

# School Councils

All schools in the Ottawa-Carleton District School Board (OCDSB) should have an advisory school council to help increase communication between schools and their communities and to serve the needs of students. The school council liaises through the school principal and is an important link between parents and the school community.

## WHAT ARE THE KEY DUTIES OF A SCHOOL COUNCIL?

### ***Building a sense of community involving:***

- organizing extra-curricular activities in the school
- coordinating school-based services and community partnerships related to social, health, recreational, and nutrition programs
- advising on community use of school facilities
- the local coordination of services for children and youth

### ***Enhancing the home-school relationship through:***

- establishing school-community communication strategies
- developing methods of reporting to parents/guardians and the community

### ***Providing advice and comments on areas such as:***

- the school-year calendar
- the school code of student conduct
- curriculum and program goals and priorities
- the responses of the school or District to achievement in provincial and District assessment programs
- the preparation of the school profile
- the principal profile — provision of input as to the qualities, skills, attitudes, and training/education for the District and administration to consider in the selection of school principals
- the school budget priorities, including local capital improvement plans
- the development, implementation, and review of Board policies at the local level



*The School Council helps increase communication between the school and the community and serves the needs of students.*

### ***The principal assists the school council in carrying out its obligations by:***

- providing existing non-confidential information\*
- giving notice of the first school council meeting of the year to all parents
- working with the school council to publish information about its activities
- endorsing the school council's fundraising activities (within the parameters and guidelines established by the Board) for the benefit of the school and/or the council

\*Note: School councils cannot access information on individual students and staff or discuss personnel matters and matters that are dealt with under collective agreements. Parents/guardians should speak directly to the teacher or principal to resolve any individual concerns.

## WHO SITS ON THE SCHOOL COUNCIL?

Membership on the school council is open to all parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, community representatives, intermediate and secondary students, the school principal (non-voting), teachers, and administrative and support staff. The composition of the school council should reflect the diversity of the community it serves.

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Members of the council are elected annually by their peers and parents/guardians must hold the majority of seats. Elementary school councils should have at least nine members and secondary school councils should have at least eleven members.

### **WHAT IS OCASC?**

The Ottawa-Carleton Assembly of School Councils (OCASC) is an umbrella organization for OCDSB school councils. The District recognizes the important role played by OCASC in strengthening the involvement of parents and the community in schools and in Board decision making through representation on Board committees and in other ways. Each school council has the opportunity to elect a delegate to attend monthly OCASC meetings. For more information, go to [www.ocasc.ca](http://www.ocasc.ca).

### **MORE INFORMATION**

Please visit [www.ocdsb.ca](http://www.ocdsb.ca) for more resources including information about key Board policies and procedures relevant to school councils, OCASC and District contacts, information from the Ministry of Education, and how to communicate effectively with the District. General information on school councils can be found at [www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council.pdf](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council.pdf).

### **WHEN ARE MEETINGS HELD?**

School council meetings are usually held every month at the school (minimum of four meetings per year). All parents/guardians and interested members of the community are encouraged to attend the meetings and express their views. The first meeting each year shall be held within 30 calendar days of the beginning of the school year.

### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For more information about your school council activities, please contact your school office. As well, your trustee and superintendent are available to assist you with the specific needs of your school. Executive Officer Michèle Giroux is the OCDSB liaison officer with school councils and OCASC and can be reached at [michele.giroux@ocdsb.ca](mailto:michele.giroux@ocdsb.ca) or 613-596-8211, ext. 8607. Coordinator, Policies and Procedures Norah Vollmer can be reached at [norah.vollmer@ocdsb.ca](mailto:norah.vollmer@ocdsb.ca) or 613-596-8253.