

Request for input about the *School Councils Regulation and Parent Engagement* in your school community. Deadline *November 3, 2018*

1. Has your school council discussed the changes to the School Councils Regulation in the School Act?

Yes = 11 (73%) No = 4 (27%)

Comments:

- We are in the process of learning more about this and we feel that we need to have further conversation with our Superintendent, especially regarding how School Council accepts monies from the Societies Group.

2. How will the changes in the School Councils Regulation affect your school council, if at all?

Comments:

- Don't know as was not aware the act had been changed with respect to school councils.
- No real affect at our school. Fundraising society takes care of all of the money and we are not a new school.
- Not at all - we already have an association.
- Not at all = 2
- Not sure. We need more information.
- Reviewed the recent changes to the School Act, noting that these were minor changes and did not impact us. For more information on the School Act: www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/education-in-alberta/the-education-act-school-act/school-councils-regulation - Asked if fundraising was still allowed for grad, and noted that if the fundraising initiatives required a gaming license, then it was not allowed as the school would require a Society Act number. However, initiatives that did not require a gaming license could be pursued.
- The changes will have no effect. Our school has an established Council and we do not have ECS students.
- The changes will not affect our school council.
- The information about establishment meetings; handling of money and charitable donation will be added to our operating procedures.
- The issue of quorum may affect us because we're a small school. A couple of years ago; only two parents and an administrator attended meetings. Based on this change; the principal may have to dissolve our Parent Council often. Currently; we have good attendance but we cannot guarantee this in the future. It would have been nice to require some input from parents about this before enacting the change.
- we briefly discussed the substitutions; additions; repeals and strike outs because of this survey; so thank you! Generally; the changes that were made are felt by this School Council

to be administrative because we have always included early childhood service parents; had a successful establishment meeting. Our school also has its own Fundraising society so it is nice to see the clarification around that in section 13 & new 12. there is a bit of confusion to new section 10 as to the 'board must' for the school. Is it ok for the principal to do that for the school? or the board must ensure there is a process/access for a;b&c? Our board has most often shared requested info and has minutes and policies on website.

- We can now include Pre-K parents and staff in our meeting.
- We were already doing most of the changes; except the cash changes which is much better!
- Will not affect us because our Operating Procedures are written to include early years programs and we are currently aligning our finances and fundraising according to the legislation.

3. How does your school and school council engage parents to encourage them to attend school council meetings?

Comments:

- All the teachers add it to the agendas; we are all over social media and every email the week prior has advertising included for the council.
- Bulletin board at school with information/details for past and future meetings- social media posts with agenda and key topics- personal connections between parents who invite a new parent personally each meeting
- Face to face within the school at events; school zone; newsletter; school sign outside; student agendas.
- It was noted that emails are sent to parents, agendas are posted to the website, relevant topics are noted on the agenda and parents have attended the school Open House to promote attendance.
- Notices of date and Times of meetings School Newsletters - Notices of date and Times of meetings on Facebook - School Council Grade Representatives - Information booth at Parent Teacher Interviews - Meet the Teacher and School Council AGM held on the same night - Prize draws at the end of the AGM
- Parents are kept informed of meetings via FaceBook posts and emails.
- Posters announcing time and date of next meeting; regular emails and a private facebook group. A lot of communication happens in person as well.
- school newsletter announcements & invitations to participate.word of mouthvolunteer booth set up during school organized events (ie: registration day; Christmas craft sale; meet the teacher and administration bbqs)Currently seeking ideas to help increase participation/engagement by attendance.
- Text message reminders; Facebook page; word of mouth; teachers reminders; school website.
- Through emails; newsletters; our school facebook page and word of mouth.
- through personal conversations; social media and school wide emails with agendas; minutes and information.

- We do an draw for a monthly parking pass in the staff parking lot. We also provide notices of meetings including the agenda and minutes on Facebook; our website; in Principal emails to parents; on a bulletin board; and by letters to parents.
- We had a table set up at the Welcome BBQ. We post to the Parents Facebook Group. Meeting reminders go out through synervoice. Word of Mouth.
- We sent out 2-3 communiques that include a list of our meeting dates; our meeting dates are posted on the school website and are included as part of the weekly email to parents.
- We try to offer snacks; drinks and childcare during the meeting. We post available positions in the newsletter. We send information about the decisions made in the newsletter. Council members are available to speak to parents during Meet the Teacher and open houses. Reminders about meeting times are posted on schoolzone and notices are sent home with students.

