



### SCHOOL COUNCILS

#### Background

The Education Act states that, for each school operated by a Board, a school council must be established in accordance with the regulations.

A school council governs its meetings and the conduct of its affairs through established by-laws. At its discretion, the school council may:

- Advise the principal and Board respecting any matter relating to the school.
- Perform any duty or function delegated to it by the Board.
- Consult with the principal so that the principal may ensure that students in the school have the opportunity to meet the standards of education.
- Consult with the principal so that the principal may ensure that the fiscal management of the school is in accordance with the requirements of the Board and the superintendent.
- Do anything it is authorized under the regulations to do.

A school council can serve as an effective mechanism for parental input in the operation of the school and to enhance communication among schools, the superintendent, and the community.

#### Procedures

##### 1. Primary and Deciding Role

School councils:

- 1.1 Determine their by-laws, finances and methods of operation.
- 1.2 Plan in-service programs for their members.
- 1.3 Report to the superintendent on the results achieved by the school council.

##### 2. Advisory Role

School councils may be asked to participate in an advisory role in matters relating to the school.

##### 3. Establishment of School Councils

- 3.1 If a school has no school council, the principal must, within forty (40) days after the start of the school year, hold a meeting for the purpose of establishing a school council. The primary purpose of the meeting is to:

- 3.1.1 Inform the parents about school councils by indicating the statutory parameters.



- 3.1.2 Elect and appoint or establish the processes for appointment of a school council executive.
- 3.2 If fewer than five (5) parents attend the establishment meeting or if the meeting is not successful in establishing a school council, the principal may adjourn the meeting to a later date and establish an advisory committee to carry out one or more duties of the school council.
  - 3.2.1 Any advisory committee is dissolved upon the establishment of a School council.
- 3.3 Where a school council or equivalent is in existence, the chair or past chair will call a meeting of parents no later than forty (40) days after the start of the school year to:
  - 3.3.1 Inform parents about the school council.
  - 3.3.2 Elect or appoint a school council executive according to the by-laws.
- 4. Membership
  - 4.1 A School council must include the following members:
    - 4.1.1 The principal of the school.
    - 4.1.2 At least one person who is a teacher at the school.
    - 4.1.3 If the school includes a senior high program, at least one student enrolled in high school.
    - 4.1.4 Parents of students enrolled in the school.
    - 4.1.5 If an early childhood program is offered at the school, at least one parent of a child enrolled in the program.
    - 4.1.6 Other representation as determined by the membership, including school support staff and/or community members.
  - 4.2 The members of a school council may establish a process to appoint or elect a chair and any member of the executive according to procedures determined by the by-laws. All eligible members have voting rights to be exercised through attendance or in a manner determined in the by-laws.
  - 4.3 Subject to any resolution passed under section 55(3) of the Act, the members of a school council may be of any faith.



[NOTE: Section 55(3) states that a Board of a separate school division may by resolution require that the parents of students enrolled in a school operated by the Board who are members of the school council declare themselves to be of the same faith as the electors of the separate school division]

### 5. Dissolution of a School Council

- 5.1 The Minister, on the request of the Board, may dissolve a school council without notice, at any time, if the Minister is of the opinion that the school council is not carrying out its responsibilities in accordance with the Act and the regulations.
- 5.2 Prior to requesting that the Minister dissolve a school council, the Board will provide the school council with the opportunity to be heard on the dissolution.

### 6. By-laws and Operational Procedures

- 6.1 The School Council will establish by-laws governing its meetings and the conduct of its affairs in accordance with statutory procedures.
- 6.2 The by-laws are to be submitted to the principal and to the superintendent.

### 7. Liaison with the Board

- 7.1 A trustee shall be designated to act as a liaison between the school council and the Board.
- 7.2 The trustee shall meet with the school council at least twice annually to discuss items of mutual interest.
- 7.3 School council reports and/or recommendations are to be made to the superintendent. The superintendent shall prepare his/her recommendations considering Division policies, needs, and priorities.
- 7.4 The trustee appointed as liaison shall act as the channel of communication between the Board and the school council; however, an elected member of the council executive and the principal may jointly present reports and/or recommendations to the Board on behalf of the school council.

### 8. Record Keeping

Where applicable, each school council is to establish methods of keeping records for the purpose of annually supplying the superintendent with:

- 8.1 A report setting out the activities of the School Council.



8.2 A financial statement.

8.3 A copy of the minutes of each meeting.

### 9. Conflict Resolution

The principal or the school council will apply the following procedures to resolve disputes on policies proposed or adopted for the school:

9.1 Either party may submit the dispute, not sooner than five (5) days or later than ten (10) days from the date of the dispute, to the superintendent for mediation of the dispute.

9.2 The submission of the dispute shall be by letter that outlines the nature of the dispute, the issues involved, and the preferred resolution.

9.3 A copy of the letter shall be simultaneously submitted to the other party who is to submit a defence of its position to the superintendent within five (5) days.

9.4 The superintendent shall attempt to mediate the dispute between the parties as soon as practicable.

9.5 If the mediation by the superintendent is not successful, the dispute will be submitted by the superintendent to the Board or a committee of the Board delegated with the responsibility to settle the disputes between the parties.

9.6 At the next Board or committee meeting, the disputants will be permitted to appear and state the rationale for their positions.

9.7 The Board or committee will make a decision that is final and binding on both parties.

Reference: Section 33, 52, 53, 55, 197, 222, 251 Education Act  
School Councils Regulation 2019  
School Councils Policy 1.8.3  
School Councils Handbook (1999)