

# SCHOOL COUNCIL HANDBOOK



**Appalachian Teachers' Association**

Revised: October 2016

4-3.00 **SCHOOL COUNCIL GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

4-3.01 Within each school and centre, there shall be a School Council. This School Council shall be a participatory and coordinating body. It also performs a communication role.

4-3.02 Decision-making shall be the responsibility of the Principal. Nevertheless, the School Council of each school or centre must be consulted before the implementation of policies made by the Principal affecting the educational policy or student discipline in that school or centre. In addition, it must be consulted prior to any decision being made by the Principal of the school or centre, which would establish or modify the pedagogical or disciplinary organization of the school or centre.

The School Council must be specifically consulted on the following items:

1. The critical dates and calendar of events.
2. The educational objectives of the school or centre, including the Success Plan, in relation to the community which it serves on an annual basis.
3. The general organization of student activities, whether integrated into the school or centre program or extra-curricular.
4. The formulation and application of school rules.
5. Any item referred to the School Council by virtue of article 8- 12.00 of this agreement.
6. The budgetary proposals at the school level for instructional material and educational activities.
7. The time, date, and duration of parent-teacher meetings.
8. The emergency substitution plan in conformity with clause 5-1.20 section E.
9. The manner of applying decisions of a pedagogical or disciplinary nature emanating from the Board and/or the Ministry of Education.
10. The school-based activities on pedagogical days with the exception of those days prior to the commencement of classes in September.

11. The student course of study, options, time allocation and scheduling.
  12. System of reporting student lateness and absences.
  13. The following three items, it being understood that consultation through the School Council is the "procedure determined by the teachers" in conformity with section 96.15 of the *Education Act*:
    - the criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods;
    - in accordance with the *Education Act* and in keeping with the school budget, the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies;
    - the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement, in keeping with the prescriptions of the Basic School Regulation and subject to the examinations that may be imposed by the Minister or the School Board.
  14. The supervision schedule.
  15. The criteria for the distribution of student teachers.
  16. Value added as per Appendix 26.
- 4-3.03 The School Council must study and express its opinion on any questions within its jurisdiction referred to it by either the Principal, the Chairperson of the School Council or any member of the teaching staff through the Chairperson of the School Council.
- 4-3.04 Between the date of the request to the School Council for advice and the date of implementation of a measure, the School Council has 30 days in order to fulfill the obligation that it has to consult with staff of the school, before making its recommendation.
- 4-3.05 If the Principal does not concur with a unanimous recommendation of the School Council, she/he shall provide the reasons, in writing, to the School Council at the next meeting. Nevertheless, the Principal shall verbally provide the reasons to School Council at its next meeting in the event that she/he does not concur with any other recommendation.

## **COMPOSITION**

- 4-3.06 The School Council shall be composed of members of the school's teaching personnel elected by their colleagues. The number of School Council members shall not be greater than nine. The composition of the School Council shall be forwarded to the Board and the ATA by September 30th.
- 4-3.07 The Principal shall be a non-voting member of the School Council, but shall be exclusive of the number of members.
- 4-3.08 The School Council shall be established by September 15th of each year.

## **OPERATION**

- 4-3.09 The School Council shall meet at least six times during the school year.
- 4-3.10 All School Council meetings shall be open to all members of the teaching staff.
- 4-3.11 At its first meeting, the School Council shall elect a Chairperson and a Secretary from among its members to serve for the year.
- 4-3.12 The decisions of the School Council are made by a majority vote of the members present who are entitled to vote. If votes are equally divided, the Chairperson has the casting vote.
- 4-3.13 No meeting can have the status of a School Council meeting without a quorum of at least two-thirds of its voting members being present. The failure of the School Council to form a quorum shall not impede the implementation of subjects vital to the operation of the school. The School Council shall adopt all other rules of internal procedure.
- 4-3.14 Notwithstanding the foregoing, should the School Council not be able to convene during July and August at the request of the Principal, the Principal may disregard this consultative process for matters relating to clause 4-2.02 that require decision during the months stipulated.
- 4-3.15 In such cases, the Principal shall immediately send a letter to the Chairperson of the School Council with a copy to the President of the Association informing them of the situation, and the action the Principal has taken. These decisions and the reasons therefore shall be the subject of discussion at the next meeting of the School Council.

# **INTRODUCTION**

Participation on School Council is a contractual opportunity to be involved in the formation, modification and implementation of educational policies as well as develop a venue for dialogue with the school administration.

It is the one place where teachers can control the discussion with the school / centre administration and where their views must be listened to.

It is hoped that teachers will use this guide and find it of assistance in promoting effective use of their School Council.

