings, including;
  - ☐ When they will be held
  - ☐ How they will be held (in-person or virtually or combination)
  - ☐ Who will call the meetings
  - ☐ Specific meeting procedures (i.e. Rules of Order or Meeting Protocols)
- ☐ Information about special school council meetings, including;
  - ☐ Who may call a special meeting
  - ☐ How they will be held (in-person or virtually or combination)
  - ☐ What kind of business may be brought forward
  - ☐ Who may attend a special meeting
- ☐ Information about the school council annual general meeting, including;
  - ☐ Who will call the annual general meeting
  - ☐ How it will be held (in-person or virtually or combination)
  - ☐ When it will happen in the school year
  - ☐ How notice of the annual general meeting will be given
  - ☐ What items will or may be on the agenda
- ☐ Information about the annual report, including;
  - ☐ What is to be included in the annual report (as per your school board)
  - ☐ Who will prepare the annual report
  - ☐ How it will be submitted
- ☐ How conflicts will be resolved
- ☐ How will possible dissolution be handled

**1. DEFINITIONS**

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "School" means \_\_\_\_\_ School;
- B. "Council" means the School Council for the School;
- C. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at the School;
- D. "Regulation" means the School Councils Regulation as provided through Alberta Provincial Legislation;
- E. "School community" means persons other than Parents (as defined in 1C above) who have, in the opinion of the majority of the Members of the School Council, an interest in the well-being of the students and the School;
- F. "Operating Procedures" means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

**2. AUTHORITY**

The School Council derives its authority to participate in the education of our students through Alberta Provincial Legislation (*Education Act, Section 55*), hereinafter referred to as "legislation."

**3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY**

*Note: Your School Council can insert the mission/philosophy of the School Board and/or School, and add a statement that the School Council's mission is to support the mission of the School, or create a mission that is specific to your School Council. Example:*

The School Council will undertake discussions and activities that will enhance student learning and foster the well-being and effectiveness of our School community.

**4. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the School Council, in keeping with the legislation, are to:

- A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice to and consulting with the Principal and the School Board on matters relating to the School such as: the School philosophy, mission and vision, policies, improvement plans, programs and directions, and budget allocations to meet student needs;
- B. Foster a positive, collaborative environment with a variety of opportunities for meaningful engagement by members of the School community;
- C. Support special events that will support and enhance student learning, encourage participation and promote the well-being of the School community;
- D. Facilitate a performance evaluation of our School Council and communicate the results of this evaluation to the School Board and the School community;
- E. Develop a communication plan to share information with Parents and the community and facilitate communications with all educational stakeholders;
- F. Adhere to School Council's Code of Ethics;
- G. Consult with other School Councils and provincial organizations;
- H. Support an approach to education in which decisions are made collaboratively;
- I. Advise School Boards, Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;
- J. **Other:**

*Note: One of the two following options (Representative Model or Town Hall Model) should be chosen – delete the other one and the numbering will change accordingly but should stay correct.*

## 5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

The School Council uses a **Representative Operating Style** and/or Model of Governance.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
  - i. (#) Parents as defined in 1C above, elected by Parents at the Annual General Meeting. The Parents elected shall represent all of the School community;
  - ii. The Principal of the School;
  - iii. One or more teachers from the School, appointed or elected by the teachers;
  - iv. One or more students if required (High School), appointed or elected by the students;
  - v. Others as decided by the School Council (optional);
- B. The voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: ;
- C. The non-voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: ;
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent Members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

**OR**

## GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

The School Council uses a **Town Hall Operating Style** and/or Model of Governance.

- A. The membership of the School Council shall consist of:
  - i. All Parents, as defined in 1c above;
  - ii. The Principal of the School;
  - iii. One or more teachers and staff of the School, elected or appointed by the teachers;
  - iv. One or more students, if required (High School), appointed or elected by the students;
  - v. Others as decided by the School Council (optional).
- B. The voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: ;
- C. The non-voting Members of the School Council shall consist of: ;
- D. The parent/other ratio may vary at times, but the number of parent Members must always exceed the number of administration, staff, students and/or community representatives.

## 6. DECISION MAKING

Decisions at School Council meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible.

- A. A decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.
- B. If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved, seconded and passed by the majority of School Council voting Members present at the meeting at which the vote was taken.
- C. There will be no voting by proxy.

