

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

PREAMBLE

In accordance with the School Act, the Board of Education has the responsibility to ensure that each school in the district establishes and maintains a School Planning Council (SPC) which is responsible for preparing a school plan in respect to improving student achievement and consulting on matters relating to the school which are referred to the SPC by the Board, the Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designate.

POLICY

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHOOL ACT, SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS WILL BE ESTABLISHED AT EACH SCHOOL FOR THE PURPOSE OF REPRESENTING THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY IN THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE ANNUAL SCHOOL PLAN FOR IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT. FURTHERMORE, THE BOARD RECOGNIZES ITS RESPONSIBILITY TO CONSULT WITH THE SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL ON MATTERS SET OUT IN THE SCHOOL ACT, AND TO ENSURE THAT SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHOOL ACT.

REGULATIONS

PURPOSE AND ROLE OF SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

1. The role of the School Planning Council includes:
 - a. Preparation of a proposed school plan;
 - b. Approval of plans for specialty academies in the school and the fees to be charged;
 - c. Consultation on matters referred by the Board, Superintendent of Schools or the Superintendent's designate; and
 - d. Consultation on matters referred to it by the school's principal or Parent Advisory Council in respect to student achievement and matters contained in the district's Achievement Contract.
2. The following are not within the mandate of a School Planning Council:
 - a. Personal and confidential information on students, parents, teachers or other employees;
 - b. Performance or conduct of individual employees, students and parents;
 - c. Terms and conditions of employment contracts; and

- d. Activities beyond the advisory and consultative roles as set out in the School Act and this policy.

DISTRICT LIAISON

The Superintendent of Schools, or designate, shall act as a district liaison officer for School Planning Councils. This may include the right to attend any meeting of a School Planning Council or School Planning Council sub-committee, or to designate another district administrative officer or employee to attend in his/her place.

ESTABLISHMENT

1. If a School Planning Council has not already been established, the principal shall proceed as outlined below to obtain representatives and shall inform the Board when these representatives have been identified.
2. In the case of a Provincial Resource Program, the Board will consider the establishment of a School Planning Council on receipt of a request from at least three parents of students attending that provincial resource program.
3. When composing of two or more schools occurs, the schools will be encouraged to form a single School Planning Council.

MEMBERSHIP

1. In accordance with the School Act, membership of a School Planning Council shall be comprised of:
 - a. the principal of the school;
 - b. one teacher at the school who is elected annually by secret ballot by the teachers who teach in the school;
 - c. three representatives of the school's Parent Advisory Council who are elected annually by secret ballot by the parents from the school, one of whom must be an elected officer of the Parent Advisory Council; and,
 - d. in the case of secondary schools, one student representative to be elected annually by students of the school.
2. The principal shall consult with the Parent Advisory Council on its bylaws for the election of representatives to a School Planning Council to ensure the rights of parents to participate in this election.
3. The principal of each school shall, on an annual basis, advise the Parent Advisory Council, students (in the case of secondary schools) and teachers of the school of the need to elect representatives and the process required to do so.
4. Every effort shall be made to ensure the School Planning Council is in place by October 1 of each year.

5. If there is not a Parent Advisory Council in the school, or if the Parent Advisory Council does not elect the required number of parent representatives, the principal, in consultation with parents or the Parent Advisory Council, shall make appropriate recommendations to the Board for appointments that fulfil the required membership of parent representatives for a School Planning Council.
6. If a teacher representative is not elected to the School Planning Council, the principal may, in consultation with the staff committee, make an appropriate recommendation to the Board for an appropriate appointment that fulfils the requirement of teacher representation. This shall be done by November 1 of each year.
7. If a student representative is not elected to the School Planning Council, the principal may, in consultation with the Students' Council, make an appropriate recommendation to the Board for an appropriate appointment that fulfils the requirement of student representation. This shall be done by November 1 of each year.
8. The principal may designate a vice-principal to act as an alternate for one or more School Planning Council meetings.
9. Teachers, students and Parent Advisory Councils may elect alternate representatives to the School Planning Council.
10. In accordance with the School Act, it must be noted that an employee of any school board may not be elected or appointed as a parent representative to a School Planning Council.

CHAIR OF SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL

The chair of the School Planning Council shall be elected at the Council's first meeting.

MEETINGS

1. Once School Planning Council representatives have been identified, the principal shall call the inaugural meeting of the Council and have the SPC determine a schedule of future meetings.
2. School Planning Council meetings shall be open to members of the school community, or others by invitation.
3. The School Planning Council chair may require any non-Council member to leave a meeting if they are deemed to be disruptive to the functioning of the SPC.
4. Alternates will have observer status if they are not attending as a designated representative.
5. A quorum shall consist of the principal (or designated alternate) and two other members or their alternates.

