



Workshops

	Foundation	Operation	Expansion
School Councils	Introduction & Establishment <i>(individual schools only)</i>	Planning Principles	<i>For individual school councils only:</i> Understanding the School Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Plan
Groups of School Councils	School Council Purpose	<i>For individual school councils only:</i> Mission and Vision	Developing a 3 Year Plan
School Districts	Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose	Operating Procedures	<i>For Groups & Districts only:</i> Understanding the District Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Plan
	Meeting Management	Policies and Practices	<i>For Districts only:</i> Effective Principal Engagement and Collaboration with School Councils
	Tools for Effective School Councils	Effective Engagement in Your School Community	
	Productive Meetings	Creating a 1 Year Plan	
	Building Positive Partnerships		
	The Work of School Council: It's NOT About the Meeting		
	<i>For Groups & Districts only:</i> Chair Basics		
	Bring Your Own Bylaws (BYOB)		
	Masterful Minutes		

Workshops designed to enhance school council effectiveness and parent engagement in public education. Learning platforms for school councils, groups of school councils, school districts and fundraising associations. Presented in three focus areas of foundation building, operational aspects and expansion potential.

School Councils, Groups of School Councils, School Districts Foundation Workshops



Foundation	1.5 hour each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
<p>Introduction & School Council Establishment* (<i>individual schools only</i>)</p> <p>Understanding language in the education community, legislation that mandates the rights, responsibilities and choices of school councils, as well as their value and importance, is the first step to creating a meaningful, vibrant school council and school community. School council establishment must follow legislated requirements. Provided those requirements are met, school councils are permitted flexibility and choice in how they operate. Parents will make the decisions resulting in the official establishment of their school council.</p> <p>*Note: duration is 3 hours; for individual school communities only.</p>		The community of a newly opened school or the community of an established school where no school council exists.	Invitation from principal or District. Minimum seven participants: five parents plus principal and teacher rep.	Review legislation relevant to the establishment of a school council; exploring rights, responsibilities and choices, understanding the benefits and value of school council, open discussion and consensus building to determine membership and governance structure.
<p>School Council 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 a school council and the school community. 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 newly established school council, an existing school council with a majority of new members or a parent group struggling to separate a school council and fundraising association.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep.	Review of relevant legislation, exploring rights, responsibilities and choices, advising examples and activities.
<p>Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose</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 school community recognizing the need for two distinct groups and seeking to form a society for the purposes of fundraising, or with one in place needing assistance to understand their boundaries.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair and (potential) fundraising association President, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop “School Council Introduction” or “Purpose”.	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 school council aware of its legislated role seeking to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its meetings.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose”.	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 school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to obtain strategies and tools related to fulfilling the role.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose”.	Identification of what school councils can do, and the resources available to assist. Exploration of school community culture/barriers and volunteer motivation.
<p>Productive 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 are essential.</p>		A school council aware of its legislated role seeking assistance to clarify and understand relationships and responsibilities among members.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair and ideally other Executive members, principal and teacher. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose”.	Case studies (<i>Issue vs. Personality</i>), discussion related to climate setting and task sharing. Identification of strategies to help create a warm, welcoming, and cooperative environment.
<p>Building Positive Partnerships</p> <p>Building positive partnerships within the Education and general community can help school councils to be more effective in their advisory role. With a focus of supporting and enhancing student learning, <i>Positive Partnerships</i> are informative, collaborative, and respectful of boundaries and authorities.</p>		A school council aware of its legislated role seeking to identify and build relationships within, or outside of, the Education Community.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose”.	Identification of Education Partners, examination of relational components, expectations and protocols.
<p>The Work of School Council: It’s NOT About the Meeting</p> <p>School Councils often struggle with identifying the types of activities and work they should be doing in order to truly fulfil their legislated role. In this workshop, school councils are encouraged to examine what they are doing in relation to their intended purpose and the intended result of their work, and then consider alternative means of including their school community.</p>		A school council aware of its legislated role seeking to extend their positive influence beyond the school council meeting and into the school community.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose”.	Examination of the common “work” of school councils, how that work relates to the intended purpose and desired result of the work, and exploration of activities and processes that will enhance the school council’s presence in the school community.

