

School Council 101

Prepared by:

Parent & Community Engagement Office (PCEO)

<http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/Howtogetinvolved/Schoolcouncils.aspx>

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Agenda

- Welcome/Introductions
- Attributes of an Effective Council
- Regulations 612 Overview
- Funds & Grants
- School Statement of Needs (SSON)
- School Committee Participation
- PIAC



Attributes of an Effective Council

- Accountability
- Transparency
- Inclusiveness



School Council Regulations

- School Councils are governed by the regulations outlined in the Education Act: Ontario Regulation 612/00 and 613/00 (2001).
- Toronto District School Board policies such as Equity, Parent and Community Involvement, Fundraising, etc.



Purpose

The purpose of a School Council, is through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and enhance the accountability of the education system to parents.

Reg. 612/2.1



Role

- A School Council is an advisory group.
 - *Reg. 612/3.8*
- Provides advice to the school Principal and or to the School Board on any matter.
 - *Reg. 612/20*



Responsibilities of a School Council

- Constitution and By-Laws
- Recording
- Reporting
- Consultation
- Communicating

Responsibilities of Chair/Co-Chair/Vice Chair

- Arrange and chair Council meetings.
- Prepare meeting agendas.
- Ensure minutes are recorded and maintained.
- Facilitate conflict resolution.
- Participate as ex-officio member on Council sub-committees.
- Communicate with Principal on behalf of Council.

Responsibilities of the School Principal

- Acts as a resource on laws, regulations and Board policies.
- Attends School Council meetings.
- Considers advice and provides response to the advice.
- Consults on items pertaining to school policies and guidelines related to student achievement, accountability of the system to parents and communication of these plans to the public. (i.e. code of conduct, school improvement plan, EQAO results, etc.)
- Provides written notice of School Council elections to community at least 14 days before elections.



By-Laws

Each School Council shall make the following by-laws:

- One governing **election procedures** and **filling of vacancies** in the membership of council;
- One establishing rules regarding participation in cases of **conflict of interest**.
- One defining, in accordance with TDSB policies, a **conflict resolution** process for internal School Council disputes.



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Elections

- Elections must be held within 30 days from the first school day in September.
- Principal shall notify the parent community 14 days before the election with details such as date, time and location.
- Election is to be done by secret ballot.
- Council elections are to elect parent representatives to Council **NOT** executives (co-chair, secretary etc.).



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Minutes

- Minutes must be taken at each meeting.
- Minutes must be available to everyone and stored in an accessible location.
- Records must be maintained for 4 years.
- Parents should be informed of minutes location.



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Reporting

- School Councils need to submit an annual report on activities.
- Principal shares this report with the parent community and with the School Board.
- Financial reporting per Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) standards.

Consultation

Must consult with parent community on issues being considered by School Council.

- Formal consultation on items such as dress code, code of conduct, school improvement plans, safe school plans, budget and issues with school-wide impact.
- Informal consultation on items such as expenditures of school council funds, field trips, lunchroom issues, change in entry times, or dismissal times.

Consultation – How to do it?

- Issue based meetings with votes or consensus
- Surveys
- Requests for opinions
- Focus groups
- Informal small group discussion



Communication

Develop a communication plan

Use different forms of communication:

- Monthly newsletters
- Pamphlets
- Attendance at school functions
- Email distribution lists
- Telephone trees
- School council display in a central public location in school
- Social Media

Communication

School Council TDSB E-mail Accounts

- All School Council chairs/co-chairs/vice chairs are eligible for one shared TDSB e-mail account.
- To activate the e-mail account please contact the Principal.

Funds/Grants

- Each year, schools are allocated funds from the TDSB of \$1.25/per pupil...minimum of \$300.00 maximum of \$100.00. Usage to be determined by Council. Council access funds via the Principal.
- Each year the MOE allocates each school \$500.00 for parent engagement & outreach. Usage to be determined by Council.
- Each year School Councils can apply for the Parent Reaching out grant for up to \$1000.00. Deadline is usually early spring (May). Visit www.edu.gov.on.ca and select parents.
- PSAB reports are due annually!
- Available grants can be accessed by Council chairs with a TDSB e-mail address at:
<https://oursite.tdsb.on.ca/org/DOM/default.aspx>

School Statement of Need (SSON)

- SSON outlines the parent/community priorities for the school that the superintendent will use to identify a principal if one needs to be appointed.
- The SSON form is completed by the school council/parent/guardian representative and submitted to the Superintendent each fall/November.



SSON Cont'd...

- This new form replaces the previous “Principal Profile” that school councils completed annually.
- Every school in the TDSB should complete the SSON and give it to their superintendent by October/November of each school year

School Committee Participation

School Council representatives and/or parents must participate on the:

- Caring and Safe Schools Committee (PPM 144, 145 & Operational Procedure PR. 703)
- Staffing Committee (Board direction)
- School Improvement Plan (SIP) (Reg. 612)



Committees Cont'd...

- Schools are also encouraged to establish a **school budget committee** and must include school council representatives in developing their expenditure plan.
- The plan should be reviewed with the school's Superintendent to ensure that the curriculum objectives for the year are supported by the school's expenditure plan.

Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC)

- PIAC is mandated to “support, encourage and enhance engagement at the board level to improve student achievement and well-being”.
- Membership is open to parents/guardians with a child in TDSB.
- For information visit: www.torontopiacc.com



Question & Answers

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