## 7. QUORUM

- A. Quorum will be attained when the majority of voting Members present at any School Council meeting are Parents as defined in 1C above, and the Principal or designate is present.
- B. In the absence of a quorum:
  - i. If the Parents and School Council Members present agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the School Council may continue for the purposes of discussion of issues;
  - ii. No motions shall be considered or approved;
  - iii. No decisions by consensus shall be reached.

## 8. EXECUTIVE and TERMS OF OFFICE

The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer (if required).



- A. All Executive positions must be filled by Parents as defined in 1C above;
- B. Every parent is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the School Council;
- C. The terms of office are from the close of the Annual General Meeting to the close of the following Annual General Meeting. Any elected member may serve        consecutive terms in the same position;
- D. The Executive of the School Council will be elected by Parents attending the Annual General Meeting or in the event of vacancies after the Annual General Meeting, elected by the voting Members present at a subsequent School Council meeting;
- E. Any Executive member may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Chair and Principal;
- F. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the School Council will be served;
- G. Unless authorized at any meeting and after notice for same shall have been given, no Member of School Council shall receive any remuneration for his/her services.
- H. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the School Council.

### 9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

#### A. Chair

It is expected that the School Council Chair will be a parent of a student enrolled in the School. Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of the School Council will:

- i. Chair all meetings of the School Council;
- ii. Coordinate with the Principal to co-create meeting agendas;
- iii. Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
- iv. Decide all matters relating to Rules of Order at the meetings;
- v. Ensure that School Council Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- vi. Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- vii. Ensure that there is regular communication with the whole School community;
- viii. Be an ex-officio member of all committees;
- ix. Review any communication to the School community prior to distribution and include the Principal in same;
- x. Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
- xi. Have signing authority, if required, on any financial accounts together with the Vice-Chair and/or the Treasurer;
- xii. Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the School Board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous School year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>;
- xiii. Have general responsibility for all activities of the School Council.

#### B. Vice-Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the School Council will:

- i. In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities (while remaining in the Vice-Chair position);
- ii. In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- iii. Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
- iv. Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
- v. Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the Fundraising Association or other parent groups within the School;
- vi. Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;



- vii. Keep informed of relevant School and School Board policies;
- viii. Prepare to assume the position of Chair in the future;
- ix. Have signing authority, if required, on any financial accounts together with the Chair and/or the Treasurer;
- x. Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

### **C. Secretary**

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the School Council will:

- i. Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
- ii. Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;
- iii. Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with PIPA;
- iv. Distribute, as determined by the School Council, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events.

In the absence of the Secretary, the School Council shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

**\*Not Applicable (Fundraising Society requires a Treasurer) \***

### **E. Past Chair (Optional)**

The Past Chair of the School Council will:

- i. Serve in an advisory capacity to the new School Council;
- ii. Act in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair.

### **F. Members at Large / ECS Parent Representative / Classroom, Grade or Division Representatives/Community Members/Fundraising Association Liaison/Others as decided by the School Council**

These Members will:

- i. Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
- ii. Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
- iii. Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the School community;
- iv. Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
- v. Have a clear understanding of the School Council's objectives;



- vi. Attend School Council meetings;
- vii. Identify possible topics for agendas;
- viii. Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility.

### 10. VACANCIES

With the exception of the School Council positions filled by the Principal and teacher representative, any vacancy of the School Council will be advertised to the parent community. Elections for a vacant position will be held at subsequent meetings of the School Council until the vacancy is filled.

### 11. MEETINGS

School Council meetings may be held in-person or using a virtual or online platform suitable for conducting School Council business, or a combination of the two. The executive, in collaboration with the principal, will determine the format of the meetings. Virtual meetings may include electronic voting which will be determined by the executive (ie. Raise Hand feature, chat window, mic, ballots via private messaging).