School Councils **Operation** Workshops



Operation	2 hours each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
Mission and Vision	Mission defines the purpose of a group, the reason for being. Vision communicates that purpose through values; reveals desired outcome or ideal state. Clearly understanding and communicating the school council purpose, mission and vision is essential to engaging the school community.	A school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to define, or redefine, their mission and vision, ideally aligned with those of the school.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members.	Idea sharing, open discussion, consensus building. Create a <i>Draft Mission and Vision Statement</i> , ready to share with school community.
Operating Procedures	A school council has discretion to decide what works best for them, within the context of legislation and their community. Topics include; model of governance, membership, decision making, terms of office, conflict resolution.	A school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to create operating procedures for the first time, or replace existing bylaws.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop “Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members.	Review of legislation relevant to school councils creating operating procedures (bylaws). Open discussion, idea sharing, and consensus building; wording of specific clauses relevant to the local community. Create <i>Draft Operating Procedures</i> for review and feedback.
Policies and Practices	School council policies should reflect legislation, the context of their communities, and the work their members choose to do. Topics include; communication - internal and external, record-keeping, fundraising and accounting, privacy, location of meetings, official mailing address, new member orientation, group evaluation and social media.	A school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to create policies which will help to guide and define its processes and work.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Operation workshop “School Council Operating Procedures” within previous school year.	Review of legislation relevant to school councils creating policies. Open discussion, idea sharing, and consensus building; wording of specific policies relevant to the local community. Create <i>Draft Policies</i> for review and feedback.
Effective Engagement in Your School Community	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.	A school council seeking to involve and engage the school community in supporting and enhancing student learning.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop “Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members.	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.
Creating a 1 Year Plan	Meaningful involvement, recruitment and effective engagement require planning. A plan should be simple to communicate and achievable - given the time and resources available. Evaluation and potential modification are vital to the creation of ongoing plans.	A school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to identify and create goals that can be achieved within the current school year.	Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher. Foundation workshop “School Council Purpose” within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members. Principal is prepared to present summary of <i>Annual Education Plan</i> and identify two or three areas where school council may choose to assist.	Exploration of the value of planning, idea sharing, open discussion, consensus building. Overview of the school’s <i>Annual Education Plan</i> , identifying areas where school council may assist in achieving identified targets, as well as ongoing school council progressive learning. Create <i>Draft 1 Year Plan</i> specifying actions, resources, outcomes and evaluation methods.

School Councils, Groups of School Councils, School Districts **Operation** Workshops

Planning Principles	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.	Those 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 principal, parent, District or group rep. 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 Councils Expansion Workshops



Expansion	2.5 hours each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
<p>Understanding the School 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 a school council to identify meaningful paths of participation.</p>	<p>A school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to increase its knowledge and understanding of the assessment and planning tools used to guide the educational focus of their school.</p>	<p>Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Principal is prepared to distribute the entire copy of the school's Results Report, 3 Year Education Plan and Accountability Pillar, and discuss details as questions arise. Foundation workshop "School Council Purpose" within previous two school years.</p>	<p>Examination of school's <i>Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Education Plan</i>. Recognition of areas of strength/success. Discussion relevant to how school council and parents can assist in achieving better results where needed.</p>
<p>Developing a 3 Year Plan</p>	<p>Meaningful involvement, participation and effective engagement require planning. A plan should be simple to communicate and achievable - given the time and resources available. Evaluation and potential modification are vital to ongoing development of plans.</p>	<p>A school council with a clear understanding of its legislated role, seeking to identify and develop long-term goals that coincide with the school's 3 Year Education Plan.</p>	<p>Invitation from principal and one parent. Minimum five participants including school council Chair, principal and teacher rep. Foundation workshop "School Council Purpose" within previous two school years. Principal is prepared to present summary of 3 Year Education Plan and identify key areas where school council may choose to assist.</p>	<p>Overview of the school's 3 Year Education Plan, identifying areas where school council may choose to assist in achieving identified targets, as well as ongoing school council progressive learning. Create a <i>Draft 3 Year School Council Plan</i> specifying actions, resources, outcomes and evaluation methods.</p>



Groups of School Councils, School Districts **Foundation** Workshops

Foundation	1.5 hour each	Audience	Requirements	Activities
<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>		A group of school council chairs (new or experienced) with or without their principals.	Invitation from District or group rep. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop "School Council 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 school council reps seeking to understand what elements should be included in bylaws/operating procedures.	Invitation from District or group rep. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop "School Council 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>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 or group rep. Minimum ten participants including a member of the district administration or Board. Foundation workshop "School Council Purpose" is recommended.	Explanation of the various types of minutes, the ideal format for school councils, and how to create and use templates efficiently.

Groups of School Councils, School Districts **Expansion** Workshop

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>		Groups or Districts with a majority of school council 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 or group rep. 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 Council Purpose" within previous two school years, more recently if majority are new members, 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.

School Districts **Expansion** Workshop

<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. Note - intended for principals and senior administrative team members.	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.
--	--	---	--	---