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School Council Handbook











Calgary Board of Education

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Welcome | You're Appreciated

The Board of Trustees of the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) ensures student success is at the forefront of every decision we make. We know that our students have their own goals and aspirations, and we want every student to have the opportunity to meet their potential.

Our students are among the best in the world and that is due, in part, to the active involvement of parents and community members. The Board of Trustees recognizes the rights and responsibilities of parents and the community to be involved in the education of their children and we are grateful for your outstanding contributions.

One of the most significant ways parents and community members can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students is through school councils.

By connecting students, schools and your community, school councils help nurture and inspire our students to achieve their full potential.

As a school council member, you will discover new and exciting ways to contribute to the education of students in your school. It is important work, and we appreciate your commitment. We look forward to working with you to provide all students with a foundation of learning that will allow them to thrive in life, work and continued learning.

Together, we will continue to achieve amazing results for our students.



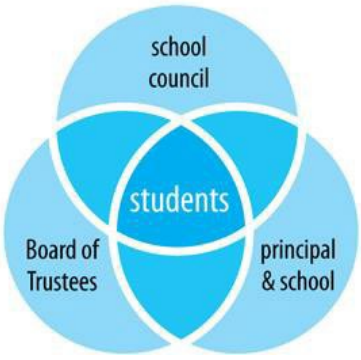
Jenny Regal **	Wards 1 & 2
Laura Hack *	Wards 3 & 4
Cynthia Cordova	Wards 5 & 10
Patricia Bolger	Wards 6 & 7
Susan Vukadinovic	Wards 8 & 9
Nancy Close	Wards 11 & 13
Charlene May	Wards 12 & 14

Board Chair

****Vice-Chair***

Partner | Unique Role of School Council

Parents and community members are important partners in public education. Through school councils, our partners can make significant and meaningful contributions to the learning opportunities provided to CBE students.



Under the *Education Act*, Alberta Education defines school councils as a collective association of parents, secondary students, the principal, teachers, and community representative(s) whose purpose is to advise the principal and the Board of Trustees respecting matters related to the school. School councils have legislated advisory and decision-making authority defined within the *Education Act* and the School Councils Regulation.

Every CBE school community is required to establish a school council. Working in collaboration with the principal and school community, school councils can help foster a supportive learning environment and create valuable opportunities for students to meet the standards of education set by the minister.

How School Councils Differ from Other Parent Groups

School councils exist to advise the principal and the Board of Trustees on school matters. The school principal and at least one teacher at the school must be members of the school council.

Parent societies are a formal group of parents, incorporated under the *Societies Act* for the purpose of raising funds for the school. A society is a separate legal entity from the school council. The school principal is not a member of this group but may participate in the meetings.

Other parent groups or associations may also exist at CBE schools, which are not incorporated and are not school councils.

School council meetings must be kept separate and distinct from the meetings of other parent groups. Meetings of parent groups can be held on the same date providing the meeting of one group officially comes to an end before the other meeting begins (e.g., school council meeting 7-8 p.m. and parent society meeting 8-9 p.m.). Meeting minutes must also be recorded separately.

Role | School Councils Are Valued

School councils perform an important advisory role at schools. They help ensure the parent and community perspective is represented in school decision-making. In addition, school councils share information about the school with the community.

The actions of the school council must reflect the expectations and beliefs of the school community, and school councils are bound by all CBE policies and regulations. School council functions include:

- ensuring students can meet the standards of education established by Alberta Education through supportive activities;
- consulting on annual school budgets and school development plans;

- advising the principal and the Board of Trustees on school matters;
- performing any duty or function delegated by the Board of Trustees;
- sharing ideas and information with other school councils and provincial organizations;
- communicating information to the school community and other school councils; and
- setting policies or creating by-laws that relate to the operations of school council, including budget, fundraising, meeting procedures and more.

Annual Report - under The *Education Act*, school councils are responsible for submitting an annual report to the Board of Trustees. This report helps the Board of Trustees measure and be accountable for parent and community involvement. The school council chair is responsible for submitting the report to the Board of Trustees annually. Although the Education Act has a Sept. 30 deadline, Trustees would appreciate receiving the report prior to the end of June. A copy of the report should also be provided to the school principal. Please scan a copy of the report and email it to the Board of Trustees, boardoftrustees@cbe.ab.ca

Note | any person volunteering in a school requires an electronic Police Information Check (ePIC).

What School Councils Are Not

School councils have self-governing authority related to the by-laws and operating procedures of the school council. Roles that are not to be taken on by a school council include: school governance, employment issues and school management. It is not the primary role of school councils to fundraise or to lobby.

A Culture of Respect & Collaboration

Fundraising

Fundraising is not an expected activity of school councils. In the event a school council undertakes a fundraising activity, consultation with the school principal should occur regarding appropriate accounting practices and procedures.

School councils cannot be incorporated under the Societies Act. Although a school council can decide it would like to undertake fundraising, it cannot be a program that would require a gaming license from the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission, such as bingos, casinos or raffles. Such fundraising must be done by a Parent Society.

