

**SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73 (KAMLOOPS/THOMPSON)
POLICY**

Reference No. 247

Effective Date
July 9, 2007

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

The Board of School Trustees of School District No. 73 (Kamloops/Thompson) supports the establishment of School Planning Councils for the purposes set out in the *School Act*.

Where a school is able to supply volunteer representatives as contemplated by the *School Act*, the School Board will establish a School Planning Council for that school. Where no teacher or parent representatives are put forward within a reasonable period, the School Board shall consider whether it will make appointments to a School Planning Council for that school.

No remuneration to members shall be provided other than reasonable and necessary expenses and normal salary.

The School Board shall consult with the School Planning Council as required by the *School Act* and through the annual budget process.

The School Board recognizes its responsibility to ensure that School Planning Councils function effectively and in accordance with ethical standards and the *School Act* to represent the school community in the process of school planning.

DEFINITIONS

Consultation – Consultation, for the purposes of this policy, is a process where advice is sought from those affected by a decision, the advice is considered and then a decision is made given the best information available.

Consensus – Consensus, for the purpose of this policy, means a decision, which everyone on the council need not agree with in its entirety but one, which everyone on the council is prepared to accept and support.

Learning Community – Learning Community, for the purposes of this policy, is a coherent and collaborative environment for student learning resulting from a process of positive interactions involving trustees, staff, students and parents.

PROCEDURES:

1. Purpose and Role of School Planning Councils

- 1.1 The role of a School Planning Council is:
- a. Preparation of a proposed school plan.
 - b. Consultation on matters referred to it by the School Board, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designate.
 - c. Consultation on matters referred to it by the principal.
 - d. Consultation on matters referred to it by the Parent Advisory Council.
 - e. Consultation on matters referred to it by the staff.
 - f. Functions assigned in these procedures.
 - g. Functions that are ancillary to the above.
 - h. Approval of school fees as required by the School Act.

- 1.2 The following are not within the mandate of the School Planning Council:
 - a. Personal and confidential information on students, parents, teachers and other employees.
 - b. Performance or conduct of individual employees, students and parents.
 - c. Terms and conditions of individual employment contracts.
 - d. Activities beyond the roles set out in the *School Act* and this policy.

2. Support

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

3. Establishment

- 3.1 If no School Planning Council is in place in a school that is not a provincial resource program, the principal shall proceed as in (4.) below to obtain named representatives and shall report to the board when all representatives have been named. The board shall then establish a School Planning Council for that school.
- 3.2 For a school that is a provincial resource program, the School Board will consider the establishment of a School Planning Council on receipt of a request from at least 3 parents of students attending the provincial resource program. If the School Board decides to establish the School Planning Council, the principal will proceed to obtain named representatives as below.

4. Membership

- 4.1 The principal of the school, one teacher representative and three parent representatives comprise the membership of the School Planning Council for the school. If the school enrolls students in grades 10, 11 or 12, one student of school age enrolled in one of those grades shall be appointed annually by the principal after consulting with the students enrolled in those grades.
- 4.2 The principal shall consult with the Parent Advisory Council on its bylaws for the election of representatives to the School Planning Council to ensure that the bylaws safeguard the rights of parents to participate in this decision.
- 4.3 By September 30th of each school year, the principal of each school shall advise the Parent Advisory Council, if one exists, and the teachers in the school, of the need to elect representatives and the required process.
- 4.4 If there is no parent advisory council in the school, the principal shall notify parents and shall consider whether he or she is prepared to make any recommendations to the School Board for appointments of parent representatives, and shall report to the School Board no later than October 31st of the school year.

- 4.5 If an insufficient number of parent representatives are elected by the Parent Advisory Council by October 31st, the principal shall notify parents and shall consider whether he or she is prepared to make any recommendations to the School Board for appointments, and shall report to the Board no later than November 30th.
- 4.6 The principal shall coordinate the holding of the election for the teacher representative and shall ensure that the election is carried out by secret ballot and in accordance with the *School Act*.
- 4.7 If no teacher representative is named by October 31st, the principal shall notify teachers and shall consider whether he or she is prepared to make any recommendations to the School Board for appointments, and shall report to the School Board no later than November 30th.
- 4.8 Teachers and parent advisory councils may elect alternate representatives.
- 4.9 The principal may designate a vice-principal to act as his/her alternate for one or more meetings.
- 4.10 School Planning Council members will hold office for a one-year term and may be re-elected.

5. Inaugural meeting

- 5.1 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.

6. Chair

- 6.1 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 stead, the vice-principal shall perform the functions of chair for that meeting.

7. Meetings

- 7.1 School Planning Councils may invite others to attend and/or participate in their meetings but no such guest shall have a vote.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 The chair may require anyone to leave, other than a member, if he or she is disrupting the functioning of the council.
- 7.4 Alternates, when they are present but not functioning as the designated representatives, are observers.

