

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 73 (KAMLOOPS/THOMPSON)

POLICY 530.1

Effective Date, October 26, 2009

SCHOOL PLANNING COUNCILS

The Board of Education supports the establishment of School Planning Councils for the purposes set out in the *School Act*.

1. Where a school is able to supply volunteer representatives as contemplated by the *School Act*, the Board will establish a School Planning Council for that school. Where no teacher or parent representatives are put forward within a reasonable period, the Board shall consider whether it will make appointments to a School Planning Council for that school.
2. No remuneration to members shall be provided other than reasonable and necessary expenses and normal salary.
3. The Board shall consult with the School Planning Council as required by the *School Act* and through the annual budget process.
4. The 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.

5. 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 that everyone on the council need not agree with in its entirety but one that everyone on the council is prepared to accept and support.

6. Procedures

a) Purpose and Role of School Planning Councils

- i) Preparation of a proposed school plan.
- ii) Consultation on matters referred to it by the Board, the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designate.
- iii) Consultation on matters referred to it by the principal.
- iv) Consultation on matters referred to it by the Parent Advisory Council.
- v) Consultation on matters referred to it by the staff.
- vi) Functions assigned in these procedures.
- vii) Functions that are ancillary to the above.
- viii) Those matters referenced in Regulation 16 of this policy.

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- ix) Approval of new Specialty Academies and the annual approval of the schedule of fees for specialty academies offered in the school as required by the School Act.
 - b) The following are not within the mandate of the School Planning Council:
 - i) Personal and confidential information on students, parents, teachers and other employees.
 - ii) Performance or conduct of individual employees, students and parents.
 - iii) Terms and conditions of individual employment contracts.
 - iv) Activities beyond the roles set out in the *School Act* and this policy.
7. Support
- The Superintendent shall designate a District Officer(s) to act as liaison for School Planning Councils. The District Officer(s) will have the right to attend any meeting of a School Planning Council or a School Planning Council sub-committee, and may designate another District Officer to attend in his/her place.
8. Establishment
- a) If no School Planning Council is in place in a school that is not a provincial resource program, the principal shall proceed in accordance with Regulation 9 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.
 - b) For a school that is a provincial resource program, the Board will consider the establishment of a School Planning Council on receipt of a request from at least three (3) parents of students attending the provincial resource program. If the Board decides to establish the School Planning Council, the principal will proceed to obtain named representatives in accordance with Regulation 9.
9. Membership
- a) The principal of the school, one (1) teacher representative and three (3) parent representatives, one of whom should be a member of the Parent Advisory Council Executive, 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.
 - b) 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.

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- c) 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.
 - i) 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 Board for appointments of parent representatives, and shall report to the Board no later than October 31st of the school year.
 - ii) 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/she is prepared to make any recommendations to the Board for appointments, and shall report to the Board no later than November 30th.
 - iii) 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*.
 - iv) If no teacher representative is named by October 31st, the principal shall notify teachers and shall consider whether he/she is prepared to make any recommendations to the Board for appointments, and shall report to the Board no later than November 30th.
 - v) Teachers and Parent Advisory Councils may elect alternate representatives.
 - vi) The principal may designate a vice-principal to act as his/her alternate for one or more meetings.
 - vii) School Planning Council members will hold office for a one-year term and may be re-elected.

d) Inaugural Meeting

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.

e) Chair

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

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10. Meetings

- a) School Planning Councils may invite others to attend and/or participate in their meetings but no such guest shall have a vote.
- b) 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.
 - i) The chair may require anyone to leave, other than a member, if he/she is disrupting the functioning of the Council.
 - ii) Alternates, when they are present but not functioning as the designated representatives, are observers.
- c) A School Planning Council shall meet at least three (3) times per school year, as decided at the inaugural meeting.
- d) Quorum shall be the principal (or a vice-principal alternate) and two other members or their alternates. Where School Planning Councils have a membership of six or more, a quorum shall be 50% plus one (1) of which one must be the principal (or a vice-principal alternate).
- e) 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.
- f) Additional meetings may be convened at the call of the chair, upon at least one week notice. Notice may be waived unanimously. An additional meeting must be called if requested by three (3) members.
- g) 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.
- h) 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.
- i) Prior to their approval of a new Specialty Academy, the School Planning Council will consult with the Parent Advisory Council and hold a public meeting for parents of the school to consider input on any proposed Specialty Academy. The proposed Specialty Academy will be publicized prior to the date of the public meeting.