#### A. Annual General Meetings

Where the School Council has not been operational the year prior, an Establishment Meeting will be held in accordance with legislation; otherwise, an Annual General Meeting of the School Council will take place once each School year:

- i. The Annual General Meeting of the School Council will be held in the month of [redacted] or at an appropriate time during the School year as determined by the School Council. The meeting will be advertised throughout the School and the community no less than 2 weeks beforehand and will state the business to take place at the Annual General Meeting;
- ii. All Parents as defined in 1C above are eligible for election;
- iii. All Parents as defined in 1C above are eligible to vote at the Annual General Meeting;
- iv. The business of the Annual General Meeting shall include:
  - a. The election of School Council (Representative) and/or Executive (Town Hall) Members;
  - b. Any proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures;
  - c. Presentation of the financial statement of the previous year (if any);
- v. And may also include:
  - a. Plans and budget for the upcoming year;
  - b. Discussion of any major issue in which all Parents should have input such as changes to the Vision or Mission of the School or School Board, School policy or other major changes in the School program or focus;
  - c. An evaluation of the School Council.

#### B. Special General Meetings

The School Council Executive may at any time give notice of a Special General Meeting of the School Council. Notice will be given at least 5 days before the meeting. The notice will state the time, date and place of the meeting, and describe the matters to be dealt with. At any Special General Meeting, all Parents in attendance shall have the right to vote.

#### C. Regular Meetings

A minimum of [redacted] Regular School Council meetings will be held per School year or as called by the Executive. It will be decided when these meetings will take place at the Annual General Meeting. The meetings will take place at the School, unless otherwise advertised.

Any School Council member may be suspended or expelled for the duration of the School year from attendance at any School Council meetings, if, upon a majority vote of voting Members present at Special General Meeting called for that purpose, it is determined to be in the best interests of the School Council to do so.



## **12. MEETING AGENDAS**

The Chair will work in partnership with the Principal to co-create the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chair, who will consult with the Executive and Principal as to the appropriateness of the item requested.

## **13. COMMITTEES**

The School Council may appoint committees that consist of School Council Members and/or School community members. Committees meet outside of School Council meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the School Council and present a report of their activities at School Council meetings.

## **14. POLICIES**

**Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations,** the School Council may make and implement policies that it considers necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The policies of the School Council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new School Council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new School Council and its term;
- B. Topics on which School Council may wish to develop guiding policies include, but are not limited to: Elections, Communication (Internal and External), Record Keeping, Fundraising, Privacy, Location of Meetings, Official Correspondence Address, New Member Orientation, School Council Evaluation, and Social Media.

**\*Not Applicable (Fundraising Society will raise funds) \***

## **16. FUNDRAISING ASSOCIATION and OTHER GROUPS OF PARENTS**

The School Council recognizes and appreciates the efforts of other groups of Parents striving to support and enhance the educational opportunities in the School.

- A. The School Council will communicate regularly with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of Parents to support their activities and to solicit support for School Council activities;
- B. The School Council may develop policies to promote a productive, open and transparent relationship with the Fundraising Association and/or other groups of Parents.

## **17. CODE OF ETHICS**

**All School Council Members shall:**





- A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;
- B. Be guided by the mission statements of the School and School Council;
- C. Endeavour to be familiar with the School's policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them;
- D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and truth;
- E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the School community;
- F. Declare any conflict of interest;
- G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- H. Apply democratic principles;
- I. Consider the best interests of all students;
- J. Respect the confidential nature of some School business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the School Council;
- K. Not disclose confidential information;
- L. Limit discussions at School Council meetings to matters of concern to the School community as a whole;
- M. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- N. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the School community;
- O. Accept accountability for decisions;
- P. Not accept payment for School Council activities.

### 18. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- A. The School Council shall abide by the Dispute Resolution process outlined in the School Board's policies and regulations to address disputes between the principal and the school council with respect to policies proposed or adopted for a school.
- B. The School Council shall apply every effort to resolve internal disputes using the steps outlined in these Operating Procedures. If at any time, **10 parents, or 5 parents and 50% of the Executive Members** of the School Council believe a dispute causing significant impairment of School Council operations is occurring, they may deliver a signed written letter to all Executive Members and the Principal requesting a Special General Meeting, and the following will apply:
  - i. The Chair will call a Special General Meeting of the School Council;
  - ii. The Secretary will provide a minimum of **5 days'** written notice to all parents and School Council Members of the date, time, place and purpose of the Special General Meeting;
  - iii. At the Special General Meeting, all parents and School Council Members present will have an opportunity to hear and discuss the issues causing the dispute;
  - iv. On motion, a vote shall be taken respecting a proposed resolution to the dispute;
  - v. If a majority of voting Members present vote in favour of the resolution proposed, the School Council will immediately act upon it.