## **Distinction between staff meetings and council**

- The purpose of council is not to pass on information. Staff meetings or bulletins are the avenue for this.
- Council provides a forum to discuss issues of concern and make recommendations that inform administration what teachers want to happen.
- Since no change in school policy can be implemented without a prior consultation on the issue, the School Council must meet whenever changes are proposed.
- A staff meeting is not a consultation. A School Council meeting is required.

## **Teachers control School Council**

- It is a legal body representing teachers' viewpoint in the school.
- Council discusses with administration how they want their school to operate.
- Members are responsible to know the opinions of the teachers they are representing.
- Members have a right and obligation to tell administration what teachers want.
- Invite guests to meetings if they can provide information that will help the decision-making process.

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL ISSUES**

The School Council must be specifically consulted on the following items:

1. The critical dates and calendar of events.
2. The educational objectives of the school or centre, including the Success Plan, in relation to the community which it serves on an annual basis.
3. The general organization of student activities, whether integrated into the school or centre program or extra-curricular.
4. The formulation and application of school rules.
5. Any item referred to the School Council by virtue of article 8- 12.00 of this agreement.

### **8-12.00      *DISTRIBUTION OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AMONG THE TEACHERS OF A SCHOOL. TEACHING ASSIGNMENT***

- *Each year, prior to April 30th, the school administration shall establish the preliminary pedagogical objectives and organization of the school for the following school year and this, after the participation of the teachers in the school.*
- *For this purpose, the Principal at the secondary level shall provide the School Council with a summary of the student course selection data when it is available.*
- *The Board shall retain the right of distribution of all teachers in the system in order to meet the priorities and goals it has determined. Notwithstanding the above, the Board shall attempt to respect the following goals:*
  - *a normalization of the pupil-teacher ratio for similar elementary schools.*
  - *an equalization of the opportunity for and frequency of specialist instruction.*
  - *the provision of teachers experienced at the primary level for level one elementary classes.*
- *In distributing duties and responsibilities at the secondary level, the Board or its delegate(s) shall attempt to ensure that the number of different course preparations per day should be minimized.*

- *When preparing examination timetables and invigilation schedules, the Principal shall give consideration to those who have large amounts of correction to ensure that these teachers have a significantly reduced invigilation schedule.*
- *In recognition of the specific preparation required for homeroom students, each teacher with a homeroom assignment shall have this assignment included in his workload.*
- *For the teacher whose assignment involves both the primary and secondary levels in the school, the teacher's workload will be calculated according to the following formula:*

*1380 min./wk = (1.15 x S) + P Where S = number of minutes with secondary students and, P = number of minutes with primary students*

- *For the purposes of determining the designation of a split class involving both primary and secondary students for the application of workload provisions of a teacher, the class shall be designated to the level of the majority of the students involved.*
- *Where possible, by June 15th, but at least three days prior to the end of the teachers work year, the teachers in a school shall be informed of their subject(s) (secondary level), level(s) or speciality(ies) (pre-school and primary level(s)) which have been determined provisionally by the school administration for the following school year.*
  - *The teacher will be notified of any changes in the provisional assignment as soon as possible.*
  - *The confirmation of these provisional assignments for a teacher in a school shall be determined by the school administration at the beginning of the following school year. It shall notify the teacher of any subsequent change.*
  - *The Specific assignments may be altered by written notification to the regular non-surplus teacher concerned. Re-assignments effected after October 15th of each year must be allowed up to five days notice to the teacher prior to the date of commencement of the new assignment. Upon request of the teacher, the Principal may grant a release from part or all of the teacher's classroom duties for a period not exceeding five days for appropriate preparation.*

## **ITINERANT TEACHERS**

- *In determining the assignment of functions and responsibilities of itinerant teachers, the Principal shall adhere to the following condition: The time devoted to the total functions and responsibilities shall include at 30 minutes each of the days an itinerant teacher is required to perform functions in two or more schools/sites. If the time to travel between schools is in excess of 30 minutes, this time shall be included accordingly.*

## **LUNCH PERIOD**

- *The lunch period of all teachers must allow the teacher to avail themselves of the regular cafeteria services when such are provided by the school.*

*In schools where regular cafeteria services are not provided, the lunch period of a teacher shall begin no earlier than 25 minutes before the first lunch period for students nor terminate no later than 25 minutes after the last lunch period for students. Notwithstanding the above, the teacher may accept the placement of the lunch period in another time providing this acceptance is given in writing.*

## **SUPERVISION**

- *In order to ensure adequate supervision the following procedures shall apply:*
  - *Where possible teacher supervision preferences shall be respected.*
  - *Before the first day of classes, the Principal shall establish, after consultation with the School Council, the supervision needs for the school year. These needs shall indicate;*
    - *the areas to be supervised*
    - *the time(s) at which the areas are to supervised.*
  - *The Principal will attempt to fulfill any cafeteria supervision by assigning only those teachers supervision who have indicated a preference for such supervision.*
- *Should times remain uncovered, the Principal shall consult the School Council to determine an equitable means of distributing the remaining time.*
- *In the case of Massey-Vanier High School, no teacher shall be assigned cafeteria supervision unless the teacher has indicated such a preference in writing.*

6. The budgetary proposals at the school level for instructional material and educational activities.
7. The time, date, and duration of parent-teacher meetings.
8. The emergency substitution plan in conformity with clause 5-1.20 section E.

