

Toronto District School Board

Operational Procedure PR.558 SCS

Title: **PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

Adopted: November 25, 1998

Revised: **January 26, 2005**

Authorization:

1.0 OBJECTIVE

To provide a procedure for implementation of the Board's Parent and Community Involvement policy

2.0 RESPONSIBILITY

Associate Director

3.0 PROCEDURES

1.0. Commitment

- (a) The policy (P.023) will be posted in a visible location in all schools locations, administration buildings and other appropriate TDSB sites;
- (b) The policy will be made available on the Board's Web site and referenced in appropriate Board publications;
- (c) The policy will be made available in various languages.

2.0. Communication

- (a) Each school, in consultation with the school council, will establish a plan for improving two-way communication with parents at the classroom and school level, including the use of a variety of oral and written forms of communication which build on existing mechanisms such as parent-teacher interviews, curriculum nights, school newsletters and parent meetings;
- (b) The Board's Web site will be developed as an interactive forum for the exchange of information and ideas by parents and communities, as well as for the conveying of information about the school system;
- (c) Translation and interpreting services will continue to be provided to facilitate communication with non English-speaking parents and communities;
- (d) School-based and central procedures will be established for reviewing documents intended for parents, prior to final publication, to ensure that that they are written in plain language;

- (e) Use of local and ethnocultural community media will be expanded to provide Board information to diverse communities;
- (f) Parent-to-parent access will be facilitated by sharing lists of school council chairpersons and their contact information among school councils within each Family of School, ward or quadrant, after following the appropriate procedures for consent.

3.0. Involving Marginalized Communities

- (a) Every two (2) years, the Learning Opportunities Index data, school achievement results, School Improvement Plans and requests for assistance from principals, school councils and communities, will be reviewed in order to identify schools with significant need for support for outreach to marginalized parents and communities;
- (b) In consultation with superintendents of education and trustees, school communities to be allocated resources required to implement community outreach programs, and provide an appropriate allocation to those school communities for that purpose will be determined;
- (c) The Board will be provided with progress reports on these community outreach activities in these schools and communities.

4.0. School Council Role and Operations

- (a) Each year, subsequent to the election of members, the school council, in conjunction with the principal, will review the regulations regarding the role of school councils and the role of the principal (Reg. 612/00) and a plan of activities consistent with that role will be established;
- (b) The school council will incorporate, within its goals, a plan to encourage diverse participation in its activities and establish written procedures specifying how parents shall be consulted in decisions of the council, and publicizes these procedures to all parents;
- (c) The principal will provide to the school council, as fully and as timely as possible, all relevant information about the school, its programs, its priorities and plans, to support its role;
- (d) The school council will participate in the development of the School Improvement Plan, be informed of the progress of the plan at its meetings, and given an opportunity to provide advice to the school on its ongoing implementation;
- (e) A handbook of best practices on parent involvement in schools including best practices for the operation of school councils, will be produced based on the experience of TDSB schools, and elsewhere, and made available to all school councils and principals;
- (f) Superintendents of education will assume responsibility for monitoring the operation of school councils in their respective Families of Schools, and provide

support and problem-solving intervention as required, to facilitate their effective operation;

- (g) A system survey of school councils will be conducted periodically to assess their effectiveness and to determine ways in which the system might provide further support for their work.

5.0. Enhancing Skills for Shared Participation

- (a) Workshops will be provided in each quadrant annually for school council members on effective practices for school councils and effective leadership of school councils, using system and external community resources;
- (b) Workshops will be provided in each quadrant annually for principals and vice-principals on building community relations, using system and external community resources;

6.0. Ward and Regional Parent Forums

- (a) Trustees, with involvement of superintendents of education, will convene parent meetings of school council members and other parents in their wards for the purpose of communication and consultation on educational matters of concern to parents and the Board;
- (b) Executive superintendents and superintendents of education, with involvement of trustees, will convene, where necessary, quadrant or regional parent forums to provide information and feedback on implementation of programs including parental role in such programs.
- (c) Public consultations on specific policies will be conducted through Board task forces, review teams, or working groups, existing ward forums, or special forums by quadrant or region, to receive parent and community input;
- (d) A parent conference will be convened every two years in each region to provide an opportunity for parents to discuss a range of educational topics of current interest to parents and the Board.