### 19. PRIVACY

The School Council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of School Council business.

### 20. DISSOLUTION

As per Alberta Provincial Legislation, only the Minister of Education has the authority to dissolve a School Council. If the School Council is dissolved, the Principal may choose to establish an advisory committee to perform some or all of the duties of the School Council until the next School year. The Principal will perform the duties as outlined in Alberta Provincial Legislation with respect to the re-establishment of the School Council within forty (40) School days after the start of the next School year.



## 21. REVIEWS and AMENDMENTS

**Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations,** the School Council may make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

- A. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually by the School Council Executive or by a committee established expressly for that purpose;
- B. The Operating Procedures of the School Council may be amended by a majority vote of the voting Members present at any scheduled meeting of the School Council;
- C. Notice of proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the School community no less than **5 days** before a meeting.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted by a majority of the Members entitled to vote at a General meeting of the School Council.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's Signature



**What does it mean to be a member of School Council?** Being a member of School Council gives you the right to participate in the governance: decision-making, policy creation, voting, advice given to other stakeholders.

There are two preferred governance models that School Councils use:  
Town Hall Model and Representative Model.

### TOWN HALL MODEL

All parents who have children enrolled in the school are automatically (by default) members of the School Council. The School Council is all the parents in the school. All parents who attend meetings are welcome to participate, share ideas/input, and vote. A School Council Executive Committee (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, etc) is elected by the members (parents) to manage meetings and coordinate School Council work. This model is meant to be inclusive and gives all parents a voice. All parents have equal opportunity to participate and share ideas/input. All parents have an equal vote.

#### Implications

- The executive carry out the work, or delegate the work, that the Council chooses to do.
- The executive is responsible for connecting with all parents to give them the opportunity to provide advice/input on School Council matters (surveys, newsletters, social media).
- Members are responsible for staying informed about School Council business.
- Every parent with a child enrolled in the school is a member of School Council (by default).
- Every parent can participate in discussion (advice) and decision making (voting).
- Parents must be majority at any meeting.

#### Strengths

- School Council is inclusive, accessible, and represents the 'collective parent voice' in the school.
- School Council strives for consensus, and ensures all member 'voices' are heard.
- More parents may be knowledgeable of School Council work.
- School Council may have more parents involved and engaged.
- School Council collaborates/partners with the principal.

#### Limitations

- School Council members attending may not be aware of the historical information.
- Discussion may be difficult to guide.
- Roles and procedures may not be clear.
- Decision-making may be confusing or difficult.
- There may not be a sense of obligation for the parents to attend the meetings.

## **REPRESENTATIVE MODEL**

Parents determine the size of the School Council and what groups will be represented during decisions being made by School Council (division, grades, classes, languages, programs, etc). Only the elected Representatives and Executive are members of the School Council (not all parents). School Council elects or appoints individuals to specific positions (representing a specific class or activity area, etc). Only parents that are designated have a vote. All other attendees are welcome to participate at meetings but are not eligible to vote or make motions.

### **Implications**

- School Council (limited number of people) represents the larger school community.
- School Council is responsible for communicating to the school community.
- Often it is class/grade representation and the rep reports back to the parents in their class/grade.
- Only School Council (Representatives and Executive) can participate in decision making (voting) but any parent attending the meeting can participate in the meeting and discussion.

### **Strengths**

- Decisions are made with School Council members that have all of the historical information.
- Decisions can be made efficiently.
- Roles are clear, relationships are developed.
- Parents must be majority at any meeting.

### **Limitations**

- May not seem inclusive or truly representative of the parent body.
- Communication to the school community may not be happening.
- May be difficult to have equal representation.
- More potential for personal information used for communication purposes not being handled appropriately.

## **COMBINED/HYBRID MODEL**

Some School Councils across the province have taken aspects of each model and created a model that reflects their school community and serves their purposes. For example, a hybrid model may be where all parents are members of School Council but certain duties are accorded to parents that are named, elected, or volunteered to be a governor of School Council (ie. grade/class reps, executive).

## School Council Chair

It is expected that the School Council Chairperson will be a parent of a student enrolled in the school. The Chair should be someone who can work collaboratively and knows how to organize programs and people. The Chair should actively encourage others to become involved in meaningful ways.