At least one school council member will participate in a meeting with the principal and/or parent society to understand the regulations related to fundraising and donations, set goals and targets for the fundraising of the school, and decide collaboratively how the funds will be used in the school. EducationMatters can support school-based fundraising campaigns. Visit EducationMatters.ca to check out their FAQ section to learn more.

Playground Planning

Getting a playground from concept to ribbon cutting takes collaboration, planning, funding and time. CBE staff can guide and support school councils and parent societies through this complex process. Your school principal is the first point of contact when considering a new or replacement playground project. The Playground Project Brief document is a resource to review prior to beginning a project.

Responsibilities

School council members are responsible for creating a welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning and work environment. Each school council must decide how to fulfill this responsibility in the school community through activities such as:

- seeking the views of the school community (e.g., through questionnaires, informal discussions, topic-specific meetings) and then representing those views actively and accurately to the school principal and/or the Board of Trustees;
- encouraging parent involvement at the school by informing the school community about school activities and opportunities to provide input into decision-making, including but not limited to school council meetings;
- becoming well informed about what is happening at the school and throughout the system, and sharing information with the school community when appropriate;
- focusing on the best interests of all students;
- becoming familiar with the Board of Trustees' Governance Policies and pertinent CBE Administrative Regulations, and understanding how they impact the school community; and
- maintaining high ethical standards and setting ground rules of respect for meetings.

Function | How School Councils Work

Each school council can operate in a manner that is meaningful for that school and community. For this reason, many kinds of councils have evolved. Each one is designed to meet the needs of its school but must be focused on creating a strong learning environment for students. AR5001 supports this work by outlining expectations for establishment meetings and the functioning of the school council.

There are two common governance/operational models that are used by school councils:

Assembly/Town Hall Model – Decisions are made at regular, open meetings of the entire school community. The executive members act only to carry out the wishes of the assembly.

If this model is chosen, the school council may include all parents of students at the school who wish to be members.

Representative Model – Acts like a board of directors to conduct the day-to-day business and reports back to the wider school community two or more times a year.

There are two common models frequently used by school councils to make decisions:

Consensus – This model requires that each decision maker agrees to the outcome, but not necessarily to all parts of it. Council members agree the total package best meets everyone's needs and supports it on that basis.

Majority Vote – Ample time is required for school council members to become informed on the issue and to discuss it thoroughly.

Majority vote is effective when it is not likely that a compromise will be reached. This style of decision making can create a win/lose situation.

Communication with Your School Community

School councils and parent societies operate under the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA). PIPA legislation governs the collection and use of personal information for organizations that are not public bodies.

More information about protecting privacy when communicating is available in the Alberta School Councils (ASCA) Resource Guide.

The ASCA Guide also provides guidance on how to collect and dispose of personal information to ensure it aligns with PIPA. This includes:

- Obtaining consent to collect, use and/or disclose personal information from parents, students, school council members or others from the school community.
- Stating the purpose for and intended use of personal information when consent is sought and then using it only for the stated purpose.
- Collecting only the essential personal information required to fulfill its role in the school.
- Ensuring that all personal information is protected from unauthorized access and destroyed safely once it is no longer needed.

Consent should be collected annually. It is also recommended that any consent documents be destroyed (collected through paper forms or email) annually.

If communicating through social media, please review the CBE's social media guidelines for school councils for guidance.

School Council Communication

The school council is legally an extension of the school. Therefore, the school can communicate with the school community on behalf of the school council (including about any school council fundraising activities) using CBE communication channels. All communication is at the principal's discretion.

CBE email accounts and direct access to CBE communication tools are not provided to school councils.

The following types of school council messages *cannot* be communicated through school/CBE communication channels:

- For the purpose of government lobbying/advocacy.
- Content to be used for individuals or organizations to engage in their own business or financial transactions for personal financial gain; or
- In a manner that is unprofessional and undermines the authority of the principal and school staff.

The school council, through the principal, can invite parents or community members to subscribe to a separate school council contact list, which would not be considered a CBE communication channel.

Things to consider when setting up an email account and contact list for a school council:

- Choose a school council email that is easy to identify but is non-personal. (e.g. acbschoolcouncil@gmail.com)
- Ensure enough people have access to the school council account so that if one person is no longer involved or leaves the school, the account can still be accessed.
- Update your contact list at least annually. Parent contact information cannot be provided by the school.

Things to consider when sending messages to parents on your contact list:

- Ensure you understand PIPA and CASL legislation (Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation) and how it applies to school council messages.
- Do not share parent contact information with other parents, unless you have specific consent to do so.
- Put parent email addresses in the BCC (blind carbon copy) field of all emails to ensure contact information is kept private.
- As mentioned above, the ASCA Resource Guide provides additional guidance on collecting and disposing of information.

Parent Society Communication

Parent societies operate independently from the school and school council. CBE must comply with CASL legislation and cannot send commercial messages through SchoolMessenger on behalf of the parent society. The school cannot provide contact information for the parent society to use.

Schools *can* send messages to the community about the contribution a parent society is making, but it must be non-commercial, focused on the impact on learning, and clearly sent from the school or CBE employee, rather than from the parent society.