7.0. Community Advisory Committees

Equity Programs Advisory Committee

- (a) An Equity Programs Advisory Committee (replacing the Community Equity Reference Group) will be established and maintained to provide advice to the Board on matters concerning the implementation of the Equity policy, and to identify issues of broad community interest regarding equity in education, for the consideration of the Board and staff;
- (b) Membership of the Equity Programs Advisory Committee will include representatives of current recognized equity-seeking groups with an interest in public education, parents from recognized Community Liaison Groups, and designated staff representation;

Early Years Advisory Committee

- (c) An Early Years Advisory Committee will be established and maintained to provide advice to the Board on matters concerning the implementation of the Early Years policy, and to identify issues of broad community interest concerning Early Years programs, for the consideration of the Board and staff; The current Child Care In Schools Advisory Committee becomes a subcommittee of the Early Years Advisory Committee and reports through it.
- (d) Membership of the Early Years Advisory Committee will include representation from the related early years areas of interest across the TDSB (child care, parenting/family literacy, First Duty projects, family resource centres, Ontario Early Years Centres and other programs for children up to 6 years of age), and designated staff representation.

Parent Involvement Advisory Committee

- (e) A Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (replacing the Parent Community Network) will be established and maintained to provide advice to the Board on matters concerning the implementation of the Parent Community Involvement policy, and to identify educational issues of broad community interest for the consideration of the Board and staff;
- (f) Membership for the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee will include one parent and an alternate for each ward through a nomination and selection process overseen by each trustee, and to include up to five (5) representatives appointed by recognized Community Liaison Groups through a nomination and selection process supervised by the Central Co-ordinator, Community Services, and designated staff representation;

General

- (g) The term of office for community members of these community advisory committees will be two (2) years;
- (h) The Board will appoint trustee members to serve on community advisory committees, including one trustee co-chair for each committee who will co-chair with a parent or community member as selected by the committee;
- (i) The Director will designate staff as non-voting resources persons to community advisory committees;
- (j) Board employee groups that wish to be considered for representation on any community advisory committees must submit such request including a rationale, to the Board for its consideration and approval. Membership by employee groups on community advisory committees will not include the right to vote;
- (k) The schedule of meetings for each community advisory committee will be established in advance and published;
- (l) Minutes of community advisory committees will be formally recorded and made available;

- (m) The Board may establish ad hoc advisory committees, task forces or working groups as needed, which may include parent or community members, to address time-limited issues under consideration by the Board.
- (n) The Board or its standing committees may refer any matter on its agenda to community advisory committees for comment.

8.0. Community Liaison Groups

- (a) The following criteria for community liaison groups will continue: majority of active membership (i.e. who attends meetings of the group) must be parents of Board students; open to membership by any parent who supports its purpose and goals; establishment of a formally elected or appointed leadership; democratic operating group practices; purpose and goals are consistent with mission and policies of the Board; sharing of minutes and reports with the Board;
- (b) Groups wishing to be recognized by the Board under the established criteria must submit a formal application with appropriate supporting documentation to the Central Co-ordinator, Community Services who will consider the request in consultation with the Associate Director prior to registering the group as a community liaison group;
- (c) The Associate Director will assign central staff to liaise with community liaison groups;
- (d) Community liaison groups will provide accessibility to its operations by making available notices of meetings through appropriate Board communication systems, where feasible;
- (e) Staff will provide a periodic update to the Board on the status of community liaison groups.

4.0 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Board Policy P.023 SCS: Parent and Community Involvement
O. Reg. 612/00, School Councils