



1. Rationale

The Simcoe County District School Board through its mission statement holds the beliefs that successful education requires active participation among the school, the home and the community, and that effective relationships between the education system and the communities are promoted through consultation, collaboration and strong communication programs.

The Board values and supports the community groups which have assisted schools in advancing the interests of students and acknowledges the many such groups which have been established throughout the school system.

The Board believes that relationships between its schools and their communities can be strengthened through the establishment of local school councils which serve as an on-going mechanism for effective two-way communication, for consultation and for a measure of shared decision-making between the school and the school community. The Board promotes as objectives of school councils and school-community organizations the following:

- 1.1 positive attitudes toward the education of students in the school;
- 1.2 effective two-way communication between home and school;
- 1.3 effective approaches to consultative and collaborative relationships among home, school and community;
- 1.4 increased parental participation in the education of their children.

2. Policy

It is the policy of the Simcoe County District School Board, that each school in its jurisdiction provide for the establishment and operation of a school council. The Board recognizes and respects the fact that many existing parent groups have chosen names for their groups that are appropriate to the local community. It is the policy of the Simcoe County District School Board, that subject to meeting the requirements of sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.6, the school council may choose to continue to use the name of the existing group.

3. Structure and Composition of School Councils

3.1 Membership and Terms of Office

- 3.1.1 The principal of the school in consultation with the existing parent group will be responsible for the establishment of the school council and for providing the support necessary to enable the council to operate within the board's policy and administrative procedures memorandum.

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3.1.5 The term of office for elected and appointed positions on the council shall not exceed two years with the initial term to begin in September 1996. Elected and appointed members may seek additional terms.

3.1.6 The size of the school council shall not be less than 9 where there is no student representation or 11 with a student representative and shall not exceed 15.

3.1.7 There will be no honorarium paid to members of the school council.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of the School Councils

4.1 School Councils are advisory bodies and may provide advice to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the school board on any of the matters listed below that the council may identify as priorities:

4.1.1 local school activity calendar within the Board-wide holiday and P.A. day calendar;

4.1.2 school code of student behaviour;

4.1.3 curriculum and program goals and priorities;

4.1.4 the responses of the school or school board to achievement in provincial and board assessment programs;

4.1.5 preparation of the school profile including the development of criteria for the selection of local school principal;

4.1.6 school budget priorities, including local maintenance projects;

4.1.7 school communication strategies;

4.1.8 co-curricular activities in the school;

4.1.9 school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, and nutrition programs;

4.1.10 local co-ordination of services for children and youth;

4.1.11 development, implementation, and review of board policies at the local level;

4.1.12 development, implementation, and evaluation of the School Growth Plan.

- 4.2 At the request of the school council, the principal should provide information to the council on the school's policies and practices related to the items identified in 4.1.
- 4.3 Early in the school year, the principal will also consult with and seek advice from the school council with regard to the school's plans for fund raising, field trips, as well as plans for expenditures of funds raised.
- 4.4 Where the Board deems it to be relevant, school councils will be consulted on matters before the Board.
- 4.5 The school council shall also:
 - 4.5.1 meet a minimum of 4 times per year. (all meetings shall be open to the community);
 - 4.5.2 attend available information and training sessions to enable members of the council to develop their skills as council members;
 - 4.5.3 communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to seek their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the council, and to report on the activities of the council to the school community;
 - 4.5.4 promote the best interests of the whole school community;
 - 4.5.5 supervise the election procedures for school councils.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of School Council Members

- 5.1 Council members are to maintain a school-wide focus on all issues. Council meetings are not a forum for discussion about individual parents, students, staff, trustees or other council members.
- 5.2 Chair
 - 5.2.1 communicate with the school principal;
 - 5.2.2 call school council meetings;
 - 5.2.3 prepare the agenda for school council meetings in consultation with the school principal;
 - 5.2.4 chair school council meetings;
 - 5.2.5 ensure that the minutes of school council meetings are recorded and maintained;
 - 5.2.6 participate in information and training programs;
 - 5.2.7 ensure that there is regular communication with the school community;
 - 5.2.8 consult with senior board staff and trustees, when requested;

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5.3 Council Members

- 5.3.1 maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- 5.3.2 participate in council meetings;
- 5.3.3 participate in information and training programs;
- 5.3.4 act as a link between the school community council and the community;
- 5.3.5 encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community.

5.4 The Principal

- 5.4.1 facilitate the establishment of the school council and assist in its operation;
- 5.4.2 support and promote the council's activities;
- 5.4.3 seek input from the council in areas for which it has been assigned advisory responsibility;
- 5.4.4 act as a resource on laws, regulations, board policies, and collective agreements;
- 5.4.5 obtain and provide information required by the council to enable it to make informed decisions;
- 5.4.6 communicate with the chair of the council, as required;
- 5.4.7 ensure that copies of the minutes of the council's meetings are kept at the school;
- 5.4.8 assist the council in communicating with the school community;
- 5.4.9 encourage the participation of parents from all groups and of other people within the school community.

6. Recommendations and Communications of School Councils

- 6.1 Recommendations and decisions of school councils that are specifically related to the school shall be referred to the school Principal.
- 6.2 Recommendations and decisions which are broader in scope than the local school may be referred either to the school principal for direction or to the appropriate Board official or Board committee with a copy to the principal.

7. Administrative Procedures

The Director of Education is authorized to establish administrative procedures to implement this policy.

APPROVED JANUARY 31, 1996
REVIEWED SEPTEMBER 2003