Typical Chairing duties include:

- Chair all meetings of the School Council;
- Coordinate with the Principal to co-create meeting agendas;
- Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
- Decide all matters relating to Rules of Order at the meetings;
- Ensure that School Council Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- Ensure there is regular communication with the whole school community,
- Review any communication to the school community prior to distribution and include the Principal in same;
- Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
- Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the school board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous school year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30<sup>th</sup>;
- Have general responsibility for all activities of the School Council;

## Chair's Relationship with the Principal

The Chair's role is key to the success of the School Council. Partnerships work – so use them! One important responsibility is regular and ongoing communication with the school Principal. This relationship of mutual trust and respect must be nurtured, being mindful of common goals for the learning community.

## Vice-Chair

On School Councils, the Chair depends on the Vice-Chair to undertake part of the work. The Vice-Chair is typically being groomed to run as Chair in the future.

Typically, the Vice-Chair's duties are to:

- In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities (while remaining in Vice-Chair position);
- In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
- Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
- Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the fundraising association or other parent groups within the School;
- Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;

- Keep informed of relevant School and School Board policies;
- Prepare to run for the position of Chair in the future;
- Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

## Secretary

The School Council Secretary typically will:

- Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
- Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;
- Maintain a dated record of all the members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information (Permission to Contact Form), in compliance with PIPA;
- Distribute, as determined by the School Council, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;

## Principal

The Principal is the instructional leader who manages the day-to-day operations of the school and is a key member on School Council who promotes cooperation between the school and the community. The principal is the ultimate decision-maker in the school. The Principal implements the policies of Alberta Education and the local school board, ensures instruction is consistent with the *Programs of Study*, ensures the standards of education are met, evaluates the programs, maintains order and discipline within the school, evaluates and supervises teachers and supervises the evaluation and advancement of students.

As a provincially-mandated member of the School Council, the Principal:

- Works in collaboration with the Chair to co-create School Council agendas
- Supports the Chair in running efficient School Council meetings, as per the School Council Rules of Order
- Provides contextual information, as requested by the School Council, on matters relating to the school
- Promotes cooperation between the school and the community it serves
- Seeks input from the School Council, parents and community on major decisions that affect the school

- Establishes, facilitates, communicates and encourages opportunities for School Council, parent and community engagement in school matters
- Encourages and supports the formation and continuous improvement of School Council
- Interprets and shares results of provincial achievement tests and diploma exams
- Shares information about the school community
- Provides information on the programs in the school and the needs of the students
- Refers School Council to the appropriate resource for information on laws, regulations and policies that affect School Council
- Enables the School Council to provide input into the school's education plan.

## Teacher

Each School Council must have at least one Teacher Representative, as per the legislation. A Teacher Representative contributes to a successful School Council in the following ways:

- Promotes a collaborative, collegial model of decision making at the school and for the School Council and provides support for the decisions of the School Council
- Shares professional knowledge with School Council members
- Encourages parents and community members to become involved in school activities
- Shares School Council activities and information with other staff, parents and community members
- Follows the code of ethics and professional protocols set out by the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA)
- Represents the teachers' perspective.

Example: **Feature Teacher** on the agenda – a different teacher each month gives a brief update/summary of what their class/grade is doing. May want to include a few students as well (bring in new parents to the meetings).

## Communication Specialist

The Communication Specialist works under the direct supervision of the School Council and undertakes all responsibilities in consultation and cooperation with the School Council Chair and the School Principal.

In general, the Communication Specialist applies his/her communications expertise to improve the links between the School Council and the School Community and to advance the goals and profile of the School Council.

The Communication Specialist of the School Council, in consultation with the Chair and the Principal, may:

- Assist the School Council in developing, implementing and evaluating a Communication Policy and Communications Plan.
- Prepare School Council Newsletters and the School Council's section of the School Newsletters.
- Provide information for the School Council section of the School website to inform of the purpose and structure of the School Council, highlight activities and accomplishments of the School Council and to promote parental involvement.
- Ensure that the information in the School Council section of the (School Name) Parent's Handbook is updated annually.