**5-1.20 Section E Substitution**

*In case of a teacher's absence, the replacement shall be assumed either by a teacher on availability or by a teacher assigned in whole or in part to substitution. Failing this, the Board shall call upon:*

***either***

*an occasional substitute registered on a list maintained by the Board for this purpose;*

***or***

*the teachers of the school who have reached the maximum of their workload and who wish to do so on a voluntary basis;*

***or***

*if none of the foregoing is available, the other teachers of the school according to the emergency substitution plan.*

*Except in the case where a teacher is assigned partially to substitution, the teacher shall be freed from the obligation to undertake such substitution within the emergency system as of the third consecutive day of a teacher's absence.*

9. The manner of applying decisions of a pedagogical or disciplinary nature emanating from the Board and/or the Ministry of Education.
10. The school-based activities on pedagogical days with the exception of those days prior to the commencement of classes in September.
11. The student course of study, options, time allocation and scheduling.
12. System of reporting student lateness and absences.

13. The following three items, it being understood that consultation through the School Council is the "procedure determined by the teachers" in conformity with section 96.15 of the *Education Act*:
- the criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods;
  - in accordance with the *Education Act* and in keeping with the school budget, the textbooks and instructional material required for the teaching of programs of studies;
  - the standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement, in keeping with the prescriptions of the Basic School Regulation and subject to the examinations that may be imposed by the Minister or the School Board.
14. The supervision schedule.
15. The criteria for the distribution of student teachers.
16. Value added as per Appendix 26.
- *Make recommendations on the activities recognized under the program and to ensure the respect of the rules used by the school administration to assign credits;*
  - *Periodically evaluate the efficiency of the program in the delivery of the activities concerned;*
  - *Report to a board-level participating body of teachers any difficulty in applying the program.*

*In carrying out its mandate, a school-level participating body of teachers shall take into consideration, where applicable, the school organization plan.*

## **SAMPLE TIMELINE / AGENDA ITEMS**

### **AUGUST**

- Election of members – no later than September 30
- First meeting to choose a chairperson and a secretary for the year.
- Establish rules of internal order
- Set meeting times for the year

### **SEPTEMBER**

- Parent/ teacher meetings and compensatory time
- Review reporting schedule and procedures
- Emergency substitution procedure
- Use of pedagogical days ... **on each month's agenda**
- Student activities
- System of reporting student lateness and absences
- Supervision schedule
- Criteria for the distribution of student teachers
- Value added

### **OCTOBER**

- Standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement

### **NOVEMBER**

- Consider special planning for the days preceding the Christmas holidays

### **DECEMBER**

- Begin study of objectives, curriculum offerings and organization for the following year
- Manner of applying decisions of a pedagogical or disciplinary nature emanating from the Board and/or Ministry

### **JANUARY**

- Continue study of objectives, curriculum offerings and organization for the following year

### **FEBRUARY**

- Formulate programme and organizational recommendations
- Approach for the implementation of popular education (Adult and Vocational Training sectors)

### **MARCH**

- Address staffing organization plans
- Budgetary proposals for instructional material and educational activities

### **APRIL**

- Student Projections (with the exception of Adult and Vocational Education courses) ... **April 15**
- List of known vacancies/anticipated staff needs ... **April 30**

### **MAY**

- Review rules of conduct

### **JUNE**

- Review past year and plan for beginning of new school year

**TO BE ADJUSTED ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL.**

# SAMPLE AGENDA / MINUTES

Name of School  
School Council Agenda / Minutes  
Date of Meeting

Names of those Present:

1. Call to order
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of previous School Council minutes
4. Unfinished Business
  - a.
  - b.
5. New Business
  - a.
  - b.
6. Question Period
7. Correspondence / Comments / Acknowledgements
8. Date of next meeting
9. Adjournment

## MOTION:

**Made by:**

**Seconded by:**

**Discussion**

**Vote:**

**in favour =**

**against =**

**abstentions =**

# **RUNNING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS**

## **1. ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON**

- Sets the agenda in consultation with the school principal.
- Posts the agenda once items have been prioritized. Representatives could contact constituents to decide what teachers' position are on key issues.
- Runs the meeting according to the rules of order established together.
- Ensure that copies of the minutes of each SC are provided to the ATA.

