

Election Procedures for Representative Parent/Guardian and Community Members

Minimum election procedures for School Community Councils are outlined in Board Policy 17: School Community Councils, and adhere to the legislation and regulations outlined by the provincial government.

Representative Parent/Guardian and Community Members are elected at an **Annual Meeting** convened by the School Community Council.

The **time of year for School Community Council elections** will vary throughout the Saskatoon Public School Division. Some schools may choose to elect their councils in May or June and other schools may choose to elect their councils in the fall. While there are advantages and disadvantages to both times of the year, every school will need to make a decision that best suits the needs of their school and community.

1. Public Notice

The Annual Meeting to elect the School Community Council is a formal meeting called under the authority of The Education Act, 1995. The purpose of the Annual General Meeting is to elect members of the School Community Council. A Public Call for nominations shall precede the Annual Meeting. (See Appendix A)
Public Notice of the Annual Meeting will be given at least 4 weeks before the meeting is held to elect School Community Council members. Notice shall be advertised or posted in such a way that it would be reasonably expected to reach the parents or guardians of students for that school and community members (as defined within the school's attendance or geographic area).

Advertising may be delivered by way of:

- information in the school newsletter
- posters at school entrances
- information on the school website
- information on the school sign
- information in the community association newsletter

The notice will include:

- the purpose of the meeting;
- the date, time and location of the meeting;
- the attendance area or geographic area for the School Community Council;
- the nomination process (i.e. Advanced Only, Advanced and from the Floor, from the Floor Only);
- where policies and procedures respecting the School Community Council can be reviewed;

Optional:

- How this will benefit their children/community
- Why we need their help
- Refreshments
- Child care availability

2. Nomination Procedures

Option A: Advanced Nominations Only

Nominations will be accepted for 4 weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting and close one week in advance of the Annual Meeting.

Where an advanced nomination process is established and the number of candidates is equal to or less than nine (with parents/guardians in the majority), an election is unnecessary. The candidates would be acclaimed and names of the elected members would be posted. At the Annual Meeting the chair would announce the elected members and call for a motion to acclaim the individuals.

If there are more names than elected seats and/or if community members are in the majority, an election would be required at the Annual Meeting. The chair of the Annual Meeting will call upon the Returning Officer.

Option B: Advanced Nominations and Nominations from the Floor

Nominations will be taken in advance of the Annual Meeting as well as from the floor at the Annual Meeting. Changes to the ballots will need to be made that evening and a Returning Officer will need to be present in the event an election is required.

The chair will announce the nominations that were received in advance of the Annual Meeting. The chair will call for nominations from the floor. Individuals nominated from the floor must be present that evening to qualify.

Nominations will be received by the Returning Officer until a motion is passed that nominations cease. Nominees may withdraw their nomination until a motion is passed that nominations cease and the chair calls for a vote by secret ballot.

If there are more names than elected seats and/or if community members are in the majority, an election would be required at the Annual Meeting as parents/guardians must be in the majority of the elected parent/guardian and community members. The chair of the Annual Meeting will call upon the Returning Officer.

Option C: Nominations from the Floor Only

Nominations will be taken from the floor at the Annual Meeting. Nominations will not be accepted in advance. Those individuals wishing to have their name stand for an elected position must be present on the evening of the Annual Meeting.

3. Nomination Forms

Nomination forms will be available from the school office and may be submitted during office hours. Nominees who have submitted the Nomination Form in advance of the Annual Meeting are not required to be in attendance at the Annual Meeting to appear on the ballot. Nominees who are nominated from the floor must be in attendance at the Annual Meeting to appear on the ballot (Appendix B – Nomination Form).

4. Receipt and Safe-Keeping of Nominations

The Principal or Administrative Assistant (s) of the school will date and sign the nomination forms as they arrive at the front office. A **photocopy** of the signed and dated nomination form shall be given to the nominee. This signed photocopy would confirm that the form was appropriately completed, contains the required information and was received prior to the due date.

The Principal of the school should make provisions for security and safe storage of the

nomination forms.

5. Public Information

The names of all nominees will become public and posted upon submission to the school office. The list will be updated as nominations are received. The list will simply define the name of each nominee and whether they are running as a parent/guardian or community member.

The names of nominees should be posted and updated in an area of the school that is visible to the parents/guardians and community members (i.e. on wall outside the front office, bulletin board in the school). The nomination forms should be held in the principal's safe-keeping and given to the Returning Officer at the Annual Meeting if an election is required.

6. Withdrawal of Nominations

Nominations submitted to the school office may be withdrawn at any time up to the closing date for nominations. At the Annual Meeting, nominees may withdraw their nomination until a motion is passed that nominations cease and the chair calls for a vote by secret ballot.

7. Voting

Persons Eligible to Vote in the School Community Council Election include:

- a **parent/guardian** of a student who attends the school for that School Community Council (including parents/guardians who do not reside within the attendance/geographic area of the school);
- a **community member** who is an elector (Appendix C &D) and resides within the attendance or geographic area for that School Community Council's school, and is not a parent or guardian of a student who attends that school.

8. Voter Registration

School Community Councils shall have eligible parents/guardians and community members sign in on the voter registration form (Appendix E) or sign a declaration stating their eligibility to vote before the meeting begins (Appendix F).

9. Breaking Election Ties

In the event of a tie vote, and if it is necessary to break the tie to determine the membership of the School Community Council, provision should be made for a candidate's name to be "picked from a hat".

10. Contested Election

If any parent/guardian or community member, who is eligible to vote in an election of a School Community Council, has reasonable basis to believe that an individual was not eligible to be elected to or vote in an election of that School Community Council, he or she may challenge that individual's eligibility by contacting the Principal of the school. The challenge must be made within 48 hours of the election.

The individual who makes the challenge shall provide his or her name and the basis of the challenge. The Principal of the school shall refer the matter to the Returning Officer who shall promptly investigate and make a ruling. The decision of the Returning Officer is final.

If the Returning Officer finds that an individual who was elected to or who voted in the School Community Council election was not eligible, the Returning Officer shall revise the final results of the election if they are impacted by that finding.

The Returning Officer shall destroy the ballots cast in an election of a School Community Council:

- if there is no challenge, once the time for making the challenge has expired; or
- if a challenge has been made, and once the Returning Officer has made a decision with respect to the challenge.

11. Destruction of Ballots

Immediately following the Annual Meeting, the ballots, voter registration, and election results shall be placed in a sealed envelope by the Returning Officer and given to the school Principal. The Principal shall store the sealed envelope in the school safe for 48 hours. Once the 48 hours has passed and the election has not been contested, the Returning Officer shall destroy the ballots.