4. How does your school council support and engage parents who are unable to attend meetings?
Comments:

- Facebook; bulletin board inside the school; school council table at events; newsletter update.
- Minutes are posted on the school website and executive members are approachable.
- minutes are posted within 2 weeks on the school website and on social media parent group- the google meet virtual link is helpful for parents who can not physically attend
- Minutes are public. Any Parent/Guardian can view them - Grade Representatives can be contacted through emails - School Council has its own email address - School Calendar
- Newsletter email monthly with highlights of previous meeting
- Our meetings are live streamed via FaceBook. We monitor the feed and take questions posted from there.
- Our minutes are posted online. We send out updates about Parent Council Activities at least twice a year.
- Post minutes on the website; word of mouth with members/attendees; "Parent Council Notes" in the school newsletter; separate Parent Council Facebook page.
- Post the minutes to the Parents Facebook Page. Draft Minutes or approved minutes to be sent via synervoice.
- social media and school wide emails. minutes posted to site.
- We have set up an email address for parents to direct their feedback; questions or concerns to.
- We keep all parents informed of every meeting and activity; in detail via email and general updates are posted in our Facebook group.
- We post our council minutes to the school website. We also send out 2-3 communiques a year that include an update on council activities.
- We use surveys and Facebook polls.
- Weekly emails have a quick summary of the meeting; minutes are posted on the website; and we ask parents to email/facebook the team if they want to know anything.

5. How does your school council create a welcoming environment for parent volunteers in your school?

Comments:

- Acknowledging their contributions verbally; via text and sending them thank you cards at the end of the school year. Encouraging volunteers to provide suggestions about how things could be made better at the school.
- Contact information available. The chair is visibly in the school. Pamphlets on school council will be handed out at interviews or sent home with students/posted to FB.
- Executive members attending the school Open House were approachable and volunteers are thanked for their help with the Teacher Appreciation lunch. It was noted that there are not many volunteer opportunities available in high schools.
- invitations; face to face conversations; volun-told them to attend; social media; food; allow everyone a chance to speak; open door policy of attendance and items/issues on agenda.
- Meeting in the library; a non intimidating environment; the set up is a large circle to encourage interaction and establish equality. Greeting each person as they enter; smiles and introductions Open ended questions through out the meetings; each person is encouraged to share their thoughts; ideas; opinions - open environment; non-judgemental; and engaging. Conversational environment
- Open community group/atmosphere; breakfast club.
- Their opinions and thoughts are valued - In our school we have a Participarent Society that is fully made up of volunteers and dedicated to volunteerism in the school. They have their own executive and hold separate meetings from School Council. They send out requests for volunteers through paper copy once a year. A Facebook page is kept up to date for when volunteers are needed. No volunteer has ever been turned away. Their opinions and thoughts are valued by this Society. Some Parents/Guardians choose to be members of both School Council and the Participarent Society. - There is a Participarent Representative Position on our School Council where a member of the Participarent Society attends meetings and reports on the Participarent's activities and/or concerns. This allows a strong communication of information between each group. School Council and the Participarent Society work together with one another when needed. Minutes are feely shared between committees as well.
- volunteers within the classroom are welcomed by the staff very well; lots of personal appreciation- volunteers for fundraising events are a core group of parents at our school; and any new volunteers have a tricky time feeling welcomed and wanting to co
- We always have an introduction activity brought forward from the principal; we have food; and engaging conversation.
- We do a school council table at all school functions (first day; meet the teacher; parent teacher interviews); provide detailed information about volunteering requirements such as Criminal Checks or volunteer tasks; email a thank you to all volunteers after volunteering; and recognizing the volunteers with a certificate and gift at the end of the school year.
- We encourage them to participate while allowing for flexibility to meet their availability and interests.

- We have a large student body with frequent new students. That keeps our council from developing a 'clique' mentality. It was easy for me as a new parent to feel included.
- We have amazing, friendly staff in our school. Our events are available; whether they know they can help out or not. Members of our parent council are approachable and social to try to encourage members who are not engaged to help other parents feel in the know.
- We live in a small community. Our environment is friendly and caring. We reach out to newcomers and encourage them to participate. We make sure everyone feels valued for sharing their time.
- We start each meeting with a prayer and go around and introduce ourselves; discuss code of conduct and ethics as well as expectations. The chair also encourages all opinions positive or negative. Also follow up emails are sent to new attendees after the meeting to thank them for their attendance.