

## SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

WHAT ARE THEY AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

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### WHAT IS A SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL?

- The School Planning Council legislation formally acknowledges the importance of parental involvement in the improvement of student achievement.
- **The School Planning Council is an advisory body.** It acts in an advisory capacity to review relevant data pertaining to student achievement and prepare the school plan for student success.
- The School Planning Council consults with the school community in developing, monitoring and reviewing the School Plan for Student Success.
- The council submits the School Plan for Student Success to the School Board.

### SCHOOL ACT (SECTION 8.1(1))

A board must establish a school planning council for each school, in its school district.

### SCHOOL ACT (SECTION 8(3))

A school planning council for a school consists of the following persons:

- (a) the principal of the school;
- (b) one of the teachers who teaches at the school,
- (c) Three representatives of the parents' advisory council who are
  - (i) parents of students enrolled in the school, and
  - (ii) elected annually by the parents' advisory council;
  - (iii) One of the representatives elected must be an elected officer of the parents' advisory council.
- (d) if the school enrolls students in grade 10, 11 or 12, one student of school age enrolled in one of those grades at the school.

#### WHAT IF THERE ARE NOT ENOUGH CANDIDATES TO WARRANT AN ELECTION?

- You must conduct the ballot vote anyway!
- Under the School Act, a secret ballot vote for PAC representatives to the School Planning Council and DPAC is mandatory.
- A PAC may not appoint or acclaim a parent to any of these positions. [School Act, s. 8(6)]
- The purpose of the ballot vote is to ensure fairness and to allow members to exercise their choice privately, without influence from others.

#### SCHOOL ACT (SECTION 8(5))

A board may appoint a person to fill a vacancy on a school planning council if

- (a) there is no parents' advisory council for the school,
- (b) the parents' advisory council for the school does not elect 3 representatives,
- (c) the teachers at the school do not elect a representative, or
- (d) the principal of the school does not appoint a student.

#### SCHOOL ACT

- (6) The term of office of a person appointed or elected to the school planning council must not be more than one year. Representatives may be re-elected.
- (7) An employee of any board is not eligible for election or an appointment.

#### SCHOOL ACT (SECTION 8.0(4))

A parents' advisory council, through its elected officers, may

- (a) advise the board and the principal and staff of the school respecting any matter relating to the school or the Provincial school, other than matters assigned to the school planning council, and
- (b) at the request of the school planning council, assist the school planning council in carrying out its functions under this Act.

### SCHOOL PLAN FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

In each school year, a board must approve a school plan for every school in the school district.

- By a date set by the board, a school planning council must prepare and submit to the board a school plan for the school in respect of improving student achievement and other matters contained in the board's achievement contract relating to that school.
- A school planning council must consult with the parents' advisory council during the preparation of the school plan.
- The board may approve, approve with modifications, or reject a school plan submitted.

### BEFORE APPROVING A SCHOOL PLAN FOR STUDENT SUCCESS, THE BOARD MAY

- (a) consult with the school planning council about modifications to the school plan, or
- (b) direct the school planning council to modify all or part of the school plan by a specified date.

### SCHOOL ACT

The board may direct the principal of a school to prepare and submit to the board a school plan for the school by a specified date if

- (a) the school planning council does not submit a school plan,
- (b) the school planning council does not comply with a direction of the board, or
- (c) the board rejects the school plan submitted.

A board must make a school plan approved available to the parents of students attending that school.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL BOARD

- Ensures that a school planning council is in place in each school
- Maintains policies and procedures to support school planning councils
- Communicates district timelines and the processes for the development, receipt and approval of school plans to school communities, parent advisory councils and school planning councils
- Provides information about the allocation of resources to the school
- Consults with school planning councils about:
  - the allocation of staff and resources in the school,
  - matters contained in the district achievement contract relating to the school, and
  - education services and programs in the school
- Maintains processes to ensure school planning councils consult with the entire school community
- Approves, approves with modifications, or rejects school plans
- Consults with, and obtains the approval of, the school planning council of a school where there may be a specialty academy offered, and consults with and obtains the approval of the school planning council for a schedule of fees for a specialty academy

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Provides collaborative leadership for the school planning council
- In consultation with students, appoints a student representative from Grade 10, 11 or 12, where applicable
- Assembles information about student achievement from classroom, school, district and provincial sources
- Provides information to the school planning council about the allocation of staff and resources in the school
- Provides information about progress made in achieving goals in the current plan and the achievement contract
- Helps the school planning council ensure plans are developed in consultation with the school community
- In collaboration with the parent advisory council and school staff, maintains ways to promote effective communication between the school planning council and the school community
- Informs the school community about the work of the school planning council
- Consults with the school planning council regarding the proposed organization of classes within 15 school days after the beginning of the school year

