



ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 110

SCHOOL COUNCILS

Background

Parents, the child's first and most influential teachers, have a lifelong interest in their children and must have meaningful involvement in the education of their children. Other members of the community have a responsibility to contribute to the education of young people and an important role to play in education. In exercising its role in ensuring the implementation of the provisions of Section 22 of the School Act, the Division recognizes the right of parents to be involved in the education of their children and for community members and staff to be involved in decisions about the education of students; therefore, in each school an opportunity will be provided for parents and members of the community to form a School Council.

Procedures

1. Effective communications between School Councils and the school, and School Councils and the Board are important in the achievement of an effective system of education. Methods of good communication will be established.
 - 1.1 The Superintendent will arrange opportunities for dialogue with School Councils through meetings between the Board and School Council chairpersons or designate(s).
 - 1.2 The Board shall initiate meetings with School Council chairpersons or designate(s).
 - 1.2.1 School Councils shall be notified of the meeting schedule.
 - 1.2.2 Schools Councils shall be informed of the agenda prior to the scheduled meeting date. School Councils shall submit their agenda items two weeks prior to the Scheduled meeting date. The Superintendent, in consultation with the Board Chair, shall prepare and circulate the agenda to the Board and School Council five (5) days prior to the scheduled meeting date.
 - 1.2.3 Following the meeting the Superintendent shall ensure that an accurate summary of the discussion is provided to the Board, School Council chairpersons and Principals.
- 1.3 School Councils require a formal route to inform the Board of a concern on a specific matter.

- 1.3.1 School Councils shall determine whether an issue can be resolved within the administrative structure or must, in their opinion, be discussed with the Board.
 - 1.3.2 Communication shall be School Council – Principal – Superintendent – Board.
 - 1.3.3 If the School Council decides that an appearance before the Board is necessary, the School Council chairperson shall require, in writing to the Superintendent, a time at which to appear at a scheduled meeting of the Board, and provide an outline of the issue to be discussed.
 - 1.3.4 The School Council request shall be included on the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting and the School Council chairperson will be invited to make a presentation to the Board.
 - 1.3.5 The Board will hear the presentation, may ask questions for clarification, and will reserve its decision until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
 - 1.3.6 In exceptional circumstances, the Board may waive the requirements of the procedures.
2. Proper fiscal management by School Councils will be achieved.
3. The education standard of the school and of the school system will be maintained or improved.
 - 3.1 The Superintendent requires the Principal to solicit input from the School Council regarding ways to improve education at the school level. The Principal shall provide the School Council with a summary of data of:
 - 3.1.1 Results of achievements tests; and
 - 3.1.2 Results of diploma examinations.
 - 3.2 The Principal shall make available to the Board through the Superintendent, a written report containing recommendations and feedback regarding the summary of local test results and any community concerns respecting the results.
 - 3.3 The School Council may consult with the Principal so that the Principal may ensure that students in the school have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister. The Superintendent requires the Principal to provide summaries of test data to the School Council within ten (10) days of a request.
4. In matters where School Council assistance will be of benefit to the Division and the School Council, the Superintendent may, with the concurrence of the School Council, delegate responsibility in defined areas.

4.1 The Superintendent shall specify the parameters for delegation within the following framework:

4.1.1 Powers

The type of power being delegated shall be specified within the following parameters:

- 4.1.1.1 To consider and make a recommendation regarding a particular subject to the Superintendent;
- 4.1.1.2 To investigate a certain matter and report the facts and the School Council's opinions regarding the matter to the Superintendent;
- 4.1.1.3 To take some specific action on behalf of the Superintendent and report to the Superintendent on the action taken. Any limitations on the delegation of the power to the School Council must be specified when delegating the required duty or task;
- 4.1.1.4 To represent the Superintendent or Board in a certain manner; and
- 4.1.1.5 To adhere to any particular Board policies or administrative procedures.

