

Alberta School Councils' Association



Workshops

School District
 Administrators & District-wide
 gatherings of School Councils

*Learning platform for school districts,
 administrators, district-wide gatherings
 of School Councils.*

Foundation

School Councils Purpose
 Chair Basics
 Bring Your Own Bylaws (BYOB)
 Partnerships with Fundraising Associations
 Meeting Management
 Tools for Effective School Councils
 Productive School Council Meetings
 Masterful Minutes

*Workshop series designed to enhance
 school council effectiveness and parent
 engagement in public education.*

Operation

Effective Engagement in Your School Community
 Planning Principles

*Presented in three focus areas of
 foundation building, operational aspects
 and expansion potential.*

Expansion

Understanding the District Results Report,
 Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Plan
 Effective Principal Engagement and Collaboration
 with School Councils





School District Foundation Workshops

Foundation	1.5 hour each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
<p>School Councils Purpose</p> <p>Understanding the legislated role of school councils including which topics/areas are open for discussion, and which require caution, helps to prevent tension and dysfunction within school councils and the school communities. Learning how to identify the work of school councils, how to frame a “personal issue” from a school council perspective, and how to broach sensitive topics is essential for new and returning members.</p>		A group of school councils or a district group of principals, administrators, trustees and/or school council reps seeking to introduce or review the legislated purpose of school councils.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board.	Review of legislation relevant to school councils, advising examples and activities. Exploring the value of school councils as they relate to supporting district education goals as well as those of individual schools.
<p>Chair Basics</p> <p>Chairing a school council meeting can be exciting, confusing or down-right scary! Having confidence with a clear understanding of chair responsibilities and processes will help to keep meetings focused, productive and fun!</p>		School council chairs (new or experienced) with or without their principals.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended.	Overview of the roles of the Chair, agenda preparation, duties of other members, communication, meeting management tools and skills.
<p>Bring Your Own Bylaws (BYOB)</p> <p>Clear governance documents help a group maintain focus and structure. Format and wording should be clear and easily understood by all. Contents should reflect the relevant (applicable) legislation in addition to the culture of the community which the group represents.</p>		A group of school councils or a district group of principals, administrators, trustees and/or school council reps seeking to understand what elements should be included in bylaws/operating procedures.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended. Note: Each participant must bring a copy of their existing governance document(s).	Review of relevant legislation (School Act/Regulations), step-by-step, hands-on review of participant’s governing documents, discussion regarding interpretation and implementation.
<p>Partnerships with Fundraising Associations</p> <p>Fundraising Associations (FRAs) are separate, legal entities with distinct rules to follow, responsibilities to comply with and liabilities to consider. Positive, collaborative, mutually respectful relationships with the principal and school council are integral to the success of each, and in the best interests of students. Clarity of who has authority for what, is essential.</p>		A group of school councils or a district group of principals, administrators, trustees and/or school council reps seeking a clear understanding of the role/authority of a registered fundraising association/society.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board, and preferably principals, teacher reps and (potential) FRA Presidents. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended.	Review of relevant legislation (Societies Act and School Act), “Which Group” identification activities, and case studies.
<p>Meeting Management</p> <p>Meaningful school council meetings require strong leadership and clear, easy to follow processes for all participants. Having a solid <i>Agenda</i>, some simple <i>Rules of Order</i> and learning how to <i>Direct Discussion</i> will help to ensure the school council meetings are not a waste of anyone’s valuable time. Every meeting participant will benefit from this workshop!</p>		A group of school councils or a district group of principals, administrators, trustees and/or school council reps seeking to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its meetings.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended.	Exploration of some common challenges for school council meetings and introduction of three important solution-oriented tools.
<p>Tools for Effective School Councils</p> <p>Resources, tips, templates and tools will be provided to help participants to understand the culture of their local community and basic volunteer psychology. Strategies to increase the effectiveness of school councils will be offered.</p>		A group of school councils or a district group of principals, administrators, trustees and/or school council reps.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended.	Identification of what school councils can do, and the resources available to assist. Understanding school community culture/barriers and volunteer motivation.
<p>Productive School Council Meetings</p> <p>Productive school council meetings rely on all school council members contributing to the value and success of the school council. Understanding the role of chair and principal, as well as the importance of meaningfully engaging other members, is vital. Use of consistent processes, expectations, ongoing documentation, evaluation and recognition is essential.</p>		A group of school councils or a district group of principals, administrators, trustees and/or school council reps seeking assistance to clarify and understand member roles and relationships.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended.	Case studies (Issue vs. Personality), discussion related to climate setting and task sharing. Identification of strategies to help create a warm, cooperative environment.
<p>Masterful Minutes</p> <p>Minutes are among the most important documents used to conduct business in a transparent and accountable manner. However, taking minutes can be daunting. Minute-takers are often expected to produce minutes out of chaotic and disorganized meetings. Understanding how much is too much, and what format is best in a school council setting will reduce stress and minimize conflict.</p>		School Council Secretaries (new or experienced) and any other interested parties.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” is recommended.	Explanation of the various types of minutes, the ideal format for school councils, and how to create and use templates efficiently.