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL

- Develops, monitors, and reviews school plans
- Maintains processes to receive input from, and report to:
  - the parent advisory council, and
  - the school community
- Provides advice to the school board about:
  - the allocation of staff and resources in the school,
  - matters contained in the district achievement contract relating to the school, and
  - education services and programs in the school
- Maintains ways to promote effective communication between the school community and the school planning council
- Revises school plans, if requested to do so by the school board

### SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL DOES NOT DISCUSS OR PROVIDE ADVICE ABOUT

- Personal, confidential information about students, parents, teachers or staff, or members of the school community
- Performance or conduct of individual students, teachers, other employees, parents, or community members
- Complaints about individuals
- personnel matters
- Terms and conditions of employment contracts
- Other matters beyond its advisory and consultative roles

### STEPS FOR ELECTING YOUR PAC REPRESENTATIVES TO THE SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL

Updating your PAC's bylaws to contain the following:

- Among the purposes of the PAC
- Election of representatives to the School Planning Council
- Duties of the PAC representatives to the School Planning Council

MEMBERS OF THE SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL WILL BE EXPECTED TO ABIDE BY THE FOLLOWING RULES OF CONDUCT:

- 1 Members are expected to attend all School Planning Council meetings.
- 2 Members shall strive to be informed about issues facing school planning councils
- 3 Members will only communicate reliable information.
- 4 Members shall support the decisions of the school planning council.
- 5 The members of the School Planning Council may be provided with information that has been designated as confidential and will not disclose such information.
- 6 Members of the School Planning Council will represent the best interests of the whole school community.
- 7 Members who have a conflict of interest, will excuse themselves from discussion and decisions regarding the issue.
- 8 Members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in the conduct of School Planning Council business and to abide by rulings of the chairperson.
- 9 Members shall work to ensure that issues are resolved by due process

THE SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES WILL

- represent, speak, and vote on behalf of the PAC at School Planning Council meetings
- request and take direction from the PAC membership and executive
- be strong advocates for meaningful parent involvement in the school and school planning
- provide a written report to all general and executive meetings
- attend general and executive meetings as directed by the membership or executive
- submit an annual report

SD57 - POLICY 1222

- Elections for school planning councils shall be held before November 30 of each year.
- The members of the school planning council shall elect the chairperson and the secretary as officers.
- By June 10 of each year, the school planning council will submit a draft school plan for student success to the Board for consideration
- By October 7 of each year the school planning council will submit to the Board its final school plan for student success.
- After the Board has approved the school plan for student success, the school planning council will make the plan available to the school community.
- The school planning council will monitor the progress toward the goals of the School Plan and provide updates to the school community

SUGGESTED TIMELINES IN THE SD57 HANDBOOK FOR SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

Sep 30	Class size composition report signed by school planning council members
Nov	School Planning Council workshop: Orientation of new members
Nov 30	School Planning Council inaugural meeting <b>must be held by Nov 30</b>
Nov – May	Staff and School Planning Council review assessment data

### SD57 POLICY 1222

Teacher and parent representatives and their children will not be subject to retribution or disciplinary action for their participation in the school planning council or for positions taken with respect to SPC business.

Except when dealing with confidential matters, meetings of the school planning council shall be open to the school's community and invited guests.

The school principal is responsible for ensuring that the school planning council's decisions or actions are consistent with district policies, processes and the rules of conduct outlined in the administrative procedures of this policy.

The Superintendent shall designate a district liaison person for school planning councils. The district liaison person or alternate has the right to attend any meeting of a school planning council.

The Board will not provide honorariums, payment or reimbursement of expenses to members of the School Planning Council for participating in council meetings.

### SCHOOL AND DISTRICT POLICIES ON SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

- School districts, and some schools, have developed policies on School Planning Councils. It is important for your PAC to be familiar with school and district policies as they have important implications for School Planning Councils in your district.

### YOUR SCHOOL AND/OR DISTRICT POLICY MAY COVER SUCH THINGS AS

- target dates or deadlines for formation of the School Planning Council and election of representatives
- meeting procedure, including minimum number of meetings per year, convening meetings, quorum, confidentiality, decision-making, telephone or electronic meetings, agenda, record-keeping
- role and authority of the chair
- roles and responsibilities of other positions, for example, secretary
- role of advisors, consultants, observers, and non-voting members and representatives
- alternates and filling vacancies
- committees
- consultation with the PAC, students, school staff, school board, special groups, and broader community
- target dates or deadlines for the school plan, including drafts for consultation
- powers of the board and principal in the event timelines or deadlines are not met
- financial matters
- conduct, discipline, and retaliation.

