

410 School Planning Councils

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Policy

Pursuant to the *School Act*, the Board of School Trustees supports the establishment of a School Planning Council at each school for the purpose of representing the school community in the process of the development of the annual school plan for improving student achievement.

The school board recognizes its responsibility to consult with the School Planning Council on matters set out in the *School Act* and to ensure that School Planning Councils function effectively and in accordance with ethical standards and the *School Act*.

Administrative Procedures

Purpose and Role of School Planning Councils

- The role of a School Planning Council is:
 - Preparation and/or review of a proposed school plan, connected to the school district accountability contract, to improve student achievement
 - Consultation on matters referred to it by the school board, superintendent or the superintendent's designate
 - Consultation on matters referred to it by the principal, the parent advisory council and employees at the school in respect of improving student achievement and matters contained in the school district accountability contract
- The following are not within the mandate of the School Planning Council:
 - Personal and confidential information on students, parents, teachers and other employees
 - Performance or conduct of individual employees, students and parents
 - Terms and conditions of individual employment contracts
 - Activities beyond the advisory and consultative roles set out in the *School Act* and this policy

Support for School Planning Councils

- The superintendent or designate shall act as a district liaison officer for School Planning Councils and will have the right to attend any meeting of School Planning Council or a School Planning Council sub-committee, and may designate another employee to attend in his or her place.

Establishment of School Planning Councils

- If a School Planning Council has not been established at a school, the principal shall proceed as below to obtain representatives and shall inform the school board when all representatives have been named. The school board shall then recognize the establishment of School Planning Council for that school.

School Planning Councils in School Annexes

- Following consultation with annex parents and teaching staff, the supervising principal of a school annex may make application to the school board to form a School Planning Council. If the school board decides to establish a School Planning Council, the supervising principal or designate of the annex will assume the duties and responsibilities of “the principal” wherever it appears throughout this policy and will proceed to obtain representatives as described below.
- If a school annex does not choose to establish its own School Planning Council, membership representation of the annex on the main school’s School Planning Council shall be provided as below.
- In instances other than the above, parents and teaching staff of a school annex may work with their supervising principal or designate to prepare and submit to the main school’s School Planning Council an additional goal for inclusion in the school’s proposed school plan that takes into account the unique context of the annex.

Membership of School Planning Councils

- The principal of the school; one (1) of the teachers at the school who is elected annually by secret ballot by the teachers who teach at the school; in schools enrolling students in grade 10, 11 or 12, one (1) student of school age enrolled in one of those grades at the school, appointed annually by the principal of the school; and three (3) representatives of the parent advisory council, one of whom must be an elected officer of the parent advisory council, comprise the membership of the School Planning Council for the school.
- The principal shall consult with the parent advisory council to ensure that its bylaws for the election of representatives to the School Planning Council safeguard the rights of parents to participate in this election.
- By September 15 of each year, the principal of each school shall advise the parent advisory council, if one exists, and the teachers of the school, of the need to elect representatives by October 31 and the required process.
- If there is no parent advisory council in the school or it elects an insufficient number of parent representatives, the principal, in consultation with the parents or the parent advisory council, shall make appropriate recommendations to the school board by November 1 of each year for appointments that fulfill the required membership of parent representatives.
- An employee of any school board may not be elected or appointed as a parent representative.

- The principal shall ensure that the election of a teacher representative is carried out by secret ballot and in accordance with the *School Act*.
- If no teacher representative is elected, the principal, in consultation with the staff committee, shall make an appropriate recommendation to the school board by November 1 of each year for an appointment that fulfills the requirement of a teacher representative.
- Teachers and parent advisory councils may elect alternate representatives.
- The principal may designate a vice-principal to act as an alternate for one or more meetings.

Chair of the School Planning Council

- The principal of the school shall be the chair of the School Planning Council and preside over all meetings. Where the principal has delegated a vice-principal to attend a meeting in his or her place, the vice-principal shall perform the functions of chair for that meeting.