School District **Operation** Workshops

Operation	2 hours each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
<p>Effective Engagement in Your School Community</p> <p>School councils would like their school community to be dynamic, exciting places, where parents feel authentically engaged in supporting and enhancing student learning. Not easily accomplished, effective engagement means many different things. Explore what this means in your school community, and how it might be achieved.</p>		A school council seeking to involve and engage the school community in supporting and enhancing student learning.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members, is recommended.	Using local context, define effective engagement, identify existing challenges, explore possible solutions and create goals and plans focused on creating engagement opportunities for the school community.
<p>Planning Principles</p> <p>Meaningful involvement, recruitment and effective engagement require planning. A plan needs to be simple to communicate and achievable - given the time and resources available. Evaluation and potential modification is vital to ongoing development of plans.</p>		Districts with a majority of school council participants who have a clear understanding of their purpose, seeking to gain a basic understanding of plan creation.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members, is recommended.	Exploration of the value of planning, idea sharing, open discussion, consensus building. Overview of the principles of planning as they relate to the work of school councils.

School District **Expansion** Workshops

Expansion	2.5 hours each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
<p>Understanding the District Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Plan</p> <p>Schools, school districts and Alberta Education have a responsibility to assess and report on the status of student success and school community satisfaction, to identify areas requiring improvement, and to implement improvement strategies. Understanding the meaning and importance of the three provincially mandated tools which guide this work will assist school councils to identify meaningful paths of participation.</p>		Districts with a majority of participants who have a clear understanding of the legislated role, seeking to increase their knowledge and understanding of the assessment and planning tools used to guide the educational focus in their school.	Invitation from District. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. District Admin is prepared to distribute the entire copy of the district’s Results Report, 3 Year Education Plan and Accountability Pillar, and discuss details as questions arise. Foundation workshop “School Councils Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members, plus minimum of one workshop from Operation category within previous school year, is recommended.	Examination of District’s Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Education Plan. Recognition of areas of strength/success. Discussion relevant to how school councils can assist in supporting and enhancing student learning. Increased awareness of the educational direction/focus, rough/draft ideas for discussion topics for school council and/or strategies for school council work.
<p>Effective Principal Engagement and Collaboration with School Councils</p> <p>The principal is the key figure in creating an environment conducive to authentic parental participation and engagement. Effective school council engagement in school and district work, principals working effectively and collaboratively with school councils in a mutually respectful environment, and collaborative engagement of the school community in partnership with the principal and school council, are integral to success.</p>		A district group of principals, administrators, trustees and school council reps (optional) seeking to explore how administrators can work effectively with school councils. <i>Note - intended for principals and senior administrative team members.</i>	Invitation from District. Minimum ten principals/administrators/trustees in attendance. Recommended attendance by a member of the administration or Board.	Review of School Act and Regulations relevant to what opportunities are mandated for discretionary school council participation. Identifying school community culture/barriers, volunteer motivation, engagement activities and case studies.



Program

	Foundation 1.5 hour each <i>Essentially information sharing</i>	Operation 2 hours each <i>Primarily interactive, outcome based</i>	Expansion 2.5 hours each <i>Generally brainstorming, drafting future work</i>
School District Administrators & District-wide gatherings of School Councils Series: 12 Workshop choices 21 Hours total	School Councils Purpose Chair Basics Bring Your Own Bylaws (BYOB) Partnerships with Fundraising Associations Meeting Management Tools for Effective School Councils Productive School Council Meetings Masterful Minutes	Effective Engagement in Your School Community Principles of School Council Planning	Understanding the District Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Plan Effective Principal Engagement and Collaboration with School Councils
<i>Segment duration:</i>	8 sessions = 12 hours <i>Foundation Built</i>	2 sessions = 4 hours <i>Operations in Place</i>	2 sessions = 5 hours <i>Expansion Initiated</i>

It is not necessary to complete sessions or segments sequentially or in any order – only as indicated in each workshop “Requirements” criteria.