



A Guide for
**School
Community
Councils**

Introduction

SCCs are school-based advisory bodies that involve parents, students, community members and school staff working together on issues that affect student learning and community well-being.

SCCs are required in every school and develop a sense of shared responsibility for student outcomes.

SCCs bring a new appreciation for what can be accomplished collaboratively in a way that suits your own unique community.

SCCs work with parents and community members to:

- share responsibility for the success and well-being of all children and youth; and,
- encourage parent, community and youth engagement in school planning and improvement.

Research shows that students have greater success when parents are involved and engaged at the school level in supporting their child's learning.

School Community Council Membership

The School Community Council membership includes two types of members, elected and appointed. At a minimum, SCCs consist of:

- Five to nine elected parents and community members. The majority of these members must be parents or guardians of students that attend the school;
- Appointed members include:
 - The principal;
 - One teacher; and
 - One or two students from grades 10-12 (if applicable)

**The focus of the
School
Community
Council is to
engage parents in
student learning
and well-being.**

School Community Council Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of SCCs include:

- encouraging parent and community participation in education;
- developing a good understanding of their community, including its needs, resources, supports and goals for student learning and well-being;
- cooperating with school staff to develop school-level plans;
- communicating annually with families and community members about their activities and accomplishments;
- accounting publicly for money they spend;
- participating in orientation, training, development and networking opportunities related to SCCs;
- upholding confidentiality; and
- following legislation, regulations, and Board policies.

SCCs may also provide advice and recommendations to their Boards of Education, school staff and other organizations about the learning needs and well-being of students.

What are some needs in our community regarding parental involvement in the education of their children?

How would I describe our community?

SCC Guiding Principles

Representative – School Community Councils are an integral component of School Division governance. They strive through their membership and actions to represent all students attending the school.

Inclusive – School Community Councils recognize all members of the school community can make a difference in the learning success and well-being of children and youth. In their activities, School Community Councils engage in processes to ensure all voices in the school community are heard, and all perspectives are considered.

Respectful – School Community Councils understand school communities are complex environments. Councils recognize the importance of both lay and professional perspectives within the community and strive to appreciate all viewpoints.

Trustworthy – School Community Councils conduct their affairs in an open and transparent manner. Councils honour individuals' right to privacy and treat all information they are privy to with appropriate discretion and sensitivity.

Responsible – School Community Councils make every effort to respond to the needs and aspirations of the school community they represent. They regularly consult with students, parents, community members, the Board of Education, the school Principal, school staff and others. In addition to this, Councils respond to requests for guidance and direction from the Board of Education, school Principal and other community agencies and organizations that support children and youth.

Effective – School Community Councils focus their attention and efforts on key matters that make a difference in student learning and well-being. Keeping in mind their understandings related to their own unique school communities. Councils align their work with provincial and School Division goals and initiatives related to student learning and well-being outcomes.

Committed – School Community Councils are committed to fulfilling their role as a vital link in school-level governance. Councils evaluate their performance regularly, take advantage of opportunities to build their capacity and account to the public they represent and the Board of Education on their progress.

Notes:

Individual School Community Councils will build a Constitution and a Code of Conduct. These two items should be reviewed yearly. If changes are made to your current Constitution, they need to be submitted to the Board for approval.

Your Council's Constitution (AP 111 – Appendix F)

The Constitution supports you in conducting your day-to-day affairs and becomes a structure that provides direction for your ongoing work and how you relate to others. Submitting your Constitution to the Board of Education for approval will provide Councils with a valuable opportunity for feedback as well as contribute to the development of an open and transparent relationship between the Board and Council that is based on mutual understanding.

A sample Constitution can be found in the Administrative Procedures Manual - [AP 111 - Appendix F](#)

Code of Conduct (AP 111 – Appendix G)

The following points provide a sample “Code of Conduct.” Actual codes may vary to reflect local concerns and considerations.

1. An individual who accepts a position as a member of the School Community Council shall:
 - Uphold the Constitution of the School Community Council and the procedures and policies of Prairie South Schools.
 - Performs his/her duties with honesty and integrity.
 - Works to ensure that the well-being of students is the primary focus of all decisions.
 - Respects the rights of all individuals.
 - Takes direction from the members, ensuring that the representation processes are in place.
 - Encourages and supports parents and students with individual concerns and works to ensure that issues are resolved through due process.
 - Strives to be informed and only passes on information that is reliable and correct.
 - Acknowledges conflicts of interest when they exist, and refrains from discussion and voting.
 - Abides by the decisions made by the council.
 - Respects all confidential information.
 - Supports public education.
2. The School Community Council is not a forum for the discussion of individual school personnel, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community. The School Community Council provides an opportunity for members of the community to have input and influence related to the practices of the school and school division for the betterment of children and education in the school.
3. A member of the School Community who is approached with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion protecting the confidentiality of the people involved.

