



SECTION 5000: GOVERNANCE

POLICY 5060: SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

- *Date Adopted: December 4, 2002*
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RATIONALE

The School Planning Council is an advisory body. The primary responsibility of the School Planning Council is to consult with the school community in developing, monitoring and reviewing school plans for improving student achievement.

The school community consists of all parents, students, administrators, teachers and support staff. School plans should reflect the characteristics, values, and needs of the school community and the District as a whole.

LEGISLATION/REGULATIONS

- *School Act, Section 8*

POLICY

The Board will establish a School Planning Council (SPC) for each school. The School Planning Council will consist of the principal of the school, a teacher of the school, and three (3) representatives from the school's Parent Advisory Council (PAC), one of whom must be an elected officer of the PAC. All members of the School Planning Council, with the exception of the principal, will be elected annually.

PROCEDURES

1. Purpose and Role of School Planning Councils

- 1.1 The School Planning Council prepares a proposed school plan in consultation with the school community. The School Planning Council will meet a minimum of three (3) times during the school year to formulate the school plan. The following are not within the mandate of the School Planning Council:



1. Purpose and Role of School Planning Councils *(continued)*

- a) personal and confidential information (e.g., files, resumes, training, medical) on students, parents, teachers and other employees;
- b) performance or conduct of individual employees, students and parents;
- c) labour relations, personnel matters including terms and conditions of contracts between employees and the Board;
- d) activities beyond the advisory and consultative roles set out in the *School Act*.

2. Support

- 2.1 The Superintendent of Schools shall designate a Board officer to act as district liaison for School Planning Councils. This District Liaison Officer will have the right to attend any meeting of a School Planning Council or a School Planning sub-committee, and may designate another Board officer or employee to attend in his or her place.

3. Establishment

- 3.1 If no School Planning Council is in place in a school that is not a provincial resource program, the principal shall proceed as in (4.) below to obtain named representatives and shall report to the Board when all representatives have been named. The Board shall then establish a School Planning Council for that school.
- 3.2 For a school that is a provincial resource program, the Board will consider the establishment of a School Planning Council on receipt of a request from at least 3 parents of students attending the provincial resource program. If the Board decides to establish the School Planning Council, the principal will proceed to obtain named representatives as below.

4. Membership

- 4.1 The principal of the school, one teacher representative, and three parent representatives comprise the membership of the School Planning Council for the school. Secondary schools will have one student representative.



4. Membership *(continued)*

- 4.2 The principal shall consult with the Parent Advisory Council on its bylaws for the election of representatives to the School Planning Council to ensure that the bylaws safeguard the rights of parents to participate in this decision.
- 4.3 By September 30th the principal of each school shall advise the Parent Advisory Council, if one exists, and the teachers in the school, of the need to elect representatives and the required process.
- 4.4 If there is no Parent Advisory Council in the school, the principal shall notify parents and shall consider whether he or she is prepared to make any recommendations to the Board for appointments of parent representatives, and shall report to the Board by October 31st.
- 4.5 If an insufficient number of parent representatives are elected by the Parent Advisory Council by September 30th, the principal shall notify parents and shall consider whether he or she is prepared to make any recommendations to the School Board for appointments, and shall report by October 31st.
- 4.6 The teachers' school union representative shall coordinate the holding of the election for the teacher representative in accordance with the *School Act*.
- 4.7 If no teacher representative is named by September 30th, the Board may fill the vacancy in accordance with the *School Act*.
- 4.8 Teachers and Parent Advisory Councils may elect alternate representatives.
- 4.9 The principal may designate a vice-principal to act as his alternate for one or more meetings.

5. Inaugural Meeting

- 5.1 When the representatives have been named, the principal shall call the inaugural meeting of the School Planning Council. The inaugural meeting shall decide a schedule of future meetings and may outline future agendas.

6. Chair

- 6.1 The principal of the school or delegate shall be the chair of the School Planning Council and preside over all meetings.



7. Meetings

- 7.1 School Planning Councils may invite others to attend and/or participate in their meetings but no such guest shall have a vote.
- 7.2 The chair may require anyone to leave, other than a member, if he or she is disrupting the functioning of the council.
- 7.3 Alternates, when they are present but not functioning as the designated representatives, are observers.
- 7.4 A School Planning Council shall meet at least 3 times per school year, as decided at the inaugural meeting.
- 7.5 Quorum shall be the principal, a parent and a teacher (or their respective alternates).
- 7.6 The School Planning Council may meet by telephone or electronically, so long as all members can communicate with each other, and other participants can observe or audit proceedings.
- 7.7 Additional meetings may be convened at the call of the chair, upon at least one week's notice. Notice may be waived unanimously. An additional meeting must be called if requested by 3 members.
- 7.8 Any member may place an item on the proposed agenda of the next meeting by request to the chair. Agendas shall be provided at least one week in advance, but this shall not prevent members from adding matters to the agenda for discussion with prior notice.
- 7.9 The chair shall ensure that a record is kept in the custody of the school of meetings held and subjects discussed (in general terms) and decisions made.