6. Any member may place an item on the proposed agenda of the next School Planning Council meeting by request to the chair. Agendas shall be provided at least one week in advance. However, this shall not prevent members from bringing forward additional agenda items for consideration without prior notice.
7. The Chair of the School Planning Council shall ensure that minutes of all meetings are kept and are available upon request. Minutes should reflect subjects discussed and decisions made.
8. The School Planning Council may establish sub-committees to investigate matters within the council's jurisdiction and may invite additional participants to join such sub-committees.

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL DECISIONS

1. While the School Planning Council shall operate on the principle of decision-making by consensus, decisions by means of a formal vote are required to approve a school plan, a speciality academy and to set annual fees for an academy.
2. Only School Planning Council members, or alternates if they are officially designated representatives at the meeting, are entitled to vote on Council matters.
3. Each School Planning Council member shall have one vote and the chair shall vote at the same time as other members.
4. A simple majority is sufficient to decide the outcome of a formal vote as long as a quorum is present.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. School Planning Council meeting expenses are the responsibility of the school.
2. No member of the School Planning Council shall receive remuneration for acting as a member of the council.
3. The School Planning Council has no power to raise or expend money.

PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL SCHOOL PLAN

1. The School Planning Council is responsible for the preparation of a proposed annual school plan, to be presented to the Board by May 31 of each year. The Superintendent of Schools may extend this deadline.
2. The School Planning Council must consult with the school's Parent Advisory Council during preparation of the school plan. This consultation shall, at a minimum, include a presentation at a Parent Advisory Council meeting, of which notice has been given to parents in accordance with Parent Advisory Council bylaws. The School Planning Council shall provide the Parent Advisory Council with reasonable opportunity for input into the

school plan and consider such input when preparing the school plan.

3. The School Planning Council shall also consult with other members of the school community regarding preparation of the school plan. Such consultation shall, at a minimum, include notification of the draft proposed school plan to the school community. The SPC shall provide reasonable opportunity for input into the school plan and consider such input when preparing the school plan. The SPC shall also consider communication and consultation with other groups and individuals that are deemed to be important to the life of the school.

CONDUCT

1. It is expected that parent representatives to the School Planning Council will represent the interests of all school families.
2. School Planning Council members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in the conduct of council business, and to abide by the rulings of the chair.
3. Any complaint about the functioning of the School Planning Council should be made to the council through its chair. If the complaint is not resolved, the complainant may then direct the complaint to the Director of Instruction for that zone who may seek to resolve the issue at the school level. In addition, any member of the School Planning Council may request the Director of Instruction for that zone to assist the SPC in resolving internal disputes or improving its processes.

BOARD CONSULTATION WITH SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

1. The Board must consult with the School Planning Council in respect to:
 - a. educational services and educational programs in the school;
 - b. matters contained in the Board's Achievement Contract relating to the school; and
 - c. allocation of staff and resources in the school.
2. The School Planning Council may provide the Board with input on any of these matters at any time.
3. Prior to the first draft of the preliminary budget of each year, the Board shall provide the School Planning Council with draft proposals for: the educational services and educational programs in the school; the allocation of staff and resources in the school for the upcoming year; and the matters contained in the Board's Achievement Contract relating to the school. The SPC will have until March 31 of each year to respond to the draft proposals. The Superintendent of Schools may adjust these deadlines if necessary, to integrate them with the school district planning cycle, and alternate deadlines may be set for different components of the consultation process.

ACCEPTANCE, REJECTION AND MODIFICATION OF SCHOOL PLANS

1. In order for a proposed school plan to be adopted by the Board, it must be consistent with the educational objectives, strategic directions and policies of the Board, meet any

legal requirements, be supportable from available resources, and be reasonably likely to achieve its goals.

2. In accordance with the School Act, the Board may:
 - a. Approve, approve with modifications, or reject a school plan;
 - b. Before approving a school plan,
 - i. consult with the School Planning Council about modifications to the school plan; or
 - ii. direct the School Planning Council to modify all, or part of, the school plan by a specified date.

APPROVAL OF SPECIALTY ACADEMY PLANS AND FEES

1. If a school is considering the introduction of a specialty academy, then the plans must be reviewed and approved by the School Planning Council;
2. In accordance with the School Act, the School Planning Council must
 - a. Consult with the parents/guardians regarding program plans;
 - b. Approve program fees on an annual basis.

Date Adopted: 2004-06-08
Date(s) Revised: 2007-11-27, 2021-04-27

Cross References:
Statutory: School Act 8.1
Other: