

Welcome and Thank You for all you do!

School Council Top 10

1. School Council Handbook and Website
2. Epstein Book
3. Continuity Binder
4. Fundraising Plan and Field Trip Plan
5. Administration Team Profile Recommendations
6. Volunteer Orientation / School needs
7. Annual Fund \$500 for School Councils
8. PRO Grants (School \$1,000 and Regional \$30,000)
9. School Council Annual Report
10. School Improvement Plan

1. School Council Handbook and Website

The School Councils Handbook has everything you need to facilitate meetings, understand policies, by-laws, guidelines and lots of information for running a successful School Council. These handbooks are available at each school or you can access a copy on the School Board website at www.scdsb.on.ca. On the website, you can also review the School Council Policy #4310, and by using the School Councils only login username and password provided to every School Council, you can network with other councils, find answers to questions, and ideas for best practices. This is an important tool for information and support for new and experienced school council members.

2. Epstein Book

This book provides School Council Chairs with a variety of ways to facilitate meetings, ways to engage council members, icebreakers (especially great for

the first couple of meetings), and many useful ideas for planning, organizing, developing and implementing projects that your school would like to do. If your school does not have a copy of this book please speak to your school's Principal.

3. Continuity Binder

This is usually a binder containing at least, the last 2 full years school council minutes, agendas, motions and votes, past and current projects including fundraising, newsletters, a list of the family of schools, PRO Grants and other special events. This allows continuity from year to year, in case of changes to School Councils members and chairs, co-chairs, vice-chairs, to review at the beginning of the year what has taken place and what projects need to be looked at for the new school year.

4. Fundraising Plan and Field Trip Plan

A fundraising plan for the school year must be developed and submitted by the end of October. Monies raised from each fundraiser are designated to student and school needs, then signed by the Principal and School Council Chair or Co-chairs and submitted. If there are changes or additions to the fundraising plan, a revised plan must be signed and submitted to the Board office. A financial report is available to review with the Principal of these non-board funds.

5. Administrative Team Profile Recommendations

Each year an administrative team profile is developed by the Principal and School Council. This profile covers areas such as goals, school community, strengths, area for development, expectations for administrators and School Council statement. This profile assists Senior Administrators when there are transfers/and or appointments to the school. These recommendations are signed by the Principal and School Council Chair and submitted each year to the Board.

6. Volunteer Orientation and School Needs

Many parents wanting to become involved with the school through volunteering are asked to provide a criminal check or a declaration before volunteering in the school or attend field trips. Once this is completed it is important to provide these volunteers with an orientation and tour of school, which is facilitated by either the Principal or Vice Principal of the school. Each volunteer would be given a volunteer handbook and policies related to confidentiality, privacy and responsibilities would be reviewed. It is helpful to provide a list of school needs to help volunteers decide where their interest and expertise can best be matched, considering each volunteer's availability. One suggestion is to have a list of school needs posted each month for volunteers to sign-up for days they are available. It may be helpful to have one parent work with the Principal and act as a Volunteer Coordinator that organizes duties each month. Every school needs volunteers, and every volunteer needs to know where they can help. Recruiting for volunteers can include parents, extended family, community members, retirees, high school students (community hours).

7. Available Funds for School Councils

Each year School Councils are provided with \$500 as an expense fund. This can be used in a number of ways for parent engagement or involvement and must be discussed and voted on in your minutes by members of School Council. If you have any questions please discuss this with your school's Principal.

8. PRO Grants

PRO (Parent Reaching Out) Grants have an early deadline for submission to the Ministry of Education, usually by mid May. There are 2 types of grants available - a school grant up to \$1,000 and a regional grant up to \$30,000. Every School Council has the opportunity to apply for an event to host at your school, or group of schools.

Some examples for these events could be a Literacy Night, Math Night, Fun Fair.

As part of your school council agenda it is important to put together a plan early so that your school does not miss out. Once the plan is put together this should be placed in the Continuity Binder at your school and when the deadline date is announced a parent member may submit the application on-line on the Ministry of Education website. <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/>

9. School Council Annual Report

At the end of each school year an annual report from School Council should be prepared, providing an overview of School Council accomplishments, student achievement goals and acknowledgement of volunteers and School Council members. This report should be submitted by end of June to the Board. School Council can also send copies to parents as newsletter. There are sample annual reports in the School Council Handbook.

10. School Improvement Plan

Review annual school improvement plan for your school and learn how school council can support those objectives, by enhancing the school environment, and improving student achievement.

MORE RESOURCES:

Simcoe County District School Board Website	www.scdsb.on.ca
Ontario Ministry of Education	www.edu.gov.on.ca
People for Education (non-profit)	www.peopleforeducation.com
#211	www.211.ca