



Administrative Procedure 1045

School Councils

Board Governance Policy Cross Reference: [1](#), [4](#), [11](#), [12](#), [13](#), [14](#), [15](#)

Administrative Procedures Cross Reference:

Form Cross Reference:

Legal/Regulatory Reference:

[Education Administration Act](#)

[School Partnerships – A Guide for Parents, Schools and Communities](#)

[Public Schools Act](#)

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Parents/guardians and other community members play a vital role in supporting students' educational accomplishments. Parents/guardians are more significant than either teachers or peers in influencing educational aspirations for the majority of children. Other community members provide an additional academic, social and business perspective. Together they provide insights and knowledge that complement the professional skills of educators in ways that strengthen school programs. Active, meaningful citizen involvement in the educational process promotes the strongest possible academic, social and emotional development of children.

There are many different ways parents/guardians and community members are encouraged to become involved in schools. One of them is through school councils. Some other ways are:

- volunteering services at the school;
- providing a learning climate for the student; and
- keeping in close contact with the school.

Involving citizens in meaningful ways provides students, parents/guardians, schools and the community with a variety of significant benefits including:

- a more common knowledge of the goals and objectives of education;
- participatory decision making by the stakeholders;

- improved academic performance;
- improved student attitudes and behaviour; and
- improved working environments for educators.

Open communication is a critical function of school councils' work with schools. Community members and school staff need to collaborate as they consider the development of School Councils. Administrators and teachers have a wide range of attitudes, assumptions, beliefs and feelings about community involvement. It is important that their aspirations and concerns about the program are discussed. Community members are encouraged to inform school staff of activities and programs that are compatible with school needs, strengths and interests.

Through this interaction, a decision can be made on the type of school involvement that will be most effective.

1. Obligations of Community/School Organizations

- a. The Brandon School Division supports the establishment of parent/citizen organizations in schools.
- b. These organizations shall be known as School Councils or School Advisory Councils.
- c. Under the *Public Schools Act*, the Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for policy development and for the governance of the Division, including instructional activities in schools. The Board delegates this responsibility through personnel employed by the Board. Councils are advisory and supportive to these processes, and work with the School Leader to operate in ways consistent with Division administrative procedures.
- d. Councils shall be subject to the direction of the Board of the Division and the Minister of Education.
- e. Councils shall be non-profit organizations associated with individual schools.
- f. These organizations shall have all books and accounts audited annually.

2. Purposes of Councils

Councils are established to:

- a. Promote cooperation and communication between the home, school and community.

- b. Promote parental and community involvement in schools.
 - c. Promote positive relations between the school and its community.
 - d. Promote the objectives of the school, recognizing the student is the most important and vital component of the educational system.
 - e. Promote the welfare of children and support the educational purpose of the school.
 - f. Serve in an advisory capacity to promote collaborative three-way communication between the council, the local school and the school board.
3. Forms of Councils in Schools
- a. School Councils – This form of organization is characterized by a high level of citizen involvement in multiple functions such as organizing information evenings, supporting existing school programs, fundraising and food preparation. The purpose of this council is to provide support to the school without formally serving as an advisory group. An executive is elected on an annual basis with numbers appropriate to the particular needs of the school as identified by the School Leader and staff.
 - b. School Advisory Councils – This form of school organization must be initiated if 10 or more community members request to formally serve as an advisory group to the school. Procedures for the establishment and operation of such a council are outlined in the Manitoba Education document entitled *School Partnerships – A Guide for Parents, Schools and Communities*.
 - c. School Booster Committees – This form of school organization is characterized by a high level of specific community involvement. It focuses on a single activity such as a school bank or school team and may have high cash flows and high organizational needs associated with its activity. This group can also provide advice and support to the School Leader and staff responsible for the student activity. Since this group focuses on a special activity it may report directly to the School Leader or operate as a sub-committee of the School Council or School Advisory Council as agreed at the time of establishment.