8. Decision-making

- 8.1 School Planning Councils shall operate on consensus. Votes are not taken except on the approval of a proposed School Plan. On matters other than the School Plan referred to the Council in accordance with Section 1.1, if the members of the Council cannot agree on a response, the Council will so report. Members may submit individual reports.



8. Decision-making *(continued)*

- 8.2 A vote shall be held to approve the proposed School Plan before presentation to the Board as required by the *School Act*. Each member shall have one vote. The chair shall vote at the same time as other members. Alternates may vote if they are the designated representatives for that meeting.
- 8.3 A School Planning Council may create sub-committees to investigate matters within the Council's jurisdiction and may invite additional participants to join the sub-committees.

9. Non-retaliation

- 9.1 Teacher representatives on the council are not subject to the direction of administration and will not suffer any discipline or retaliation through the employer for their participation in the council or for positions taken with respect to council business.
- 9.2 Any retaliation by administration or school staff members against parent representatives or their children for their participation in the council or for positions taken with respect to council business will not be permitted.

10. Financial

- 10.1 Meeting expenses are the responsibility of the school.
- 10.2 Members may claim reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses in accordance with the Board policy governing employee expenses. Expense claim forms (other than the principal's) must be approved by the principal. Teachers may take lieu time rather than claim child care expenses.
- 10.3 A school Planning Council has no power to raise or expend money.

11. Annual School Plan

- 11.1 The Council is responsible for the preparation of a proposed school plan, to be presented to the Board by the date specified. This time may be extended by the Superintendent of Schools.
- 11.2 Any member may present a minority report to the Board.



11. Annual School Plan *(continued)*

- 11.3 A School Planning Council must consult with the school's Parent Advisory Council during preparation of the school plan. Consultation shall be at a minimum 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 a reasonable opportunity for input into the school plan and consider such input when deciding on the school plan.
- 11.4 A School Planning Council will also consult with other members of the school community regarding preparation of the school plan. A minimum of 30 days' notice of the draft proposed school plan shall be provided to employees of the school. The School Planning Council shall provide employees with a reasonable opportunity for input into the school plan and consider such input when deciding on the school plan. The School Planning Council will consider what other groups and individuals who are important to the life of the school should be included in the consultation and how to communicate with them.

12. Confidentiality and Conduct

- 12.1 From time to time, the School Planning Council may be provided with information by or on behalf of the Board that has been designated as confidential. The members of the Council are expected not to disclose such information without permission given by or on behalf of the Board and to abide by any restrictions or conditions placed on disclosure of the information (e.g., draft proposals on allocation of staff and resources for the school).
- 12.2 It is expected that parent representation will function as representatives of all school families and represent their community of interest, not the interests of any subgroup.
- 12.3 Members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in their conduct of Council business and to abide by the rulings of the chair.
- 12.4 Any member of a School Planning Council may request the District Liaison Officer appointed under Section 2.1 to assist the School Planning Council in resolving internal disputes or problem-solving or improving its processes.



12. Confidentiality and Conduct *(continued)*

- 12.5 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, then the complainant may address the complaint to the District Liaison Officer.
- 12.6 If it appears to the Board, following investigation, that a member of a School Planning Council has been guilty of misconduct, including but not limited to breach of confidentiality, the Board may discharge the member and request that a new member be elected, or may appoint a new member if elections are not feasible. Before making such a decision, the Board shall ensure that the member has had the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Board will not be required to provide an oral hearing, but shall take into account any written representations.

13. Board Consultation with School Planning Councils

- 13.1 The Board must consult with the School Planning Council in respect of (a) allocation of staff and resources in the school; (b) matters contained in the Board's accountability contract relating to the school; (c) educational services and educational programs in the school.
- 13.2 A School Planning Council may provide the Board with input on any of these matters at any time.
- 13.3 By April 1st the Board shall provide School Planning Council with draft proposals for the educational services and educational programs in the school and the allocation of staff and resources in the school for the upcoming year and the matters contained in the board's accountability contract relating to the school; the School Planning Council will have until April 30th to respond. The Superintendent of Schools may adjust these dates if necessary to integrate with the school district planning cycle, and may set different dates for different components of the consultation process.

14. Acceptance, Rejection, Modifications of School Plans

- 14.1 In order for the 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 legal requirements, be supportable from available resources, and be reasonably likely to achieve its goals.



14. Acceptance, Rejection, Modifications of School Plans *(continued)*

14.2 If the Board rejects or modifies a proposed school plan, it shall provide reasons to the School Planning Council.