

EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT ***“SCHOOL COUNCILS”***

WHO HAS MANDATED THEM ?

The Ministry of Education and Training for the Province of Ontario now requires them in all school boards.

WHAT IS THE TORONTO DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (TDSB) POLICY ON SCHOOL COUNCILS ?

The TDSB believes strongly that “Education is a share responsibility involving a partnership of students, parents, staff and community.” The Board has long supported school/community organizations as important partners in public education.

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL ?

Parents form the majority. Each council shall include:

- parents from the school (elected)
- principal (designated)
- a teacher (elected by staff)
- a business and operations staff member (eg. Secretary, EA)
- community reps (appointed later)

TERM OF OFFICE?

One year and then may seek an additional term.

HOW DO ELECTIONS WORK FOR SCHOOL COUNCIL ?

They will be held in the fall of each year, within the first 30 days of the first term. An Adhoc committee of staff and parents will organize this process. Interested parents will submit a Candidate Declaration form and a short biography (optional) by the deadline.

If an election is required, it will be held by secret ballot. The number of candidates to be elected will be determined by the Adhoc committee.

WHO IS THE CHAIR OF THE COUNCIL ?

A parent shall be elected as the Chair.

THE COUNCIL IS AN ADVISORY COUNCIL. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN ?

It may provide advice to the school Principal on matters such as:

- Code of Behaviour
- Curriculum and program goals
- Board assessment programs and reviews
- Selection of principals
- Budget
- Community concerns
- Reporting to parents
- Extra curricular activities
- Board policies or procedures
- School safety
- School reviews

The ultimate responsibility for the administration and management of the day-to-day operation of the school rests with the school principal.

WHAT FACTORS SHOULD THE COUNCIL TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION WHEN DISCUSSING AN ISSUE ?

The members should promote the best interests of the school community. They should maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. They should respect the personal and professional rights of individuals. Parents from all groups within the school community should be encouraged to participate.

DOES THE SCHOOL COUNCIL NEED A CONSTITUTION ?

Yes. It should establish its goals, priorities and procedures within a constitution. It should also organize training sessions to enable members to develop their skills as council members.

HOW ELSE IS THE COUNCIL ACCOUNTABLE ?

It must communicate regularly with parents and the community to seek input and opinions and report back to them. It must work within the existing policies and procedures of the Toronto District School Board.

- It must meet at least four times per year.
- All meetings are open to the community.

WHAT ABOUT FORMAL REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ?

Formal recommendations of the council shall be communicated in writing to the Principal, Ms. L. Hanson; Superintendent of Education, Vicky Branco and Trustee, Sheila Cary-Meagher.

The council shall prepare a formal final report at the end of the school year, outlining its goals, activities, budget and achievements.