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- j) 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.
 - k) To the extent practical, the course outcomes and the proposed fees for any course for which fees for optional activities and materials will be charged, will be presented to the School Planning Council for input prior to implementation of such fees with an explanation of how the proposed fees will enhance or enrich course outcomes. Any departure from this will not affect the validity of a fee charged if it otherwise complies with Board Policy and the School Act.
11. Decision-making
- a) School Planning Councils shall operate on consensus. Votes are not taken except on the approval of a proposed School Plan and on the approval of new Specialty Academies and Specialty Academy Fees. On matters other than the School Plan and Specialty Academies and Specialty Academy Fees referred to the Council in accordance with Regulation 6(a) and 6(b), if the members of the Council cannot reach consensus, the Council will so report. Members may submit individual reports.
 - b) A vote shall be held to approve the proposed School Plan and any new Specialty Academies and any Specialty Academy Fees before presentation to the 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.
12. Non-retaliation
- a) 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.
 - b) 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.
 - c) 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.
 - d) 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.

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13. Financial

- a) Meeting expenses are the responsibility of the school.
- b) Members may claim reimbursement for reasonable and necessary expenses in accordance with [Policy 1136.1 Travel: Expenses and Insurance](#). Expense claim forms (other than the principal's) must be approved by the principal.
- c) A School Planning Council has no power to raise or expend money.

14. Annual School Plan

- a) The Council is responsible for the preparation of a proposed Annual School Improvement Plan, to be submitted to the Board no later than the last day of March of each school year. This time may be extended by the Superintendent for extraordinary circumstances.
- b) Any member may present a minority report to their constituent group and to the Board.
- c) A School Planning Council must consult with the school's Parent Advisory Council during preparation of the school plan. At a minimum, consultation shall be 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.
- d) 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.
- e) The School Improvement Plan must be ratified by the Parent Advisory Council and the school staff before recommendation to the Board.
- f) The school will begin implementation of the School Improvement Plan in September immediately following approval of the plan by the Board.

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15. Confidentiality and Conduct

- a) From time to time, the School Planning Council may be provided with information by or on behalf of the 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 Board and to abide by any restrictions or conditions placed on disclosure of the information.
- b) 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.
- c) Members are expected to be collaborative and respectful in the conduct of Council business and to abide by the rulings of the chair.
- d) Any member of a School Planning Council may request the District Officer(s) appointed under Regulation 7 to assist the School Planning Council in resolving internal disputes or problem-solving or improving its processes.
- e) 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 Officer(s).
- f) If it appears to the 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 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 Board shall ensure that the member has had the opportunity to respond to the allegations. The Board will not be required to provide an oral hearing, but shall take into account any written representations.

16. Board of Education Consultation with School Planning Councils

- a) The Board must consult with the School Planning Council in respect of:
 - i) Allocation of staff and resources in the school.
 - ii) Matters contained in the Board's Achievement Contract relating to the school.
 - iii) Educational services and educational programs in the school.
 - iv) The approval of new Specialty Academies and Specialty Academy Fees.

The principal will ensure these matters are considered.

- b) A School Planning Council may provide the Board with input on any of these matters at any time.

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- c) By February 28th, the 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 Board's Achievement 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 District planning cycle, and may set different dates for different components of the consultation process.

17. Acceptance, Rejection, Modification of School Plans

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