

School Council Participant Roles

School Council Chair

It is expected that the School Council Chairperson will be a parent of a student enrolled in the school. The Chair should be someone who can work collaboratively and knows how to organize programs and people. The Chair should actively encourage others to become involved in meaningful ways.

Typical Chairing duties include:

- Chair all meetings of the School Council;
- Coordinate with the Principal to co-create meeting agendas;
- Communicate with the Principal on a regular basis;
- Decide all matters relating to Rules of Order at the meetings;
- Ensure that School Council Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- Be the official spokesperson of the School Council;
- Ensure there is regular communication with the whole school community,
- Review any communication to the school community prior to distribution and include the Principal in same;
- Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Council;
- Comply with the School Councils Regulation by providing the school board with an annual report that summarizes the School Council's activities for the previous school year, including a financial statement relating to money, if any, handled by the School Council, no later than September 30th;
- Have general responsibility for all activities of the School Council;

Chair's Relationship with the Principal

The Chair's role is key to the success of the School Council. Partnerships work – so use them! One important responsibility is regular and ongoing communication with the school Principal. This relationship of mutual trust and respect must be nurtured, being mindful of common goals for the learning community.

Vice-Chair

On School Councils, the Chair depends on the Vice-Chair to undertake part of the work. The Vice-Chair is typically being groomed to run as Chair in the future.

Typically, the Vice-Chair's duties are to:

- In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities (while remaining in Vice-Chair position);
- In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the School Council;
- Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
- Ensure the appropriate management, in compliance with PIPA, of any personal information collected on behalf of the School Council;
- Assume responsibility, in consultation with the School Council, for communicating with the fundraising association or other parent groups within the School;
- Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;



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- Keep informed of relevant School and School Board policies;
- Prepare to run for the position of Chair in the future;
- Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

Secretary

The School Council Secretary typically will:

- Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
- Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other School Council documents, and ensure that all relevant documents (as per legislation) are available to the public in an accessible location in the School, for a period of 7 years;
- Maintain a dated record of all the members of the School Council who have knowingly provided their contact information (Permission to Contact Form), in compliance with PIPA;
- Distribute, as determined by the School Council, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;

Treasurer (if handling funds, depending on school board policy)

If the School Council is handling money, through fundraising activities or donations, the Treasurer will:

- Keep accurate records of all financial transactions;
- Ensure that records are available upon request of the School Board or school community;
- Be responsible for the deposits of all monies paid to the School Council in whatever bank, trust company, credit union or treasury branch the School Council may order;
- Present a full, detailed account of receipts and disbursements to the School Council as required by the School Council, and prepare the financial statements for the annual report;
- Supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the financial committee.

Principal

The Principal is the instructional leader who manages the day-to-day operations of the school and is a key member on School Council who promotes cooperation between the school and the community. The principal is the ultimate decision-maker in the school. The Principal implements the policies of Alberta Education and the local school board, ensures instruction is consistent with the *Programs of Study*, ensures the standards of education are met, evaluates the programs, maintains order and discipline within the school, evaluates and supervises teachers and supervises the evaluation and advancement of students.

As a provincially-mandated member of the School Council, the Principal:

- Works in collaboration with the Chair to co-create School Council agendas
- Supports the Chair in running efficient School Council meetings, as per the School Council Rules of Order
- Provides contextual information, as requested by the School Council, on matters relating to the school
- Promotes cooperation between the school and the community it serves
- Seeks input from the School Council, parents and community on major decisions that affect the school



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- Establishes, facilitates, communicates and encourages opportunities for School Council, parent and community engagement in school matters
- Encourages and supports the formation and continuous improvement of School Council
- Interprets and shares results of provincial achievement tests and diploma exams
- Shares information about the school community
- Provides information on the programs in the school and the needs of the students
- Refers School Council to the appropriate resource for information on laws, regulations and policies that affect School Council
- Enables the School Council to provide input into the school's education plan.

Teacher

Each School Council must have at least one Teacher Representative, as per the legislation. A Teacher Representative contributes to a successful School Council in the following ways:

- Promotes a collaborative, collegial model of decision making at the school and for the School Council and provides support for the decisions of the School Council
- Shares professional knowledge with School Council members
- Encourages parents and community members to become involved in school activities
- Shares School Council activities and information with other staff, parents and community members
- Follows the code of ethics and professional protocols set out by the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA)
- Represents the teachers' perspective.

Example: **Feature Teacher** on the agenda – a different teacher each month gives a brief update/summary of what their class/grade is doing. May want to include a few students as well (bring in new parents to the meetings).

Communication Specialist

The Communication Specialist works under the direct supervision of the School Council and undertakes all responsibilities in consultation and cooperation with the School Council Chair and the School Principal.

In general, the Communication Specialist applies his/her communications expertise to improve the links between the School Council and the School Community and to advance the goals and profile of the School Council.

The Communication Specialist of the School Council, in consultation with the Chair and the Principal, may:

- Assist the School Council in developing, implementing and evaluating a Communication Policy and Communications Plan.
- Prepare School Council Newsletters and the School Council's section of the School Newsletters.
- Provide information for the School Council section of the School website to inform of the purpose and structure of the School Council, highlight activities and accomplishments of the School Council and to promote parental involvement.
- Ensure that the information in the School Council section of the (School Name) Parent's Handbook is updated annually.



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- Develop promotional material for the Annual General Meeting, special events, projects and programs and other School Council materials as directed by the School Council and in keeping with the School Council Communications Policy and the Communications Plan.
- Collaborate with Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) in obtaining templates and samples for promotional and other School Council materials.
- Assist the Chair and the School Council by proofreading and editing reports, correspondence and other material, to ensure they reflect the School Council in a professional and consistent manner.
- Develop communication strategies which facilitate two-way communication between the School Council and the School Community. (Surveys, discussion groups, social media).
- Promote the School and its activities with the public (local media, community newspapers), as requested by the Principal.
- Assess the effectiveness of School Council publications, distribution systems, etc. and recommend improvements.
- Attend School Council meetings regularly.
- Managing social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, website).

Parents and others

Parents of children enrolled in the school form the majority of the members of School Council. The School Council may choose to include "Others" in their membership such as: Elders or Knowledge Keepers, religious leaders (ie. Imam; parish priest), School Resource Officer, School-Home Liaison (social worker), community newspaper columnist.

Parents and other members of the School Council will:

- Share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience;
- Encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals;
- Communicate information of interest to the School Council and the school community;
- Share information from School Council meetings with the community;
- Have a clear understanding of the School Council's purpose;
- Attend School Council meetings;
- Identify possible topics for agendas;
- Serve as a liaison between the School Council and their organization or area of responsibility.

