

## **110 SCHOOL COUNCILS**

### **Background**

Canadian Rockies School Division believes that School Councils are an important link between the Principals and the school communities throughout the jurisdiction. Canadian Rockies School Division believes that School Councils can bring critical perspective about education, the needs of the school, and concerns of the community to the Principal, the Superintendent, and the Board.

In accordance with the Education Act, Canadian Rockies School Division acknowledges the Principal as the instructional leader of the school and holds the Principal responsible for the educational program of the school, sound fiscal management and supervisory duties as assigned by the Superintendent.

In accordance with the legislation, each school shall have a School Council that will act as an advisory body to the school administration.

The School Council will also conduct its business within its scope of authority as delegated by the Board, and in accordance with the Education Act Regulation 94/2019.

### **Procedures**

1. Duties of Principal
  - a. Each Principal shall ensure that the incoming School Council executive has a current updated version of the Alberta School Council Resource Manual, and shall review annually with the School Council:
    - i. Alberta School Council Resource Manual;
    - ii. Administrative Procedure 110 – School Councils;
    - iii. School policies (local);
    - iv. School Council bylaws (local);
    - v. The school's combined Three-Year Education Plan/Annual Education Results Report (AERR).
2. School Council Membership
  - a. A school council must include the following members:

- i. The Principal of the school;
  - ii. At least one (1) person who is a teacher at the school, elected or appointed by the teachers at the school;
  - iii. If the school includes a senior high school program, at least one (1) person who is a student enrolled in the high school, elected or appointed by the students enrolled in the high school. In addition, if the school includes a junior high school program, the council may consider including a student representative.
  - iv. The majority of the members of a School Council shall be parents of students enrolled in the school.
  - v. The members of a School Council may establish a process to appoint as members of the School Council one (1) or more persons who are not parents of students enrolled in the school but who have an interest in the school.
  - vi. The members of a School Council may establish a process to appoint or elect as members of the school council one (1) or more persons who are parents of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school.
3. Responsibilities of the Board
  - a. The Board shall provide insurance indemnifying School Councils from liability and damages.
4. Duty to report to the Board
  - a. The Chair of a School Council must prepare and provide to the Board by September 30th of each year a report:
    - i. Summarizing the activities of the school council in the previous school year, and
    - ii. Including a financial statement relating to money handled by the school council in the previous school year, if any, and how the funds were used.
  - b. A school council must retain at the school a copy of the minutes for each meeting of the school council and make them available to the Board or the public on request.
  - c. A school council must retain the minutes for each meeting of the school council for at least seven (7) years.

5. Date for first meeting of School Council

- a. For any school year, the first meeting of the School Council must be held within twenty (20) school days after the start of the school year, or as specified in the bylaws of the school council.

6. School Council Meetings

- a. The school council will meet a minimum of seven (7) times during the school year. Suggested models for school councils are:
  - i. Representative governance model – when the school council acts like a board of directors to conduct the day-to-day business and reports back to the wider school community two (2) or more times a year.
  - ii. Assembly/town hall model – most decisions are made at regular, open meetings of the entire school community and the executive members of the school council act only to carry out the wishes of the assembly.
- b. Roles and responsibilities of school council members may be found in section 3 of the Alberta School Council Resource Manual.

7. Suspension of a School Council

- a. If a quorum is not available for a meeting of a school council and the meeting has been rescheduled on two (2) or more occasions, the Board may suspend the operation of the school council until the following year.
- b. If the operation of a school council is suspended, the Principal may establish an advisory committee to carry out one (1) or more of the duties or functions of the school council until a new school council is established.
- c. If the operation of a school council is suspended, a new school council must be established within forty (40) school days after the start of the next school year.

8. School Council Establishment Meeting

- a. If a school that is required to have a school council has no school council, the school must hold an establishment meeting within forty (40) school days after the start of the school year.
- b. A notice of establishment meeting must be given by the Principal to the following persons:
  - i. A parent of each student enrolled in the school;

- ii. A parent of each child enrolled in an Early Childhood program at the school;
  - iii. The school staff;
  - iv. Other members of the school community who, in the principal's opinion, are to be given notice.
- c. A notice must:
  - i. Describe the purpose of the meeting;
  - ii. Set out the time, date and location of the meeting;
- d. Be given at least ten (10) school days before the date of the meeting and either:
  - i. Be posted in two (2) or more locations that are accessible to the public;  
or

## 9. Parent Advisory Committee

- a. The Principal may establish an advisory committee if:
  - i. There are fewer than five (5) parents in attendance at an establishment meeting; or
  - ii. If an establishment meeting is not successful in establishing a school council, the Principal may establish an advisory committee for that year to carry out one (1) or more of the duties or functions of a school council.

## 10. School Council Executive

- a. A school council must have a Chair and any other members of the executive as determined by the persons attending an establishment meeting.
- b. A parent of a student enrolled in the school must be elected Chair of the executive.
- c. A member who is not a parent may be elected Chair of the executive if no parent is willing to be nominated as Chair.
- d. Every member of a school council is eligible to be elected as a member of the executive.

