

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONS 4300

SCHOOL COUNCILS 4310

1. Rationale

In accordance with the *Education Act* and Ontario Regulation 612/00, each school of the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) shall have a school council. The purpose of the school council is to improve student achievement and well-being and enhance the accountability of the education system by making recommendations to the school and the board. This is achieved through the ongoing and valued parent/guardian, school staff, and community participation and communication for a shared sense of accountability for public education.

2. Policy

It is the policy of the SCDSB to enable school councils to be engaged community partners, in an advisory capacity to the principal, for the improvement of student achievement and well-being in safe and nurturing learning environments within the local school, and throughout the SCDSB.

3. Definitions

3.1 School council is an advisory body that makes recommendations to the school principal and/or the board on matters as stated in the *Education Act*, applicable legislation, and board policy.

3.2 Advisory body is a group established to provide advice and recommendations. An advisory body does not have final decision-making power. (*Ministry of Education, School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001.*)

3.3 School community includes but is not limited to parents/guardians, school administrators, teaching staff, support staff, students, and members of the local community.

4. Guidelines

4.1 Ministry of Education:

4.1.1 establishes regulations regarding school councils; and,

4.1.2 reports annually to members of school councils on education in the province.

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- 4.2 Board of Trustees:
 - 4.2.1 establish board policy regarding school councils;
 - 4.2.2 consult with school councils to ensure that parents/guardians, through their school councils, are able to influence decisions affecting their children's education and responds to their recommendations; and,
 - 4.2.3 facilitate the communication and networking opportunities among school councils through a series of meetings for school council members organized by the Parent Involvement Committee.

- 4.3 Director of Education:
 - 4.3.1 ensures Policy 4310 – School Councils is implemented;
 - 4.3.2 consults with school councils on board planning processes and implementation plans that relate to student achievement, well-being, and the accountability of the education system to parents/guardians; and,
 - 4.3.3 responds to their recommendations.

- 4.4 Principals:
 - 4.4.1 familiarize the school council with the *Education Act*, Ontario Regulation 612/00 and related guidelines;
 - 4.4.2 collaborate with their school council to make the education system more accountable to the school community;
 - 4.4.3 promote, support, and guide the school council, in their advisory role, to be an effective voice for parents/guardians;
 - 4.4.4 encourage the school council to be as representative of the school community as is reasonable;
 - 4.4.5 consult and engage school council on matters that will impact the school community and the wider community, including but not limited to, the school action and equity plan, the field trip plan, and the fundraising plan; and,
 - 4.4.6 receive and respond to school council recommendations.

- 4.5 School councils:
 - 4.5.1 act within the scope of their duties as stated in legislation and board policy;
 - 4.5.2 promote and improve student learning, in an advisory capacity, through active participation and communication;
 - 4.5.3 involve and represent the school community by consulting with all parents/guardians of the school's students;
 - 4.5.4 make recommendations related to the school to the school principal; and,
 - 4.5.5 make recommendations that are broader in scope than the local school to the school principal for direction or as appropriate to a board official or board committee.

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5. Administrative procedures

The Director of Education is authorized to provide the administrative procedures necessary to implement this policy.

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