4.1.2 Budget

The Superintendent shall establish those financial limits to which the School Council can commit or expend funds.

4.1.3 Timeline

The Superintendent shall establish dates by which the School Council shall report to or complete the duty or task allocated to it by the Superintendent.

5. Periodic or annual reports from School Councils are important to the Board in carrying out its responsibilities.

5.1 The School Council is required to submit to the Superintendent by October 31 of each year, for the preceding school year, copies of:

- 5.1.1 Financial statements of any money handled by the School Council;
- 5.1.2 A report outlining the activities of the School Council; and
- 5.1.3 Minutes of each meeting.

- 5.2 The Superintendent encourages School Councils to contribute, through the Principal, to jurisdiction newsletters and the annual report by submitting articles outlining;
 - 5.2.1 Significant accomplishments at the school;
 - 5.2.2 Major events or projects at the school; and
 - 5.2.3 Results of studies undertaken.
- 6. The Board is required to establish either an appeal process or a conflict resolution procedure in order to fulfill the requirements of Section 22.1 of the School Act.
 - 6.1 In the event of a dispute, either the chairperson of the School Council or the Principal may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent regarding the dispute, within a reasonable time from which the dispute arose.
 - 6.2 When the need to hear an appeal arises, the Superintendent shall establish a hearing date, time and place which allows the parties to the appeal sufficient notice to prepare for the appeal. This may include arranging to be represented by legal counsel.
 - 6.3 In cases where the Superintendent's decision is being appealed, the appeal shall be heard by the Board or a committee established by the Board. In that circumstance, the Superintendent shall attend to make representation to support his/her position.
 - 6.4 The Board Chair or committee established by the Board to hear the appeal shall be guided by the following:
 - 6.4.1 Introduction of participants to the hearing.
 - 6.4.2 Explain the purpose of the appeal hearing:
 - 6.4.2.1 To provide an opportunity for both parties to make representations surrounding the disputed issues, and in support of their position before a decision on the appeal is made;
 - 6.4.2.2 To permit each party to hear the other party and to respond to statements as presented by the other party; and
 - 6.4.2.3 To allow trustees to know the facts and disputed issues, and to hear any evidence or information they deem relevant prior to making the decision in respect of the appeal.
 - 6.4.3 The School Council chairperson and the Superintendent will be given an opportunity to review their positions regarding the dispute on the policy proposed, or adopted for the school, and the issues surrounding the dispute. The party making application for the appeal shall proceed first and be given a full and ample opportunity to raise concerns before the

Board. The other party shall then be given ample opportunity to explain the party's position to the Board regarding their disputed matter.

- 6.4.4 Each party to the dispute shall be given ample opportunity to respond to the concerns raised by themselves with respect to the dispute.
- 6.4.5 Board members may question the parties to clarify the facts.
- 6.4.6 The Board or committee established by the Board will discuss the matter in the absence of the parties.
- 6.4.7 The Board or committee established by the Board will make a decision in respect of the appeal and advise the parties in writing regarding the decision and the reasons for that decision.

7. The Board may request that the Minister dissolve a School Council if the Board is of the Opinion that the School Council is not carrying out its responsibilities.

7.1 The Board will request the Minister to dissolve a School Council if one of the following negative conditions prevail:

- 7.1.1 Fraudulent, criminal or unethical behavior;
- 7.1.2 Internal dissention affecting morale;
- 7.1.3 Adversarial relationships with staff;
- 7.1.4 Refusal to follow the policies of the Board or to carry out its responsibilities in accordance with the School Act and Alberta Education Regulations;
- 7.1.5 Disruption of the educational climate; or
- 7.1.6 Unresolved disputes between the School Council and the Principal.

8. School Councils are required to follow School Act Regulation 171/98 regarding School Councils.

References: Section 20, 22, 60, 61, 113 of the School Act
School Councils Regulation 171/98
School Councils Policy 1.8.3
School Councils Resource Manual (1995)
School Councils Handbook (1999)

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