The school may send a message that mentions parent society fundraising activities if it meets all these conditions:

- The message does not include commercial details (like the cost of an activity)
- The message does not include a call to action or direct invitation to engage in a commercial activity (like a link to an order form)
- The primary focus of the message is not on the fundraising activity (when asking "what's this message about?" the answer should not be the fundraising activity but rather on the impact the society's impact is having on students)
- The message is not worded as coming from or being sent on behalf of another person, business, or organization (for example, the message should not use "we" to mean your parent society, or have the parent society volunteer name as the signature at the end)

Given a parent society is a separate entity, the school may not send invitations to subscribe, or links to the sign-up page for the parent society mailing list, even using the commercial broadcast type in SchoolMessenger.

School Websites

All school websites have a page for the school council, and a separate page (or pages) for parent societies, as needed, under the "Get Involved" tab. The pages for the school council and society cannot be combined, even if many of the members are involved in both. School councils and parent societies are different entities and are governed differently.

- The content on these pages can be updated by the school and can include:
  - Names of school council or society officers;
  - Council or society contact information
  - Council or society meeting agendas and schedules for upcoming meetings (including start/end time and location), and minutes of past meetings;
  - Links to external council or society website or social media presence;
  - Society bylaws and certificate of incorporation; or
  - Fundraiser links and details.

Codes of Conduct and Ethics

Having codes of conduct and ethics for members can dispel misunderstandings about the school council, what it does and how it deals with issues. When those involved in discussion and decision-making at a school embrace both a code of ethics and conduct that speak to collaboration, cooperation, continuous improvement and understanding, conflicts can be dealt with more effectively. *See page 31 of this handbook.*

Membership | Common Roles

Membership in the school council is defined in regulation and in the Education Act. AR5001-School Councils will support school council members in understanding membership options of the council. The majority of the members of a school council must be parents or guardians of students or children at the school. Common school council positions are:

Principal – The principal is responsible for the school's instructional leadership, day-to-day operations, and promoting cooperation between the school and community.

Some typical duties include:

- holding an establishment meeting where no school council exists as outlined in the School Councils Regulation;
- establishing advisory committee if fewer than five parents at establishment meeting.
- seeking input from parents and community on major decisions that affect the school.
- establishing, facilitating and communicating opportunities for parent and community involvement; and
- providing information on school programs and the needs of students.

School Council Chair – The school council chair needs to be a parent of a student in the school. The chair actively encourages others to become involved in meaningful ways and organizes both programs and people.

Some typical duties include:

- ensuring school council is represented at Community of School Councils (COSC) meetings;
- chairing and organizing meetings;
- ensuring responsibilities for council members are clearly defined;
- striving to ensure the diversity of the school community is represented on council;
- communicating regularly with the school principal;
- ensuring regular communication with the school community;
- ensuring an annual report is submitted to the Board of Trustees; and
- staying informed about policies that impact school councils

School Council Vice-Chair – This role may be shared with the chair through the creation of co-chairing positions. The vice-chair assists the chair and prepares to become the school council chair in the future.

Some typical duties include:

- chairing meetings in the absence of the school council chair;
- helping to prepare for school council meetings; and
- preparing to assume role of chair in the future.

Key Communicator – The key communicator works to build and enhance a connection between parents/school communities and Calgary Board of Education. Key communicators liaise with school councils, enable more informed citizen input and share information, ideas and concerns as part of a system-wide network of involved parents.

Some typical duties include:

- attending Community of School Councils (COSC) meetings throughout the year; and
- attending school council and executive meetings.

Secretary – The secretary records meeting minutes and ensures accuracy of minutes.

Some typical duties include:

- acting as recorder at meetings and ensuring the minutes accurately reflect discussion;
- keeping minutes, correspondence, and records (including copies of school council annual reports) filed in an orderly, publicly accessible fashion, in accordance with the Personal Information Protection Act;
- possessing working knowledge of school council bylaws/operating procedures; and
- distributing meeting and event notices.

Treasurer – If the school council is handling money, the treasurer keeps an accurate record of funds and financial transactions.

Some typical duties include:

- keeping accurate records of all financial transactions;
- reporting to school council on the receipt and expenditure of funds; and
- ensuring records are available upon the request of the school district.

Teacher – Each school council must have at least one teacher who is elected or appointed by the teachers at the school.

Some typical duties include:

- working with school principal to provide information to the school council.

Note | the teacher role can be rotated amongst various teaching staff throughout the year.

Community Member – The community member is an optional position that is strongly encouraged. A community member can provide a valuable perspective and connect the school to the larger community. The community member is not there to promote their own personal interests or agendas.

Some typical duties include:

- helping the school and school council to build partnerships with the larger community; and
- acts as a resource to promote cooperative ventures between the community and the school to enhance student learning.

High School Student – Applying to high schools only, the high school student shares a student perspective on issues and communicates information from the school council to fellow students.

Some typical duties include:

- presenting a student perspective on issues;
- seeking other students' views to share with the school council; and
- communicating information from school council to fellow students.

Community of School Councils (COSC)

The Board of Trustees is committed to working closely with parents and community members to ensure that the defined Results for all students are achieved.