## **2. SETTING THE AGENDA**

- Staff should be provided with the opportunity for input to the agenda but the chairperson can use discretion and wisdom in ordering the agenda.
- Determine a deadline for agenda additions.
- Items left from previous meeting should be dealt with on a priority basis at the next meeting.
- Chairperson can decide if some items are information only and can be dealt with via memo.
- The agenda should be distributed to the appropriate staff members at least 24 hours before the meeting. Post the agenda in an obvious area or circulate it among staff.
- Important issues could be discussed in a pre-council meeting (or by using some other method of consultation). When appropriate, chairperson could ask teams or departments to pre-discuss items.

## **3. ESTABLISH A ROUTINE**

- Meeting dates.
- Agenda setting.
- Starting and ending on time.
- Having appropriate information available e.g. handouts.
- Take turns making points that were discussed with colleagues that support your position.
- When you have spent enough time on an issue, someone moves and someone seconds a motion.

#### **4. MEET IN AN APPROPRIATE AREA**

- Area conducive to meeting.
- Tables to write on.
- Reasonably formal seating.

#### **5. REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL**

- By team, cycle, department, etc.
- Consider broad aspects of issues – effect on school as a whole.
- Council members should support the chairperson's endeavours to run efficient meetings by following the procedures.
- Any decision affecting the entire teaching staff should be presented to the teachers for approval.

#### **6. INVITATION TO SCHOOL COMMUNITY FOR SPECIFIC ITEMS**

- Support staff
- Non-teaching professionals
- Student services
- Activity coordinators
- Coaches

#### **7. DURING THE MEETING**

- The chairperson can say when enough discussion has taken place “would anyone like to make a motion” or a member can take the same initiative and make a motion themselves to keep the meeting moving.

#### **8. AFTER THE MEETING**

- The secretary completes the minutes and gives them to the chairperson to check before distributing them to the staff and principal within 7 days of the meeting.
- At the next meeting the council members look at the minutes to make sure they are correct and then a motion to approve them is moved.
- Council members should check to see whether the actions that were recommended have taken place.

A copy of School Council minutes should be distributed to all teaching staff.  
A copy should be sent to the ATA. [ataunion@hotmail.com](mailto:ataunion@hotmail.com)

# Robert's Rules of Order for Beginners Abridged

## CALL TO ORDER

This occurs at the beginning of the meeting, once quorum has been attained. No meeting can have the status of a School Council meeting without a quorum of at least two-thirds of its voting members being present.

## MOTIONS

Business is resolved at meetings by voting on propositions put forward by members. Such propositions are called *motions*. Any person who is eligible to vote at a meeting may make a motion. Depending on the type of motion, another member is usually needed to *second* the motion. Motions are then debated and voted upon.

## VOTING

Voting on motions normally requires a simple majority. Voting is normally done by a show of hands.

### **To Ensure Smooth Discussion:**

- Raise your hand if you wish to speak. The Speaker will take note and ask you to speak at the appropriate time.
- State your name and department before speaking to the topic at hand.
- Speak to the topic or motion at hand.
- Try not to repeat points other people have already made unless you have something new to add to the point.

## COMMUNICATING WITH CONSTITUENTS (COLLEAGUES)

- Each council member should be assigned a specific group of constituents.
- Constituents must know who their council representative is.
- Representatives should communicate with their constituents.
- Teachers must take ownership of items they ask their representative to bring to council.
- All teachers must have access to school council minutes, which should be clear, and a standardized form.

## Principal Powers of the Governing Board in Schools

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>ROLE OF GB</b>	<b>TIMING</b>
Success plan	Principal with staff	Approves	Spring
Rules of conduct including anti-bullying and anti-violence plan	Principal with staff	Approves	Spring
Time allocation for each subject	Principal with teaching staff	Approves	February – March
Extra-curricular or extra-mural activities	Principal with staff	Approves	Any time
Implementation of student and special education services	Principal with staff	Approves	Spring
Communications with parents	Principal with teaching staff	Consulted	Spring
Management and educational success agreement	Principal with staff	Approves	Spring

## Principal Powers of the Governing Board in Centres

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>	<b>ROLE OF GB</b>	<b>TIMING</b>
Implementation of programs of study	Administration with teaching staff	Approves	January, February
Operating rules for the centre	Administration with staff	Approves	Spring
Implementation of student and popular education services	Administration with staff	Approves	Spring
Procedures for implementing the basic regulation	Administration with staff	Approves	Any time

**Before going to GB these issues should be discussed with staff – at school council, staff meeting, or common presence.**