- Develop promotional material for the Annual General Meeting, special events, projects and programs and other School Council materials as directed by the School Council and in keeping with the School Council Communications Policy and the Communications Plan.
- Collaborate with Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) in obtaining templates and samples for promotional and other School Council materials.
- Assist the Chair and the School Council by proofreading and editing reports, correspondence and other material, to ensure they reflect the School Council in a professional and consistent manner.
- Develop communication strategies which facilitate two-way communication between the School Council and the School Community. (Surveys, discussion groups, social media).
- Promote the School and its activities with the public (local media, community newspapers), as requested by the Principal.
- Assess the effectiveness of School Council publications, distribution systems, etc. and recommend improvements.
- Attend School Council meetings regularly.
- Managing social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, website).

## **Parents and others**

Parents of children enrolled in the school form the majority of the members of School Council. The School Council may choose to include "Others" in their membership such as: Elders or Knowledge Keepers, religious leaders (ie. Imam; parish priest), School Resource Officer, School-Home Liaison (social worker), and community newspaper columnist.

Parents and other members of the School Council will:

- Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
- Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
- Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the school community;
- Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
- Have a clear understanding of the School Council's purpose;
- Attend School Council meetings;
- Identify possible topics for agendas;
- Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility.



# APPENDIX 15

## School Council Internal Partnerships: Who's Who?

### School Council (collective parent voice)

- Advises the principal and board/charter board on educational issues that pertain to the school
- Establishes and reviews school council's goals, objectives, action plans and procedures
- Communicates and consults with parents and the school community
- Meets regularly

### School Council Members

- Encourage participation of parents and representatives from the school community
- Act as a link between the school council, parents and the community
- Act in the best interest of the school and students
- Ensure the executive positions of the school council are filled
- Maintain high ethical standards
- Understand the policies of the local school board

### Fundraising Society Parent Advisory Committee

- Partners with School Council and Principal to set priorities for fundraising based on the School Growth Plan
- Maintaining the Society in good standing

### Principal

- Oversees the operation and management of the school
- Establishes a school council
- Provides school council with opportunities for input on educational issues and shares recommendations with the board
- Promotes cooperation between the community and the school
- Provides policy and regulation information to school council
- Advises school council on actions taken in response to school council recommendations
- Interprets and reports results of provincial achievement tests, student learning assessment and diploma exams

### Superintendent

- Serves as chief executive and education officer of the school board
- Establishes accountability measures for the division
- Upholds the *Education Act*, *School Councils Regulation* and related policies
- Implements policies regarding the operation of school councils and assists with their formation and operation

### School Board/Charter Board

- Reports to the community on student learning and the performance of the school system, including an interpretation of the results
- Provides educational programs, based on community needs
- Hires and evaluates the superintendent
- Provides school council liability insurance
- Enables meaningful school council input into decisions about education
- Creates appeal and dispute resolution procedures to assist school council
- Supports the work of school council
- Provides accurate and timely information

### Minister of Education

- Has responsibility for education legislation
- Sets funding levels for education
- Sets general direction for education policy
- Sets guidelines for curriculum and student assessment
- Reports annually about education in the province



SC Internal Partnerships: Who's Who?  
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## Creating School Council and/or Fundraising Association Committees

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Members of a school council, or a registered non-profit society (the Fundraising Association), cannot do everything on their own. Sometimes it is necessary to delegate tasks to a committee. Parents, teachers, or members of the community who are unable to attend regular meetings may be willing to serve on a short-term specific-task committee. Committees can enable an organization to accomplish more work in specific areas and are formed after initial organization discussion. Items requiring more lengthy discussion, activity or research are assigned to a committee. Committees make decisions or recommendations, according to the mandate the organization gives them.

There are two types of committees: Standing Committees (year-long) or Ad Hoc Committees (short term).

Committee members should:

- be willing to participate, both individually and as a team;
  - be willing to prepare reports for the organization, as required;
  - set priorities and follow through with them;
  - understand the expected time commitment; and
  - work towards consensus.
- 

Operating Procedures (School Council) and/or bylaws (School Council or Association) should state the ability of the organization to establish committees. *Example:*

### ***(School Council/Association) Committees***

*The (School Council/Association) may appoint committees that consist of voting members, non-voting members and/or non-members. Committees meet outside of regular meetings to complete their assigned tasks and present a report of their activities at (School Council/Association) meetings.*

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A written policy will help to clarify the responsibilities of the Executive Members when they create committees. *Example:*

### ***(School Council/Association) Policy Statement:***

*The (School Council/Association) believes the work of the organization is enhanced through the establishment of committees to carry out specific functions.*

*The Executive Members shall:*

- a) *Assess the nature of specific tasks required to carry out the work with diligence and in a timely manner, and determine the type of committee required.*

***Guidelines***

- *Determine the specific task and clearly describe the Terms of Reference for each committee established.*
  - *Determine the number of Executive Members and/or others required to carry out the task.*
  - *Ensure opportunities exist for clear and open communication between the committee and the Executive members.*
  - *Ensure the Chairperson/President is ex-officio (automatically) on each committee.*
  - *Ensure orientation to the task is provided to committee members, if required.*
- 

Written Terms of Reference will help the committee members understand their responsibilities and obligations, and determine what decisions they can make on their own to complete their task.