The Board of Trustees has established a Community of School Councils (COSC). This committee is comprised of school council members, members of the Board of Trustees and representatives from CBE administration. The purpose of this committee is for CBE leaders and parents to have an opportunity to work together, to share information, to discuss concerns and to plan for the future.

COSC meetings take place during a school year and will be held using a virtual or in-person format. In-person meetings are held at the Education Centre, 1221 - 8 Street S.W., with free underground parking provided.

Once COSC meeting dates are set, they are posted on the School Councils meeting page. Invitations are emailed to school councils prior to each meeting. Ensure contact information is up to date by sending an email to schoolcouncilinfromation@cbe.ab.ca. Information provided at COSC meetings will be made available on the School Councils meeting page to allow access for school council members, parents and community members.

Connecting School Councils to the System

CBE Connections

CBE Connections, is an electronic newsletter, sent to all parents / guardians of CBE students. This monthly newsletter contains timely information about CBE events and activities. CBE Connections also includes a section with information and updates specifically for School Council members.

Inviting Trustees to Schools

Trustees are interested in supporting schools, parents, students and stakeholders. School councils are responsible for inviting a ward trustee to their school events and meetings when appropriate. Invitations can be emailed to a trustee directly or you can contact the Office of the Board of Trustees.

Trustees attend school council meetings to enhance communication. A trustee can clarify board decisions as well as gather input from council members that is beneficial to the board.

Note | for any formal events such as graduation, it is the responsibility of the principal to invite the trustee through the Protocol for Elected Official, Dignitary, Indigenous Elder and Knowledge Keeper Involvement at CBE events.

Public Board Meetings

Everyone is welcome to attend public board meetings from September to June. Meetings are held in person beginning at 11 a.m. at the Education Centre, 1221 - 8 Street S.W. Information about board meetings and a link to listen live can be found on the Public Board Meetings page.

Members of the public can verbally address the Board of Trustees on educational issues at some meetings.

CBE News

The CBE communicates system news in a variety of ways, a couple of which are noted below. We encourage school councils to take advantage of these opportunities to stay informed.

1. **School Websites** – Important updates are posted on the CBE public website and school websites throughout the year.

2. **SchoolMessenger** – When appropriate, news is also sent to parents and guardians through SchoolMessenger. Due to CASL legislation, only those parents/guardians who have opted to receive commercial messages will receive electronic messages about topics such as fees, fundraisers, school sales or activities with associated costs. Subscribe to receive all school and system-based messages.

3. **Social media** – The CBE regularly posts updates to our Instagram and Facebook accounts. Follow us!

Resources | Support for School Councils

Access to Information Act (ATIA)
https://www.alberta.ca/access-to-information-act

Alberta School Council Resource (ASCA) Guide
This manual, developed by ASCA in collaboration with Alberta Education, provides school councils in Alberta with information to get started.
https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/public/download/documents/181387

CBE Board of Trustees' Governance Policies
www.cbe.ab.ca/policies/governance.asp

CBE Board of Trustees' Board Meeting Procedures
https://cbe.ab.ca/GovernancePolicies/Board-Meeting-Procedures.pdf

CBE Board of Trustees | Board Meetings
https://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/board-of-trustees/Pages/Board-Meetings.aspx

CBE Administrative Regulations
http://cbe.ab.ca/about-us/policies-and-regulations/Pages/Administrative- Regulations.aspx

CBE Administrative Regulation 5001 – School Councils and Parent Societies –
https://www.cbe.ab.ca/GovernancePolicies/AR5001.pdf

CBE Administrative Regulation 7008 – Fundraising and Donations
http://cbe.ab.ca/GovernancePolicies/AR7008.pdf

Administrative Regulation 5003 – Volunteers http://cbe.ab.ca/GovernancePolicies/AR5003.pdf

- All volunteers must have a received a Police Information Check (PIC) prior to volunteering at any activity for the school council (on CBE property or other property).

Alberta School Councils' Association
The Board of Trustees will pay the cost of Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) memberships for any CBE school councils who are interested in this opportunity.

Memberships need to be renewed on an annual basis. Membership terms run from July 1 to June 30.

ASCA provides valuable support and services to school councils across the province. To learn more about ASCA, please visit their website.

To obtain a membership for the current school year, just fill out this form. Once the form has been filled out, you are able to take advantage of ASCA's resources and services for the rest of the school year.

Alberta Education
Provides information for parents, students and educators as well as contact information for school boards and schools throughout Alberta. www.education.alberta.ca

Education Act
https://www.alberta.ca/K-12-education-legislation-and-regulations.aspx#jumplinks-0

School Councils Regulation
https://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/MinOrders/2019/Education/2019_028_Education.pdf

Societies Act
https://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=S14.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=0779726936

Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission
www.aglc.ca

Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)
http://servicealberta.ca/pipa-overview.cfm

Protection of Privacy Act (POPA)
https://www.alberta.ca/protection-of-privacy-act
Governs the protection of privacy related to personal information in the public sector (CBE and CBE employees).

Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)
https://fightspam.gc.ca/eic/site/030.nsf/eng/home

Know | Your Board of Trustees

Citizens of Calgary elect trustees to govern the Calgary Board of Education, one of the best education systems in the world. Trustees are elected during the municipal election every four years.

The Board of Trustees provides leadership for the CBE by defining the Mission (different than the core values), Results and Operational Expectations for the organization on behalf of its community.

The Board's job is to represent, lead and serve Calgarians and to govern the CBE. This is done by establishing expectations for organizational results and quality operational performance and then monitoring actual performance against those expectations. This monitoring takes place at public board meetings.

Governance Model

The CBE Board of Trustees uses the Coherent Governance® model to identify values and perspectives that must underlie all organizational decisions, activities, practices, budgets and goals. Policies can be found on our website at www.cbe.ab.ca/policies/governance.asp.

One of the sections contained in the Board of Trustees' Governance Policies is a section entitled "Results." This section identifies the expected outcomes for CBE students. The Board of Trustees annually monitor progress on the Results in meeting the standards set out by the Minister in the Programs of Study.



Contact | Your Board of Trustees



Trustee Jenny Regal
Wards 1 & 2
jelregal@cbe.ab.ca



Trustee Laura Hack
Wards 3 & 4
laahack@cbe.ab.ca



Trustee Cynthia Cordova
Wards 5 & 10
cycordova@cbe.ab.ca



Trustee Patricia Bolger
Wards 6 & 7
pjbolger@cbe.ab.ca



Trustee Susan Vukadinovic
Wards 8 & 9
suvukadinovic@cbe.ab.ca



Trustee Nancy Close
Wards 11 & 13
neclose@cbe.ab.ca



Trustee Charlene May
Wards 12 & 14
clmay@cbe.ab.ca

Success | CBE Mission, Results and Values

Mission

Each student, in keeping with their individual abilities and gifts, will complete high school with a foundation of learning necessary to thrive in life, work and continued learning.

Results

- Academic success
- Citizenship
- Personal development
- Character

Values

- Students come first.
- Learning is our central purpose.
- Public education serves the common good.

Protect | Insurance

In accordance with the *Education Act*, the CBE carries a general liability policy to cover bodily injury and property damage claims against the CBE, its employees and school councils, while they are performing their duties.

The insurance states: “The term ’school council’ means an unincorporated entity which operates within its school under the authority of the principal of the school.”

The role of a school council is mostly one of an advisory capacity. Therefore, when a school council decides to independently organize an activity, such as a ski program or fundraiser, it cannot organize it in the name of the school council but as a parent group or a society (an entity incorporated under the *Societies Act*). Any liabilities that may arise from such activity will be the responsibility of the parent group/society. The CBE’s insurance will not respond to any claims under those circumstances. It is thus essential that the parent group/society obtain their own insurance to protect themselves from potential claims or lawsuits.

When a parent group/society organizes activities, any announcements or notices sent out to parents must:

- not be written on the school’s letterhead,
- specifically state that the activity is not being organized by the school or the CBE,
- state that all costs or fees are to be made payable to the parent group/society.

For the CBE’s insurance to respond to any potential claims or lawsuits, the principal needs to be actively involved in the planning, organizing and supervising of the activity rather than merely supporting or attending the parent group/society’s activity. As with all activities, it is the principal’s obligation to exercise the necessary duty of care including adherence to all applicable CBE policies and procedures.

If the school council is following the definition of the *Education Act* and is merely acting in an advisory role there is no need to purchase insurance. If, however, the school council is organizing extra activities (e.g., ski program, bake sale, etc.) it may do so only as a parent group or society and may wish to consider obtaining a liability policy to protect the individual members of the parent group/society from any losses or lawsuits.

Marsh Canada Inc. Insurance Brokers have an insurance program available for parent groups and societies. The contact for this program is Shekar Velu (Shekar.Velu@marsh.com). The CBE provides this information merely as a means of reference and does not in any way endorse this program.

Offer | Additional Information

Privacy Legislation

Two separate statutes govern the use of personal information within schools:

1. POPA and ATIA – School boards and school employees operate under the Protection of Privacy Act (POPA) and the Access to Information Act (ATIA). These pieces of provincial legislation are intended to strike a balance between the public's right to know and the individual's right to privacy.

   As of June 11, 2025, POPA and ATIA replaced the former Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP).

   Most information and forms have been updated on the CBE website and hard-copy forms. For more information, visit the CBE website - Protection of Privacy and Access to Information page.

2. PIPA – School councils and fundraising societies operate under the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA). This legislation governs the collection and use of personal information for organizations that are not public bodies.

Remuneration

In accordance with the provincial School Councils Regulation, no school council member shall receive any remuneration for acting as a member of the council.

Additional Questions/Resources

If you have any additional questions, please visit this link for more information.

Alberta School Council Resource Manual
https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/public/download/documents/181387
This manual was developed by the Alberta School Councils' Association in collaboration with Alberta Education. It provides school councils in Alberta with all the information they need to get started, be organized, and operate effectively and efficiently.

If you still have questions after reviewing this document, please email the School Council Information inbox.