Meetings of the School Planning Council

- When the representatives have been named, the principal shall call the inaugural meeting of the School Planning Council. The inaugural meeting shall decide a schedule of future meetings and may outline future agendas.
- School Planning Councils may invite others to attend and/or participate in their meetings but such persons shall not have a vote.
- Except when dealing with confidential matters, meetings shall be open to members of the School Planning Council, alternates, invited guests and others who have permission from the Council.
- The chair may require anyone to leave, other than a member, if he or she is disrupting the functioning of the Council.
- School Planning Councils shall meet at least three (3) times per school year, as decided at the inaugural meeting. Additional meetings may be convened at the call of the chair or if requested by three (3) members.
- A quorum shall be the principal (or vice-principal alternate) and two (2) other members or their alternates.
- Any member may place an item on the proposed agenda of the next meeting by request to the chair. Agendas shall be provided at least one week in advance, but this shall not prevent members from adding matters to the agenda for discussion without prior notice.
- The chair shall ensure that a record of meetings held and a general summary of subjects discussed and decisions made are kept at the school.

Decision-making by School Planning Councils

- School Planning Councils shall operate on consensus. Votes are not taken except on the approval of a proposed school plan. If consensus cannot be reached on matters other than the school plan it will be reflected in the meeting record.
- A vote shall be held to approve the proposed school plan before submission to the School board as required by the *School Act*. Each member, or alternate, shall have one (1) vote. The chair shall vote at the same time as other members.
- The School Planning Council may create sub-committees to investigate matters within its jurisdiction and may invite additional participants to join the sub-committees.

Financial Activities of the School Planning Council

- Meeting expenses of the School Planning Council are the responsibility of the school.
- No member of School Planning Council shall receive any remuneration for acting as a member of the Council.
- The School Planning Council has no power to raise or expend money.

School Planning Council and the Preparation of the School Plan

- The School Planning Council is responsible for the preparation of and/or review of a proposed annual school plan, to be presented to the school board by May 1 of each year. The Superintendent may extend this time.
- The School Planning Council must consult with the school parent advisory council during preparation of the school plan. Consultation shall be, at a minimum, a presentation at a parent advisory council meeting, of which notice has been given to parents in accordance with parent advisory council bylaws. The School Planning Council shall provide the parent advisory council with a reasonable opportunity for input into the school plan and consider such input in their preparation of the school plan.
- The School Planning Council will also consult with students, teachers, and other members of the school community regarding preparation of the school plan. The principal shall provide employees with reasonable opportunities for input into the school plan and forward that input to the School Planning Council. The School Planning Council will consider what other groups should be included in the consultation.

Confidentiality and Conduct and School Planning Councils

- The School Planning Council may be provided with confidential information. The members of the Council are expected not to disclose such information without authorization of the school board and to abide by any restrictions or conditions placed on disclosure of the information.
- It is expected that parent representatives will function as representatives of all school families and represent their community of interest, not the interests of any subgroup.
- Members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in the conduct of School

Planning Council business and to abide by the rulings of the chair.

- The School Planning Council may request the district liaison officer appointed under this policy to assist the School Planning Council in resolving a disputed matter or improving its processes.
- Any complaint about the functioning of the School Planning Council should be made to the Council through its chair. If the complaint is not resolved, then the complainant may address the complaint to the district liaison officer who may investigate.
- If, following an investigation, a member of School Planning Council has been found guilty of misconduct, including but not limited to breach of confidentiality, the school board may either discharge the member and request that a new member be elected, or may appoint a new member if elections are not feasible. Before making such a decision, the school board shall ensure that the member has had the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The school board will not be required to provide an oral hearing, but shall take into account any written representations.

School Board Consultation with School Planning Councils

- Prior to the first draft of the preliminary budget of each year, the school board shall provide the School Planning Council with information and draft proposals for the educational services and educational programs in North Vancouver schools, the allocation of staff and resources in North Vancouver schools for the upcoming year and the matters contained in the School board's accountability contract relating to the school. The School Planning Council will have until April 30 of each year to respond. The superintendent may adjust these dates if necessary to integrate with the school district planning cycle, and may set different dates for different components of the consultation process.
- The School Board, through the school principal, must consult with the School Planning Council in respect of allocation of staff and resources in the school; matters contained in the school district accountability contract relating to the school; and educational services and educational programs in the school.
- The School Planning Council may provide the school board with input on any of these matters at any time.

Acceptance, Rejection, Modification of School Growth Plans

- In order for the proposed school plan to be adopted by the school board, it must be connected to the school district accountability contract, be in harmony with the school district strategic directions framework and be consistent with school district policies.
- If the school board rejects or modifies a proposed school plan, it shall provide reasons to the School Planning Council.

Annual Review of Policy

- This policy fulfills the statutory obligation of the school board to establish school planning councils and their operating procedures in a timely manner. This policy will

be reviewed on an annual basis.