### EXAMINING DATA FOR THE SCHOOL PLAN

- School Planning Councils are required to develop school plans with clearly stated goals for improving student achievement in the school.
- To develop and monitor school goals, School Planning Councils must examine data on student achievement from a wide range of sources. Data reveal patterns in student performance, participation, satisfaction, and many other things related to learning, and indicate where changes in practice can or should be made.

## 20 POSSIBLE TYPES AND SOURCES OF DATA

1) Grades K to 12 report card information, including interim reports, 2) Classroom tests, Science 9 cross-grade exam results, Writing portfolios, District Grade 6 writing assessment, School-wide writes, 3) Grade completion rates, 4) Grade-to-grade transition, 5) Attendance information, 6) Discipline data, 7) BC Performance Standards, including Quick Scales, 8) Ministry Satisfaction Surveys, Grades 4, 7, 10, 12, 9) Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), Grades 4 and 7, 10) CAT 3 (Canadian Achievement Test Version 3), Grades 4, 7, 10, 11) Provincial exam results, 12) Grade 12 provincial exam results, 13) Participation rates in courses, 14) Middle/secondary course failure rate, 15) Career programs data, 16) Graduation exit survey, 17) Graduation rate, 18) Demographic data, 19) Extra-curricular involvement, 20) Provincial and district scholarships

## CREATING THE SCHOOL PLAN

The school plan is a statement of goals, objectives, and strategies for improving student achievement in the school. Most school districts use a standard template for school plans and may include the following items for each goal:

- Statement of the goal
- Objectives, with performance indicators and targets
- Strategies, including training needs, resources, and cost
- Evaluation plan
- Communication plan

Examples of School Plans for Student Success for each school in Prince George can be found at:

<http://www.sd57.bc.ca/index.php?id=1717>

The Ministry of Education has certain expectations for school plans. Some templates have these expectations written into them. For example, the Ministry wants school goals to be

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Timely

EACH GOAL SHOULD INCLUDE A STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING IT. STRATEGIES SHOULD BE

- Clear in their intent, logical, and based on best practices
- Innovative and creative
- reasonable, given the people, resources, and time available
- Acceptable to the stakeholders who will be responsible for implementing them

### OVERALL, SCHOOL PLANS SHOULD INCLUDE

- analysis and rationale for each goal selected
- data sources used in the analysis, and a description of how the data were interpreted
- specific performance targets for improving student achievement
- groups of students targeted for focused attention
- data the school will use to track progress.

### SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN DEVELOPING THE PLAN

- Does the school have the funds to undertake this initiative ?
- Does the school have sufficient trained staff to provide these services to students?
- Does the school have the space to expand this program?
- How will this affect department staffing and schedules?
- Does the school have sufficient office staff to undertake this task?

### IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL PLAN

Using school, district, and Ministry data, the SPC will monitor progress toward the goals contained in the plan. On an ongoing basis, the School Planning Councils will ask

- Is the school plan being followed?
- Are the strategies being implemented in a timely way as set out in the plan?
- Is progress being made toward achieving the goals?
- Have the goals been achieved?
- Were the goals measurable, as well as achievable?
- Were the strategies workable and successful?
- Were the stakeholders satisfied with the goals and strategies?
- What problems and concerns were encountered along the way?
- What could have been done to avoid or resolve those problems and concerns?
- Given the experience with this school plan, what should the School Planning Councils be looking at in the future?

For a plan to be successful, those responsible for implementing it must support the plan and be willing to do what is needed to see it through.

The consultation process built into School Planning Councils, and reflected in many school and district policies, acknowledges the importance of all stakeholders in the school planning process. **Achieving school goals is a shared responsibility.**

The School Planning Councils must ensure that all stakeholders are included in the planning process and are satisfied with the process and the decisions made.



School plans are the board's primary source of information about what needs to be done to improve student achievement in the district. School plans tell the board what each school community is thinking about student achievement in the school, where the greatest needs lie, and the best practices School Planning Councils have found to achieve goals.

School Planning Councils members, and the school community at large, can take pride in their contribution to improving student achievement for all students in their district.



# CONGRATULATIONS!

It is hereby declared that

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your name here)

Has completed the presentation on  
"What Have I Gotten Myself Into"  
formally know as  
"The School Planning Council"

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Presented by DPAC57

