



## **RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR WARD COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Ward council meetings provide an opportunity for parent representatives from schools in the ward to meet with their local school trustee to discuss issues of common concern. They are also an opportunity for the school trustee to inform parents about matters under consideration by the Board and get their feedback.

Some ward council meetings may have a formal council with a steering committee of parents, the trustee and the school superintendent. Other ward council meetings have regularly scheduled meetings convened by the trustee. Ward council meetings are held an average of four times per school year.

### **The following outlines guidelines for ward council meetings:**

- a) Where practical, the ward forum should consider using the geographic name of the ward to facilitate identification.
- b) The selection process for parent and community members from the local school takes place at a meeting of the school council to which all parents are invited; a selection process in May or June is recommended.
- c) Ward councils are open to any parent of a local school who wishes to attend.
- d) The ward council actively promotes equity and diversity of participation in its activities, such diversity includes elementary and secondary school representation and participation by ethno-cultural communities within the ward.
- e) The ward council elects or appoints a parent chairperson(s) and a steering or planning committee.
- f) Parents form a majority of the ward council and the steering/planning committee.
- g) The steering/planning committee is responsible for planning and coordinating all meetings and relevant communication.
- h) A minimum of four (4) meetings per year are held.
- i) Written notice of meetings with an agenda is sent to the school council at least ten days in advance or within a reasonable time frame to facilitate participation.
- j) Written record (minutes or notes and reports) is kept and made available to local school councils and other interested parties.
- k) Where necessary, important communications should be translated into the major languages of the ward.
- l) Superintendents and Administration are invited to attend meetings.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- a) Parent, community, student and staff representatives have input into the agenda-setting process through direct communication with the trustee.

- b) Parent and community representatives should assume responsibility for reporting back to the school council on matters discussed at the ward forum.
- c) The parent chairperson must be given the staff support necessary to ensure that they can discharge their responsibilities effectively.
- d) The trustee attends meetings of the ward forum and assumes responsibility for reporting to the forum on relevant matters under consideration by the Board and for communicating the views of the participants back to the Board, where necessary.
- e) The superintendent contributes to the planning and agenda-setting process where necessary and attends the ward or family-of-schools meetings where required.

### **Ward Community Advisory Committee Representative Elections Process**

CACs of the Board, such as the French as a Second Language (FSLAC) and the Parent Involvement Advisory Committees (PIAC) have structured their membership to include parent representatives who are elected at the ward level. Election processes may entail the following:

#### **Notification**

There should be **clear notification** of the elections outlining the following:

- Positions available
- Date
- Time
- Location
- Nomination process

#### **Nomination Process**

This process should outline:

- whether an individual can self-nominate and/or be nominated ;
- establish deadline for nomination submissions;
- clearly outline who and how nominations will be processed. Nomination forms should be prepared and circulated; and
- Candidates must be present on election night.

#### **Election Evening**

- Clear item on agenda for election.
- Identified chair/lead for the elections process that will introduce the elections; outline the election process for the evening and identify scrutineers.
- Ballots should be made available for elections.
- Voting should be by private ballot ONLY and no phone, e-mail or proxy voting.

#### **Post elections**

- Communication to the community as to the successful candidates
- Notification of successful candidate(s) to the PCEO.

For further information please contact the Parent and Community  
Engagement Office (PCEO) at 416 397-3528