Establishing Group Norms

To ensure effective, respectful, and efficient meetings, SCCs are encouraged to establish and review group meeting norms at the beginning of each school year.

Suggestions:

- Be solution focused;
- Ensure every member has the chance to be heard;
- Meetings are democratic;
- Clear agenda, and;
- Start/end times

*Norms can be added to the agenda

Sample Agenda for SCC Meetings

Group Norms

Attendance –

Previous Minutes –

Principal Report –

A) *Learning Improvement Plan* –
Review work plans for school goals

B) *Communications* –

C) *Celebrations and Challenges* –

Committee Reports –

Professional Development –

New Business –

a) SCC training session –

Action Items –

Next meeting –

School Community Council Finances (AP 112)

The Board of Education helps to offset expenses of School Community Councils through the provision of an annual grant. The yearly grant is one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) for each School Community Council to a maximum accumulated grant of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00). Funds are allocated for Council operations only, not for school projects or to enhance the school's decentralized budget.

Purpose of Operational Grant Funds:

- Member expenses related to events and meetings, including mileage for out-of-town members and childcare. Per diem is not included.
- Staff appreciation and student recognition. Do not give Gift Cards to staff.
- Communication and public relations.
- SCC events and activities.
- SCC Learning Improvement Plan Initiatives.
- SCC resources.
- Memberships in local or provincial organizations
- Meeting supplies.

Fundraising:

At the beginning of each school year, the school administration will present the school's fundraising plan to the SCC for approval. SCCs should act in consultation with the school to support fundraising initiatives for the school year. The school council, as a whole, must decide the extent to which the fundraising will impact their school community and if the council's purpose is likely to be enhanced or compromised as a result of fundraising efforts. All school fundraising efforts must align with the school's learning improvement plan and the needs of the school community.

How do you see the SCC spending its Operational Funds this year?

Learning Improvement Plans

Each school is required to formulate a Learning Improvement Plan for its students for the school year. The goals and vision within this plan relate to the Division's overall goals and are tailored for the individual school.

School Community Councils are to be actively involved in cooperation with the school staff in developing Learning Improvement Plans for their schools. Specifically, they are to:

- Collaborate with staff to develop the next cycle of the Learning Improvement Plan each August/September.
- Collaborate with staff to determine and support activities related to the Learning Improvement Plan.

What are the school's Learning Improvement Plan goals?

How do I see myself contributing as part of the SCC?

School Community Council Activity Examples

The following is a list of various activities that SCCs have planned, supported and/or facilitated in Prairie South schools. It is not an exhaustive list, and we would love to continue growing and sharing our ideas!

- Book Exchange/Community Book Drive
- Parent/Student Book Clubs
- One School, One Book
- Sponsor an author visit or author residency
- Reading and Writing Challenges/Contests
- Book and Breakfast or Lunch and Learn activities with parents/community members
- Supporting writing goals – providing writing folders and pencils with words of encouragement on them
- Reviewing OurSchool Survey and finding ways to help address possible areas of growth
- Hosting parent information nights
 - Literacy/Math/Mental Health/Mindfulness/Social Media
- Family Nights
 - Movies/Games/Carnival/Author Visits/BBQs
 - Reading/Trivia/Creative Writing/Math Games/STEAM Challenges
- Community Day (outdoor winter activities, spring BBQ and carnival)
- Scavenger Hunts
 - Clues are spread throughout a community in relation to a book, school goal, physical fitness, etc... (family scavenger hunt)
- Fairs
 - Health Fair/Career Fair/Cultural Fair/Math Fair
- Clubs
 - Cooking/Beading/Card making/Reading/Creative Writing
- Inclusion and Diversity awareness activities
- Organizing weekly gym nights for parents and students to participate together
- Babysitting service for meetings/events
- Developing partnerships (community and beyond)
- Helping schools understand the context of the community
- Attending Conferences
- Outdoor Classrooms
- Yard Beautification
- Staff Appreciation
- Family Fun Challenges
- Library renovation projects
- Outdoor Garden
- Orange Shirt Day

School Community Council Planning

What are some activities that could support and promote student well-being?

What are some activities that could support and promote student learning?

What successes can we celebrate, and what are some challenges we may anticipate?