Checklists, Templates & Samples

Checklist for School Council Chair

- ☐ Have you discussed setting the date of the first school council meeting of the year with the school principal?
- ☐ Has an invitation been sent to all parents/community members to attend the first school council meeting of the year?
- ☐ Working with the school principal, has a schedule for regular meetings for the school council been identified?
- ☐ Have members of the community been identified who may be interested in sitting on the school council executive?
- ☐ Has a teacher been identified from the school staff to be part of the school council?
- ☐ High school only – has a student been identified to be part of the school council?
- ☐ Is there a mail slot in the school office that can be used by the school council?
- ☐ Does the school office have the contact information for the school council executive?
- ☐ Have the members of the school council executive been provided with a copy (or appropriate web links) to information such as the school development plan, the Education Plan, etc.
- ☐ Have bylaws for the school council been reviewed and revised as necessary for the current school year?
- ☐ There is a requirement to keep all records for seven years. Has a system for filing this information in the school office been established?
- ☐ Invite the local trustee to at least one school council meeting during the year.
- ☐ Local MLAs may be interested in contacting the school council chair. Have you provided your contact information to the local MLAs?
- ☐ June - Have you submitted your annual report to the Board of Trustees and the principal. Although the *Education Act* states a Sept. 30 deadline, trustees would appreciate receiving annual reports prior to the end of June. To send to the Board of Trustees, email or mail through the school to: Office of the Board of Trustees, Education Centre, 1221 - 8 Street S.W., Calgary, AB T2R 0L4.

Checklist for Principals

- ☐ September – does the school have a school council? If not, has an establishment meeting been scheduled in accordance with the School Councils Regulation?
- ☐ Have you met with the school council chair this year to discuss such items as membership on the school council (i.e. has a community member been selected) meeting notice for the first meeting, etc.
- ☐ Working with the school council chair, has a schedule for regular meetings for the school council been identified?
- ☐ School council meetings and meetings of a school society (where applicable) cannot be scheduled for the same time.
- ☐ September – Has a teacher been identified to be part of the school council?
- ☐ September – High school only – has a student been identified to be part of the school council?
- ☐ Is there a mail slot in the school office that can be used by the school council?
- ☐ There is a requirement to keep all records for seven years. Has a system for filing this information in the school office been established?
- ☐ Does the treasurer of the school council require any information regarding accounting practices/procedures that are used in the school?
- ☐ Does the school council understand the process to invite the ward trustee to a school council meeting during the year? Do they need any assistance or information regarding this?
- ☐ Does the school have the contact information for the school council executive?
- ☐ June – Have you received the school council's annual report? The school council chair is responsible for submitting the report to the Board of Trustees and the principal. Although the *Education Act* states a Sept. 30 deadline, Trustees would appreciate receiving annual reports prior to the end of June to send to the Board of Trustees, email to boardoftrustees@cbe.ab.ca or mail through the school to: Office of the Board of Trustees, Education Centre, 1221 - 8 Street S.W., Calgary, AB T2R 0L4

Checklist for Overall School Council Operations

- ☐ Bylaws/operating procedures have been established (more information available in *School Councils Regulation* and Alberta School Council Resource Manual)
- ☐ Bylaws/operating procedures reviewed and updated as needed each year? How and when will the school council's bylaws/operating procedures be amended?
- ☐ Do you have a school council mission/purpose?
- ☐ Do you have school council goals (purpose made more specific)?
- ☐ What model of governance will you adopt?
- ☐ What will be your decision-making model? Who can vote? Does your school council need quorum? How will quorum be defined?
- ☐ What will be the meeting procedures for regular, annual and special meetings? How often will council meet? Will council use Robert's Rules of Order?
- ☐ Who are the members of school council? What will be the executive positions? What will the terms be? Does executive have authority beyond other council members? How will vacancies be filled?
- ☐ What are the roles and responsibilities of the members of the school council and the executive of the school council?
- ☐ What committees, if any, will the school council have? How will the school council create committees and their terms of reference?
- ☐ What will be the relationship of the school council with the fundraising society, if there is a society?
- ☐ To whom will the school council report? (more information available in School Councils Regulation)
- ☐ What will be the purpose of a fundraising activity? How will the school council's funds be managed? Who will manage the funds? Who will decide how the funds are distributed? What is the policy of the school district regarding school council funds?
- ☐ Will the school council develop policy in addition to the bylaws/operating procedures to assist it in its year to year operation? How will policy be created? (reference *Education Act Section 22 (5)*)
- ☐ What will be your codes of conduct and ethics?
- ☐ Who will be the school council member designated to ensure the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and privacy issues are understood and implemented for the school council? Who will be the school council member responsible to manage the personal information of school council members and school community members involved with the school council?
- ☐ What will be the process to address an internal school council dispute?

