

Administrative Procedure 111

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

Background

The District supports the establishment of School Planning Councils for the purposes set out in the School Act.

Where a school is able to supply volunteer representatives as contemplated by the Act, the District will establish a School Planning Council for that school. Where no teacher or parent representatives are put forward within a reasonable period, the District shall consider whether it will make appointments to a School Planning Council for that school.

The District shall consult with the School Planning Council as required by the School Act.

The District recognizes its responsibility to ensure that School Planning Councils function effectively and in accordance with ethical standards and the School Act to represent the school community in the process of school planning.

Procedures

1. School Planning Councils will engage their school community in discussions and consultation towards collaborative decision making in areas and within dates as outlined by legislation, Ministerial Regulations, Orders, and District procedures including:
 - 1.1 Class size and composition;
 - 1.2 Program options and educational services at school and District level;
 - 1.3 Approval of specialty academies, including fees as outlined by Ministry regulations and guidelines;
 - 1.4 Resource allocations in the school;
 - 1.5 School Improvement Plans;
 - 1.6 District Literacy Plan and Achievement Contract.
2. The Principal and the members of the School Planning Council will ensure the outcomes of the discussions and consultations are clearly communicated to the wider school community.
3. All members of the school community are welcome to attend School Planning Council meetings.
 - 3.1 Only statutory members have voting and decisions making privileges.
4. School Planning Councils will serve for an academic year.

- 4.1 By June 30, School Planning Councils will have completed annual elections for the upcoming year, following the guidelines outlined in the legislation and the Ministry Guidelines.
- 4.2 School Planning Councils may choose to have alternate members to ensure a full operating Council in the event of the absences due to illness, leaves, moving schools, etc.
5. Principals, in collaboration with the Parent Advisory Council and the School Planning Council, will establish and communicate a schedule of School Planning Council meetings to be conducted throughout the year. The schedule will include a meeting within fifteen (15) days of the first day of school to meet the requirements as outlined in the School Act.
6. By April 30, School Planning Councils will inform the District if they intend to adjust any goal areas for the coming year, so this can be included for consideration with the District Achievement Contract.
7. By June 30, School Planning Councils will submit the School Improvement Plan to the Superintendent.

Reference: Sections 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act
School Regulation 265/89
Achievement Contract Guidelines
School Planning Council Guidelines

Administrative Procedure 111 – Appendix

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL GUIDELINES

1. Membership

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 By October 1 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.
- 1.3 If there is no Parent Advisory Council in the school, the Principal shall notify the parents and shall consider whether s/he is prepared to make any recommendations to the Board for appointments of parent representatives, and shall report to the Board by October 1
- 1.4 If an insufficient number of parent representatives are elected by the Parent Advisory Council by November 1, the Principal shall notify parents and shall consider whether s/he is prepared to make any recommendations to the Board for appointments, and shall report by November.
- 1.5 The Principal shall coordinate the holding of the election for the teacher representative and shall ensure that the election is carried out by secret ballot in accordance with the School Act.
- 1.6 If no teacher representative is named by November 1, the Principal shall notify teachers and shall consider whether he or she is prepared to make any recommendations to the Board for appointments, and shall report to the Board by November 1.
- 1.7 Teachers and Parent Advisory Councils may elect alternate representatives.
- 1.8 The Principal may designate a Vice-Principal or a District administrator to act as his/her alternate for one (1) or more meetings.
- 1.9 The term of office for elected School Planning Council representatives is not more than twelve (12) months from the date School Planning Council members first take office. Representatives may be reelected.
- 1.10 During the term of office, if a teacher representative or Parent Advisory Council representative resigns, or respectively does not continue to be a teacher or Parent Advisory Council member of the school, then the membership of that teacher or Parent Advisory Council representative on the School Planning Council will cease, and the alternate will take the previous representative's place on the School Planning Council. If there is no alternate, another representative will be elected by the teachers or Parent Advisory Council within one (1) month of that representative's loss of School Planning Council membership, or the Board will appoint a representative.

2. Chair

- 2.1 The Principal shall be the Chair of the School Planning Council and preside over all meetings. Where the Principal has delegated a Vice-Principal to attend a meeting in his/her stead, the Vice-Principal shall perform the functions of Chair for that meeting.

3. Meetings

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 School Planning Councils may invite others to attend and/or participate in their meetings, but no such guest shall have a vote.
- 3.3 Except when dealing with confidential matters, meetings shall be open to members of the School Planning Council, alternates, invited guests and others who have permission from the Council.
- 3.4 The Chair may require anyone to leave, other than a member, if s/he is disrupting the functioning of the Council.
- 3.5 The School Planning Council shall meet at least three (3) times per school year, as decided at the Inaugural Meeting.
- 3.6 Quorum shall be the Principal (or a Vice Principal alternate) and two (2) other members or their alternates.
- 3.7 Alternates, when they are present but not functioning as the designated representatives, are observers.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 Additional meetings may be convened at the call of the Chair, upon at least one (1) week's notice.
- 3.10 Notice may be waived unanimously. An additional meeting must be called if requested by three (3) members.
- 3.11 Any member may place an item on the proposed agenda of the next meeting by request to the Chair.
- 3.12 Agendas shall be provided at least one (1) week in advance, but this shall not prevent members from adding matters to the agenda for discussion without prior notice.
- 3.13 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.

4. Decision-making

- 4.1 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 1.1 above, if the members of the Council cannot agree on a response, the Council will so report. Members may submit individual reports.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 The 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.

5. Financial

- 5.1 Meeting expenses are the responsibility of the school.
- 5.2 The School Planning Council has no power to raise or expend money.

6. Annual School Plan

- 6.1 The 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.
- 6.2 The School Planning Council will also consult with other members of the school community regarding preparation of the School Plan. Such consultation shall at a minimum provide notice of the draft proposed School Plan to employees in 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.

7. Confidentiality and Conduct

- 7.1 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 information.
- 7.2 It is expected that parent representatives will function as representatives of all school families and represent their community of interest, not the interests of any subgroup or individual.

- 7.3 It is expected that teacher representatives will function as a representative of all teachers in the school and represent their community of interest, not the interests of any subgroup or individual.
- 7.4 Members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in the conduct of Council business and to abide by the rulings of the Chair.
- 7.5 Any member of the School Planning Council may request the Superintendent or designate to assist the School Planning Council in resolving internal disputes or problem solving or improving its processes.
- 7.6 Any complaint about the functioning of the School Planning Council is to be made to the Council through its Chair. If the complaint is not resolved, then the complainant may address the complaint to the Superintendent or designate.
- 7.7 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.

8. Board Consultation with School Planning Councils

- 8.1 Upon public release of the Board's Preliminary Budget, the Board shall provide the School Planning Council with draft proposals of 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 June to respond.
- 8.2 The Superintendent may adjust these dates if necessary to integrate with the District planning cycle, and may set different dates for different components of the consultation process.

Reference: Sections 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 20, 22, 65, 85 School Act
 School Regulation 265/89
 Achievement Contract Guidelines
 School Planning Council Guidelines