

SCHOOL COUNCILS

Background

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

Definitions

School Council - 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.

Advisory Committee – a committee established by the principal if fewer than 5 parents are in attendance at an establishment meeting for the School Council or if the meeting is not successful in establishing a School Council.

Parent Fundraising Committee - 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.

Procedures

1. Establishment

- 1.1 The Principal shall annually initiate establishment of a School Council in accordance with the School Councils Regulation (AR 94/2019 and as subsequently amended).
- 1.2 In the event that fewer than five parents are in attendance or a School Council is not successfully established, the principal may adjourn the meeting to a later date and establish an Advisory Committee to carry out one or more duties or functions of a School Council in the interim.

2. Organization and Operation

- 2.1 School Councils are encouraged to refer to the Alberta School Councils' Association Website (albertaschoolcouncils.ca) for current information on regulations and expectations.
- 2.2 Each school council may make bylaws respecting the conduct of its business and affairs as per the School Councils Regulation (AR 94/2019) s.17(1).

- 2.3 School Councils are encouraged to draft a code of ethics and exemplify these principles. Samples are available to all PRSD School Councils in the School Council Resource Guide on the Alberta School Councils' Association Website.
- 2.4 The Chair of the executive must be a parent of an enrolled student (unless no parent is willing).
- 2.5 A school council cannot incorporate under the *Societies Act* or the *Companies Act*.
- 2.6 Consideration is to be given to Administrative Procedure 401 – Employment of Relatives in the appointment of School Council executive officers; where possible, executive officers of School Councils should not be school employees.
- 2.7 Trustees may attend School Council meetings, as assigned, when possible.

3. Reporting

- 3.1 The chair of a School Council must prepare and provide to the Board by September 30 of each year a report:
 - 3.1.1 summarizing the activities of the School Council in the previous school year, and
 - 3.1.2 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Local Trustees submit reports to the Board on School Council meeting proceedings, significant activities and financial reports.

4. Conflict Resolution Appeals

- 4.1 School Councils are encouraged to develop a conflict resolution procedure to be used to resolve conflict situations between School Council members and parents as it relates to School Council operations or in situations that are not subject to Administrative Procedure 152 – Dispute Resolution.
 - 4.1.1 Conflicts which develop shall be dealt with in accordance with the School Council conflict resolution procedure.
 - 4.1.2 The School Council conflict resolution procedure may provide for mediation if the School Council chooses, and the School Council may request that the Superintendent appoint a mediator to assist in resolving the conflict situation.
- 4.2 Differences between the School Council and the Principal shall be resolved by application of the Division's Administrative Procedure 152 – Dispute Resolution.

5. School Councils and Principals

- 5.1 The Principal is responsible and accountable to the Superintendent and ultimately to the Board for all activities within the school. The Principal is required to seek support

and advice from the community through the School Council. School Council advice is valued in the following areas:

- 5.1.1 Creating an atmosphere in which community members are encouraged to share their ideas with school staff.
- 5.1.2 Contributing to the curricular program by sharing their knowledge, expertise and skills with students and staff.
- 5.1.3 Advocating the Division's mission, vision, principles and beliefs in the communities around the schools.
- 5.1.4 Creating a school context for student learning such as providing input relative to:
 - 5.1.4.1 School philosophy.
 - 5.1.4.2 School climate.
 - 5.1.4.3 School rules.
- 5.1.5 Identifying services in the community to enhance student learning, including:
 - 5.1.5.1 Use of community resources (speakers, materials, sites for visits or partnerships).
 - 5.1.5.2 Counseling.
 - 5.1.5.3 Enhancement of programs.
 - 5.1.5.4 Specialized services.
- 5.1.6 Helping communicate the meaning, use and dissemination of test scores to parents and the community.
- 5.1.7 Identifying priorities for use of school facilities and equipment.
- 5.1.8 Offering suggestions for priorities for education programs within the context of Board mission and mandate and meeting the minimum requirements of Alberta Education.
- 5.1.9 Offering suggestions on school budget priorities, expenditure allocations, and fees that the school or Division may establish.
- 5.1.10 Identifying student fund-raising activities that would be acceptable to the community and making those recommendations to an appropriate fund-raising entity.
 - 5.1.10.1. School Councils are legally prohibited from soliciting donations or raising funds in any manner that would require a gaming licence.
- 5.1.11 Reviewing and making recommendations relative to the local selection of learning materials.
- 5.1.12 Recruiting volunteers for activities in support of schools.

5.2 Financial Reporting Requirements

- 5.2.1 The Principal is required to provide the School Council with periodic financial

statements on a schedule of dates agreed to by the Principal and the School Council.

- 5.2.2 The Principal shall ensure that all financial statements are made in accordance with any requirements imposed by the Board and the Superintendent.

5.3 Education Standards

- 5.3.1 The Principal is required to solicit input from the School Council regarding ways to improve education at the school level.

- 5.3.2 The Principal shall provide the School Council with a summary of data of:

- 5.3.2.1 Results of achievement tests; and

- 5.3.2.2 Results of diploma examinations.

6. Advisory priorities for School Councils

- 6.1 Vision and mission of the school.
- 6.2 Local goals, priorities and school plans.
- 6.3 School budget.
- 6.4 Program organization.
- 6.5 Special projects for the school.
- 6.6 Board Policy/Division Administrative Procedures.

7. Communications

- 7.1 The Board will provide opportunities for dialogue with School Councils through meetings between the Board and the Council of School Councils. (AP 111)

- 7.1.1 The schedule for these meetings will be determined at the Board's organizational meeting.

- 7.1.2 School Councils will be notified of the meeting schedule.

- 7.1.3 Following the meeting the Superintendent shall ensure that an accurate summary of the discussion is provided to the Board, School Council, the Chair and principals.

- 7.2 School Councils may require a formal route to inform the Board of a concern on a specific matter.

- 7.2.1 The process for communication is:

- School Council → Principal → Superintendent → Board

- 7.2.2 If the School Council cannot resolve the issue with this process, the School Council Chair will contact the Secretary-Treasurer to determine a time at which to appear before a scheduled meeting of the Board and provide a written outline of the issue to be discussed.

- 7.2.3 The School Council request shall be included on the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting, and the School Council Chair will be invited to make a presentation to the Board.
- 7.2.4 The Board will hear the presentation, and deal with it in accordance with the Policy 7 – Board Operations.
- 7.2.5 In exceptional circumstances, the Board may waive the requirements of Policy 7 – Board Operations.
- 7.3 The Board may by resolution request a School Council or its Chair to meet with the Board.

Adopted/Revised/Reviewed: JUN 2016/NOV 2019/APR 2026

Reference: *Education Act* s. 33, 52, 53, 55, 197

Protection of Privacy Act s. 13(1)(bb)
Access to Information Act s. 90(1)
School Councils Regulation AR94/2019
Board Policy 7 – Board Operations
AP 111 - Council of School Councils
AP 152 – Dispute Resolution
AP 401 – Employment of Relatives