Sample | School Council Annual Report

(can also be accessed as a Word template at cbe.ab.ca/schoolcouncils)

(NAME) School Council Annual Report

email to | Board of Trustees at boardoftrustees@cbe.ab.ca
mail to | Board of Trustees, Calgary Board of Education, 1221 – 8 Street S.W. Calgary, AB T2R 0L4

School: _____ **Reporting Year:** _____

Executive: *List the members who held positions as officers in the past year*

Principal _____

Chair _____

Vice Chair _____

Teacher _____

Community _____

Secretary _____

Treasurer _____

Student Rep (if applicable) _____

Other _____

Other _____

Meeting Dates: *List the dates of regular school council meetings*

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Date of First School Council Meeting of the Year: _____

School Council Activities – *Summarize the major activities of the past year and provide an overview of activities or initiatives planned for the next year*

Financial Statement (attached) – *Summarizes the finances handled by the school council during the past year, if applicable.*

Name of School Council Chair: _____

(printed)

Signature of School Council Chair: _____

Date: _____

Sample | Agenda

(NAME) School Council Meeting
Date Time
Location

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Welcome and Introductions** 5 minutes
3. **Approval of the Agenda** 5 minutes
   (Members may request an item be added)
4. **Approval of the Minutes from the Last Meeting** 5 minutes
5. **Business Arising from the Minutes** 10 minutes
   5.1
   5.2
   5.3
6. New Business 30 minutes
   6.1
   6.2
   6.3
7. **Reports** 20 minutes
   7.1 Principal's Report
   7.2 Key Communicator Report
   7.3 Community Member Report
   7.4
   7.5
8. **Next Meeting Date**

Adjournment

Sample | Minutes

(NAME) School Council Meeting

Date Time

1. Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order by S. Smith at 7:03 p.m. and a quorum was present.

2. Welcome and Introductions

S. Smith, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were made and a special welcome was given to guest Ms. S. Smart.

3. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented, or, as amended.

4. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on (date) were approved as presented. (The minutes should be distributed prior to the meeting. They can be approved as distributed and don't have to be read aloud at the meeting. If there are errors indicate the minutes were approved with corrections.)

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 In follow-up to the request to provide the school office with contact information for school council members, to date, there are some members who have not provided this information.

5.2 The date for the upcoming concert, previously discussed, will be October 10, 2016.

6. New Business

6.1 School Fees – This item was discussed at length. The following suggestions were provided to Principal Smith as options for collecting fees.

6.2 Teacher Appreciation Luncheon – G. Gray volunteered to head the appreciation committee. It was decided that a breakfast for school staff would be provided instead of a luncheon.

Motion: That the School Council ask the School Fundraising Association to report on any fundraising activities that exist. Moved by W. White. Seconded by J. Jones CARRIED.

7. Reports

7.1 Principal's Report – J. Jones reported that the school has welcomed 650 students this year as well as five new teachers. Upcoming events for the next month include parent/teacher interviews, a pizza lunch for students and a special presentation to students by the Calgary police on safety.

7.2 Key Communicator Report – W. White reported that the school newsletter will include information about the school council. In addition, the local community newsletter will contain information about upcoming school events.

7.3 Community Member Report – No report at this time.

8. Next Meeting - The next meeting will be held on date, at time. The location will be .

9. Adjourned - Meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Notes prepared by G. Gray, Secretary: (Signature)

Approved by S. Smith, Chair: (Signature)

Sample | School Council Bylaws/Operating Procedures

NAME

1. The name of the school council shall be ABC School Council.

MISSION

2. To foster the well-being and effectiveness of our school community and to enhance student learning

GOALS

3. The goals of the school council, in keeping with the Education Act and the School Councils Regulation, are to:
   a. provides advice (i.e., input) to the school principal and employees on issues of importance, such as the school philosophy, mission and vision, school discipline policies, school improvement plans, programs and budget allocations to meet student needs
   b. stimulates continuous improvement through meaningful involvement by all members of the school community
   c. facilitate collaboration among concerned participants of the school community
   d. supports the school in its efforts to focus teachers' time and school resources on the essential tasks of teaching and learning

GOVERNANCE – (Select one model only)

Representative Model

4. (1) The membership of the school council shall consist of:
   a. (x) number of parents of students enrolled in ABC School (one of the parents shall be a parent of a child in the kindergarten program), elected by parents at the annual general meeting
   b. the parents elected represent all the school community
   c. the principal of ABC School
   d. one or more teachers from ABC School, appointed or elected by the teachers at ABC school
   e. a community member, selected by the council (optional)

Town Hall Model

4. (2) The membership of the school council shall consist of:
   a. the parents of students enrolled in ABC school
   b. the principal of ABC School
   c. employees of ABC School

MEMBERSHIP – (Select one model only)

Representative Governance Model

5. (1) The positions of the executive committee shall consist of:
   a. chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer (if required)
   b. all executive positions must be filled by parents of students enrolled at ABC School
   c. every member of the school council and/or parent of a student enrolled at ABC School are eligible to be elected to an executive position on the school council
   d. the terms of office are from the annual general meeting one year to the next annual general meeting the following year

e. the executive of the school council can be elected by parents of students enrolled at ABC School attending the annual general meeting or at the first school council meeting by school council members

Town Hall Governance Model

5. (2)

a. The executive committee will prepare the agenda for the meetings and circulate minutes of the same.

b. the executive committee will carry out the day-to-day operation of the school council.