# Creating School Council and/or Fundraising Association Committees

## Terms of Reference Template for Committees

<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>NAME AND TYPE OF COMMITTEE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is this a standing committee (ongoing), an ad hoc committee (short-term) or a sub-committee?</li> </ul>	•
<b>GENERAL PURPOSE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the area of responsibility?</li> <li>What type of work is the committee expected to do?</li> </ul>	•
<b>KEY DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What results are expected from the committee?</li> <li>What authority does the committee have? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited Advisor: The committee investigates and reports. The Executive Members make the decisions.</li> <li>Active Advisor: The committee investigates and suggests action. The Executive Members will probably take the committee suggestions.</li> <li>Limited Agent: The committee can take some action, with the Executive Members' consent.</li> <li>Active Agent: The committee takes action. The Executive Members can later ratify the action taken.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	•
<b>COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENTS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Who is appointed to the committee? (e.g., voting and non-voting members, ex-officio members)</li> <li>How is the Committee Lead/Chair appointed?</li> <li>Who appoints the other committee members? (e.g., Executive Members, Committee Lead, etc)</li> <li>When are committee members appointed? (e.g., after the AGM, at certain points in the organization's calendar)</li> <li>How long do the appointments last?</li> </ul>	•
<b>MEETINGS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is the expected number of meetings per year?</li> <li>How are meetings scheduled?</li> </ul>	•
<b>RESOURCES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the allowable committee costs approved by the Executive Members in the budget?</li> <li>What are the restrictions?</li> <li>What approval is necessary?</li> </ul>	•
<b>SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What tasks are to be accomplished by the committee?</li> <li>Are there specific dates for specific tasks?</li> </ul>	•
<b>REPORTS AND TARGET DATES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What are the dates for submitting progress reports to the Executive Members?</li> <li>Does the committee report verbally or in writing?</li> </ul>	•
<b>REVIEW AND EVALUATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When does the committee submit its written review of accomplishments?</li> <li>When does the committee make recommendations to the Executive Members for changes (in the overall task or in the Committee Terms of Reference?)</li> </ul>	•
<b>APPROVAL AND REVIEW DATE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When were the Terms of Reference for this committee last reviewed and approved?</li> <li>When will they be reviewed again?</li> </ul>	•

# Making Motions

## To Propose a Motion (*action*):

1. Once recognized by the Chair, a member says, "I move that ... (*state the motion*)."
2. Another member says, "I second the motion."
3. The Chair says, "It has been moved by (*first member who made the motion*) and seconded by (*member who seconded*) that (*state the motion*). Is there any discussion?"
4. The member who made the motion (*the mover*) should speak to the motion first, with other members having an opportunity to speak following.
5. At the end of the discussion, the Chair says, "If there is no further discussion, the motion is that ... (*state the motion*). All in favour?" (*Take a count*) "Opposed?" (*Take a count*). "The motion is ... (*carried or defeated* depending on the count).

## Common Motions

Motion	Purpose	Needs a sec <sup>nd</sup> er	Discus_sion Allowed.	Amendments Allowed	-Vote required
Amend (a motion)	To change a motion	yes	yes	yes	Majority
Table (a motion)	To postpone an issue to the next meeting so more urgent business may be addressed	yes	no	no	Majority
Withdraw (a motion)	To take a motion off the table - and strike from the minutes	no	no	no	Majority
Recess (a meeting)	To take a break	yes	yes	yes	Majority
Adjourn (a meeting)	To end the meeting	yes	no	yes	Majority
Accept a Report {as presented} <i>Treasurer, Committee, Minutes, etc.</i>	To file records along with the minutes of the meeting	yes	yes	yes	Majority