## 11. Fundraising

- a. Fundraising societies are groups of people who have incorporated under the Societies Act or Part 9 of the Companies Act. Under current legislation, school councils may fundraise but cannot register as fundraising societies. (Section 2, Alberta School Council Resource Manual)
  - i. However, members may serve on both school council and fundraising societies.
  - ii. Meetings may be held one after another, as long as minutes and records are kept separately.
- b. Fundraising has always been used by schools to provide extra services and activities, such as additional playground equipment, field trips, and sports uniforms. Fundraising is used for the extras that parents and staff want for their school.
- c. Fundraising shall not be used for core items.

## 12. Communications

- a. The following communication channels are to be respected:
  - i. Principal
  - ii. Superintendent and/or Department Head
  - iii. Board
- b. If the School Council, via a motion, requests the Principal to implement or undertake a program or project within its scope of authority, and if, in the opinion of the School Council, the request is not being met or fulfilled, the School Council shall first try to resolve the matter with the Principal. Then, if the matter remains unresolved, the Council will inform the Principal that it wishes to take the matter to the Superintendent.
- c. A School Council may request an appearance before the Board. The School Council Chair shall request, in writing, an opportunity to appear before a meeting of the Board and provide an outline of the issue to be discussed at least 5 working days before the meeting date. The length of presentations to the Board will be set at 15 minutes, or at the discretion of the Chair.
- d. The School Council request shall be included on the agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting and the School Council Chair or designate will be invited to make a presentation to the Board.

- e. The Board, in setting the meeting date, will hear the presentation, ask questions for clarification, and may reserve its decision until the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.
- f. The Superintendent may call staff members to present background information.

### **Guidelines for Delegation of Duties or Tasks to School Councils**

The Superintendent recognizes that the expectations within communities may require schools to respond in ways that are different from those employed in other schools in the school jurisdiction. Therefore, the Superintendent may delegate specific duties to a School Council(s) from time to time. The Superintendent shall specify the parameters for delegation within the following framework:

#### 1. Delegation of Authority

The type of authority being delegated shall be specified within the following parameters:

- a. To consider and make a recommendation regarding a particular subject to the Superintendent;
  - b. To investigate a certain matter and report the facts and the School Council's opinions regarding the matter to the Superintendent;
  - c. To take some specific action on behalf of the Superintendent and report to the Superintendent on the action taken. Any limitations on the delegation of power to the School Council must be specified within the resolution delegating the required duty or task;
  - d. To represent the Superintendent in a certain manner; and
  - e. To adhere to Board policies or administrative procedures.
2. The Board accepts that school Principals may seek input from School Councils in the following areas: (See *Scope of Authority*)
- a. Policy and Programs
  - b. Budget
  - c. School Staff
  - d. Transportation

- e. School Facilities
- f. Public Relations

If a School Council decides not to assume an active role in a particular area, the responsibility to fulfill the duties shall remain with the school administration or central office personnel as directed by the Superintendent.

School Council decisions will be in the form of a recommendation. The Principal and/or the Superintendent will give consideration to recommendations presented by the School Council.

### 3. Scope of Authority

The School Council may provide advice in:

- a. **POLICIES, PROCEDURES, PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES**
  - i. The Development and/or review of all policies at the jurisdiction level.
  - ii. The school education program, the implementation of new programs and business partnerships at the school or jurisdiction level.
  - iii. Educational and sport field trips and other extra-curricular field trips.
  - iv. Local procedures regarding attendance and truancy.
  - v. Length of school day, noon hour and recesses, in keeping with the provisions of the Education Act and Alberta Education requirements and the resources of the divisional fleet.
- b. **LOCAL SCHOOL BUDGETS**
  - i. The preparation, allocation and monitoring of funds.
  - ii. Determining area of priority for budget expenditures.
  - iii. The expenditures of the established budget through a review of school expenditures as provided by Divisional Office.
- c. **SCHOOL STAFF**
  - i. May provide input into establishing candidate characteristics and competencies for recruitment of school administration.
- d. **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**
  - i. Make recommendations concerning the need for a student transportation program in keeping with the requirements of the Education Act and the Highway Traffic Act.
- e. **SCHOOL FACILITIES**
  - i. Make recommendations regarding the adequacy of school buildings, upgrading or renovations.

f. PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Superintendent encourages School Councils to contribute, through the Principal, to the Superintendent's Newsletter and the annual report by submitting articles outlining:

- i. Significant accomplishments at the school;
- ii. Major events or projects at the school; and
- iii. Results of studies undertaken.

**References**

Section 22, 52, 53,55,196,197,222 Education Act  
School Council Regulation 94/2019  
School Council Resource Manual

**History**

Developed: August 2003  
Amended: January 2020