- 7.5 A School Planning Council shall meet at least 3 times per school year, as decided at the inaugural meeting.
- 7.6 Quorum shall be the principal (or a vice-principal alternate) and two other members or their alternates.
- 7.7 The School Planning Council may meet by telephone or electronically, so long as all members can communicate with each other, and other participants can observe or audit proceedings.
- 7.8 Additional meetings may be convened at the call of the chair, upon at least one week's notice. Notice may be waived unanimously. An additional meeting must be called if requested by 3 members.
- 7.9 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.
- 7.10 The chair shall ensure that a record is kept in the custody of the school of meetings held and subjects discussed (in general terms) and decisions made.

8. Decision-making

- 8.1 School Planning Councils shall operate on consensus. Votes are not taken except on the approval of a proposed School Plan and on a proposed schedule of school fees. On matters other than the School Plan and school fees referred to the Council in accordance with 1.1, if the members of the Council cannot reach consensus, the Council will so report. Members may submit individual reports.
- 8.2 A vote shall be held to approve the proposed School Plan and any schedule of school fees before presentation to the School Board as required by the *School Act*. Each member shall have one vote. The chair shall vote at the same time as other members. Alternates may vote if they are the designated representatives for that meeting.
- 8.3 A School Planning Council may create sub-committees to investigate matters within the Council's jurisdiction and may invite additional participants to join the sub-committees.

9. Non-retaliation

- 9.1 Teacher representatives on the council are not subject to the direction of administration and will not suffer any discipline or retaliation through the employer for their participation in the council or for positions taken with respect to council business.
- 9.2 Any retaliation by administration or school staff members against parent representatives or their children for their participation in the council or for positions taken with respect to council business will not be permitted.

- 9.3 Any retaliation by parents against administrators, school staff or other parents for their participation in the council or for positions taken with respect to council business will not be permitted.
- 9.4 Any retaliation by school staff against administrators for their participation in the council or for positions taken with respect to council business will not be permitted.

10. Financial

- 10.1 Meeting expenses are the responsibility of the school.
- 10.2 Members may claim reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses in accordance with the school board policy governing employee expenses (Policy No. 307). Expense claim forms (other than the principal's) must be approved by the principal.
- 10.3 With the exception of the approval of a schedule of school fees, a School Planning Council has no power to raise or expend money.

11. Annual School Plan

- 11.1 The Council is responsible for the preparation of a proposed Annual School Improvement Plan, to be presented to the School Board no later than April 30th of each school year. This time may be extended by the Superintendent for extraordinary circumstances.
- 11.2 Any member may present a minority report to their constituent group and to the School Board.
- 11.3 A School Planning Council must consult with the school's 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 when deciding on the school plan.
- 11.4 A School Planning Council will also consult with other members of the school community regarding preparation of the school plan. Such consultation shall at a minimum provide notice of the draft proposed school plan to employees in the school. The School Planning Council shall provide employees with a reasonable opportunity for input into the school plan and consider such input when deciding on the school plan. The School Planning Council will consider what other groups and individuals who are important to the life of the school should be included in the consultation and how to communicate with them.
- 11.5 The School Improvement Plan must be ratified by the Parent Advisory Council and the school staff before recommendation to the Board.
- 11.6 The school will begin implementation of the School Improvement Plan in September immediately following approval of the plan by the Board.

12. Confidentiality and Conduct

- 12.1 From time to time, the School Planning Council may be provided with information by or on behalf of the School Board that has been designated as confidential. The members of the Council are expected not to disclose such information without permission given by or on behalf of the School Board and to abide by any restrictions or conditions placed on disclosure of the information.
- 12.2 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.
- 12.3 Members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in the conduct of Council business and to abide by the rulings of the chair.
- 12.4 Any member of a School Planning Council may request the district liaison officer/officers appointed under 2.1 to assist the School Planning Council in resolving internal disputes or problem-solving or improving its processes.
- 12.5 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.
- 12.6 If it appears to the School Board, following investigation, that a member of a School Planning Council has been guilty of misconduct, including but not limited to breach of confidentiality, the School Board may 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.

13. School Board Consultation with School Planning Councils

- 13.1 The School Board must consult with the School Planning Council in respect of (a) allocation of staff and resources in the school; (b) matters contained in the School Board's accountability contract relating to the school; (c) educational services and educational programs in the school; and, (d) the approval of a schedule of school fees. The principal will ensure these matters are considered.
- 13.2 A School Planning Council may provide the School Board with input on any of these matters at any time.
- 13.3 By February 28th, the School Board shall provide the School Planning Council with draft proposals for the educational services and educational programs in the school and the allocation of staff and resources in the school 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 March 31st 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.

14. Acceptance, Rejection, Modification of School Plans

- 14.1 In order for the proposed school plan to be adopted by the School Board, it must be consistent with the Board Goals, educational objectives, strategic directions and policies of the School Board, meet legal requirements, be supportable from available resources, and be reasonably likely to achieve its goals.
- 14.2 If the School Board rejects or modifies a proposed school plan, it shall provide reasons to the School Planning Council.