DECISION MAKING

6. a. Decisions at school council meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible. The decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.

b. If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved and seconded and passed by a majority of school council members.

QUORUM

7. Quorum will be attained when a majority of voting members present at a meeting are parents of students enrolled in ABC School.

DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE

8. (a) The Chair - plans meetings and prepares agendas, facilitates school council meetings, acts as spokesperson for the school council (unless otherwise delegated) and supports the school council. The chair serves as the Board of Trustees' Council of School Councils representative. The chair ensures the school board receives an annual report from school council.

(b) The Vice-Chair (Co-Chair) - assists the chair with duties, as assigned, and in the absence of the chair, assumes the duties of the chair. The vice-chair is the designated Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA)/Privacy officer of the school council and manages personal information in compliance with PIPA. The vice-chair assumes responsibility in consultation with the school council, for communicating with the fundraising society.

(c) The Secretary - keeps accurate minutes and records of school council meetings, documents and files all correspondence and communications. The secretary keeps an accurate list of names and addresses of school council members in compliance with the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA). The secretary ensures all material relating to the ABC School Council including resources (School Council Resource Manual), all meeting minutes and any relevant documents are available to the public in an accessible location in ABC School.

(d) The Treasurer (if required) - keeps financial transactions of the school council, reports to the school council and complies with the school council and the Calgary Board of Education policies.

(e) The Key Communicator - works to build and enhance a connection between parents/school communities and Calgary Board of Education. The key communicator will attend Community of School Councils (COSC) meetings. Key communicators liaise with school councils, enable more informed citizen input and share information, ideas and concerns as part of a system-wide network of involved parents.

VACANCIES

9. With the exception of the school council position filled by the principal, the school council may appoint school council members and/or community members to fill vacancies until the election at the next annual general meeting.

COMMITTEES

10. A school council may appoint committees that consist of school council members and/or school community members. Committees report on their activities at school council meetings and meet outside of school council meetings to complete their assigned tasks.

MEETINGS

11. a. The first meeting of the school council is held within XX school days after the annual general meeting

b. The school council will meet a minimum of seven times during the school year.

c. Regular meetings will be determined by the school council members attending the first meeting and/or the executive of the school council.

d. Meetings will take place at the school unless indicated with a 20 school day notice to change the location.

e. Special meetings of the school council may be called by the executive or at the written request of (x) number of parents of students enrolled at ABC School.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

12. a. The annual general meeting of the school council will be held within 20 days after the start of the school year or at an appropriate time during the school year determined by the school council.

b. The meeting will be advertised throughout the school and the community at the beginning of the school year until the date of the AGM or within 20 school days of the AGM date

c. Election of school council members and/or executive positions will take place at the AGM

d. All parents of students attending ABC School are eligible for election.

e. All parents of students attending the ABC School are eligible to vote at the AGM.

f. The business of the AGM shall include:

- election of school council members and/or executive members
- proposed bylaws/operating procedures amendments
- motion to accept a financial statement of the previous year
- plans and budget for the upcoming year
- discussion of any major issues in which parents should have input, such as:
- changes to the vision or mission statement of the school,
- major changes in the school program or focus,
- formal evaluation of the school council.

ANNUAL REPORT

13.a. In accordance with the School Councils Regulation, the school council, through the chair, prepares and provides the school board with an annual report submitted by June 15, 20XX that includes:

- a summary of the school council's activities of the year
- a financial statement
- a copy of the minutes of each meeting

b. The school council will make the annual report available to all members of the school community.

AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS/OPERATING PROCEDURES

14. a. The bylaws remain in force from year to year, unless amended at the AGM.

    b. The bylaws of the school council may be amended by a majority vote of the school council at an AGM

    c. Notice of proposed bylaw amendments must be circulated with the notice of the AGM.

CODE OF ETHICS

15. All School Council members shall:

- Abide by the legislation that governs them
- Endeavour to be familiar with school policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them
- Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity and trust
- Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community
- Declare any conflict of interest
- Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued
- Apply democratic principles
- Consider the best interests of all students
- Respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council
- Not disclose confidential information
- Limit discussions at school council meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
- Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
- Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community
- Accept accountability for decisions
- Not accept payment for school council activities

PRIVACY

16. a. School council shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA).

    b. School council shall not share personal information for purposes other than those of school council business.

POLICIES

17. a. School council may develop policy for the duration of their term.

    b. The policies of school council will be reviewed at the beginning of every new school council term to decide if each policy will be implemented for the new school council and its term.

FUNDRAISING SOCIETY

18. a. School council will communicate regularly with the fundraising society to support their activities and to solicit support for school council activities.

    b. School council can develop policy to promote productive, open and transparent relations with the fundraising society.

SCHOOL COUNCIL FUNDRAISING

19. a. School council, will, where possible, encourage the fundraising society to do the fundraising for the school and the school community.

    b. School council are able to fundraise and funds can be kept in a school council bank account or given to the school.

    c. School council's funds given to the school will be subject to the Calgary Board of Education's policy on school council fundraising.

Contact Info

t | 403-817-7933

boardoftrustees@cbe.ab.ca







