

Purpose/Background

School Councils can enhance student learning by engaging parents, staff and community members to advise the Principal and the Board on matters concerning school improvement planning. The Division views each School Council as a means for parents and community members to work together with the school to support and enhance student learning.

Procedures

1. The functions of School Councils are to include:
 - 1.1 Supporting school activities;
 - 1.2 Advising the Principal and the Board with respect to matters related to the school;
 - 1.3 Providing liaison between the school and the community;
 - 1.4 Consulting 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;
 - 1.5 Consulting with the Principal so that the Principal may ensure that the financial management of the school is in accordance with the requirements of the Superintendent and the Board;
 - 1.6 Performing any function or duty required under the legislation or the regulations of the government; and
 - 1.7 Performing any function or duty delegated by the Board.
2. School personnel or individual student concerns shall not be discussed at School Council meetings.
3. School Council Membership:
 - 3.1 A School Council includes the following members:
 - 3.1.1 The Principal of the school;
 - 3.1.2 At least one person who is a teacher at the school, elected or appointed by the teachers at the school;
 - 3.1.3 If the school includes a senior high school program, at least one person who is a student enrolled in the high school, elected or appointed by the students enrolled in the high school;
 - 3.1.4 Subject to section 55(2) of the Act, parents of students enrolled in the school; and
 - 3.1.5 If an early childhood services program is offered at the school, parents of children enrolled in the program at the school.
 - 3.2 The School Council executive:
 - 3.2.1 A school council must have a Chair and any other members of the executive determined by the persons attending an establishment meeting.

- 3.2.2 A parent(s) of a student enrolled in the school or, if an early childhood services program is offered at the school, a parent of a child enrolled in the program must be elected chair (co-chair) of the executive.
 - 3.2.3 To maintain separation of the two entities (whether actual or perceived), RVS staff should refrain from accepting an executive position with the council.
 - 3.2.4 A member who is not a parent may be elected as chair of the executive if no such parent is willing to be nominated as chair.
4. Responsibility of Board to School Council: The Principal is responsible and accountable to the Superintendent and ultimately to the Board for all activities within the school; the Principal is to seek support and advice from the community through the School Council.
 - 4.1 The School Council will have an opportunity to provide advice on the development of the school's:
 - 4.1.1 foundation statements, if any, respecting the school's vision, principles and beliefs;
 - 4.1.2 policies;
 - 4.1.3 school playbook; and
 - 4.1.4 budget / school fee schedule.
 - 4.2 The School Council will have access to the results for the school from provincial assessments and any other provincial measures and a reasonable interpretation of those results and measures.
 - 4.3 The School Council will have access to any information in the reports and accounts produced under the reporting and accountability system.
 - 4.4 The School Council will have free and full access to timely and accurate information that is publicly available, including Board policies, minutes of Board meetings and administrative procedures.
5. Establishment Meeting: School Councils must be established, or an establishment meeting held, in all schools within the Division.
 - 5.1. If a school has no school council, the school must, within 40 days after the start of the school year, hold a meeting for the purpose of establishing a school council.
 - 5.2. If there are fewer than 5 parents in attendance at an 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 or functions of a school council in the interim until a school council is established. The advisory committee is dissolved on the establishment of a school council.
 - 5.3. A notice of the establishment meeting must describe the purpose of the meeting; set out the time, date and location of the meeting and be given at least 10 days before the date of the meeting.
 - 5.4. A notice of the establishment meeting may be given by any means that the principal considers appropriate, including electronic means.

- 5.5. When notice of establishment meeting is provided the following individuals shall be provided notice of the meeting:
 - 5.5.1. a parent of each student enrolled in the school;
 - 5.5.2. a parent of each child enrolled in an early childhood services program at the school;
 - 5.5.3. the school staff; and
 - 5.5.4. other members of the school community who, in the principal's opinion, should be given notice.
6. Opportunities for dialogue with the School Council will be provided through meetings between the Board and School Council Chairs.
7. A formal communication process by which the School Council Chair can communicate with the Board will be established.
8. A School Council shall submit an Annual Report of School Council activities to the Superintendent or designate by Sept 30 of each year. The School Council Annual Report shall include:
 - 8.1. a summary of the school council's activities over the school year including:
 - 8.1.1. Significant accomplishments at the School;
 - 8.1.2. Major events or projects; and
 - 8.1.3. Results of studies undertaken; and
 - 8.2. a financial statement (if applicable refer to section 9).
9. Donations / Fundraising / Financial Reporting: A school council may receive donations on behalf of a Board but no school council shall raise funds or otherwise solicit donations in any manner that would require a gaming license under the *Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act*.
 - 9.1 Any funds raised by the School Council are considered School Generated Funds (SGF). These funds are subject to RVS' accounting and financial reporting requirements, including allowable carryover limits, management oversight and expenditure guidelines as outlined in Administrative Procedure 5119 - School Generated Funds.
 - 9.1.1 Funds raised by the school council must be held in an RVS bank account and tracked as part of RVS' accounting records for auditing and reporting purposes.
 - 9.1.2 The School shall provide the School Council financial transaction reports for review and decision-making purposes.
 - 9.1.3 The School Council shall include the annual School Council financial statement transaction report as part of the School Council Annual Report (refer to section 8). This must also be posted by August 15 (following the school year) to the School Website.

9.2 School Councils cannot incorporate under the Societies Act or part 9 of the Companies Act. As a result, School Councils that choose to fundraise are limited in how they are able to do so. Certain types of fundraising (i.e. Casinos) require incorporation.

10. In the event of a dispute between the School Council and the school principal with respect to policies proposed or adopted for a school, the School Council chair and the principal are encouraged to attempt to resolve the dispute at the school level.

10.1. When a dispute cannot be resolved at the school level, either the Chair of the School Council or the school principal may submit a written appeal to the Area Director regarding the dispute, within a reasonable amount of time.

10.2. When a dispute cannot be resolved at the Area Director level, either the Chair of the School Council or the school principal may submit a written appeal to the Associate Superintendent of Schools regarding the dispute, within a reasonable amount of time.

10.3. When a dispute cannot be resolved at the Associate Superintendent level, either the Chair of the School Council or the school principal may submit a written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools regarding the dispute, within a reasonable amount of time.

10.4. When a dispute cannot be resolved at the Superintendent of Schools level, either the Chair of the School Council or the school principal may submit a written appeal to the Board of Trustees regarding the dispute, within a reasonable amount of time.

11. Expectations within communities may require principals to respond in ways that are different from those employed in other schools in the Division; specific duties may be delegated to a School Council(s) from time-to-time.

12. Dissolution of School Council: The Board may request the Minister to dissolve a School Council if the Minister is of the opinion that the School Council is not carrying out its responsibilities in accordance with the Education Act and the regulations.

Reference:

- Section 33, 52, 53, 55, 197, 222, 251 Education Act
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Personal Information Protection Act
- School Councils Regulation