

Elk Island Public Schools Committee of School Councils Operating Procedures

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

- A. "EIPS" means Elk Island Public Schools
- B. "COSC" means the Committee of School Councils
- C. "Representative" means an individual member chosen by their school council to attend COSC
- D. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program in EIPS;
- E. "Operating Procedures" means the governing document serving the same purpose as Bylaws referenced in the Regulations.

2. HISTORY AND AUTHORITY

Strathcona County Committee of School Advisory Councils (COSAC) formed in the late 1980s under Strathcona County Public Schools to bring together partners in education. As the group evolved, ownership transferred to parents who held the executive positions. When amalgamation occurred in 1993, Strathcona County Schools became part of Elk Island Public Schools. School Councils also became mandated under the School Act in 1995 and COSAC became the EIPS COSC. COSC was the first group of this nature in Alberta and has been a model for other divisions.

COSC operates with autonomy and is supported by Board Policy 2 which states:

1.10 Encourage the formation of a Committee of School Councils (COSC).

1.10.1 If a COSC is formed, its primary purpose shall be to enhance communications among the School Councils (SCs), the Board, the Superintendent and the community.

1.10.2 Parents with concerns are encouraged to present their concerns directly to the teacher/Principal. School personnel or individual student concerns shall not be discussed at COSC meetings.

1.10.3 Further terms of reference and operating procedures shall be as determined by COSC.

3. PURPOSE

COSC exists for the purpose of empowering, engaging and supporting school council representatives.

4. OBJECTIVES

- Receive timely presentations by EIPS representatives and education partners on provincial and district education initiatives
- Share best practices and perspectives from school councils throughout the district

- Understand our legislated role as school councils and how parents can make an impact provincially.
- Understand the role of fundraising societies.
- Support and empower school council representatives through support and mentorship opportunities
- Create opportunities for meaningful discussion which can then inform discussion at the school level.
- Build relationships with other school council representatives and education partners.
- Understand district priorities, goals and outcomes, and their role in the District Education Plan and School Education Plans
- Share content from individual school councils
- Foster the collaborative spirit of Parents as Partners
- Broaden perspectives to include the full K-12 educational experience
- Encourage participation in and understanding of the role of Alberta School Councils Association
- Resource and equip healthy school councils and fundraising societies.

5. GOVERNANCE, MEMBERSHIP and DECISION MAKING

The Committee of School Councils encourages engagement, providing participation falls within the purpose and objectives.

The membership shall consist of:

- A. School council representative(s) as defined in 1(c)
- B. The Superintendent and/or designate
- C. EIPS COSC liaison
- D. ATA Local President and/or designate
- E. Board of Trustee Chair and/or designate(s)
- F. Additional Trustee(s)
- G. Other invited guests
- H. Past Chair (for a term of one year)

Decision Making

Most decisions shall be made by consensus by school council representatives.

Decisions requiring a vote, such as elections, or dissolution, shall be made by school councils through their appointed representative. Each attending school councils shall be granted one vote. Proxy votes will not be counted. Votes shall be simple majority, with the exception of dissolution which shall require 75% approval.

6. QUORUM

COSC does not have quorum requirements.

7. EXECUTIVE and TERMS OF OFFICE

Term of office shall be one year beginning at our October meeting.

The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary

- A. All Executive positions must be filled by representatives as defined in 1C above.
- B. Every representative is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the COSC.

- C. Any Executive member may resign their position by providing written notice to the other executive members.
- D. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote voting members at a regularly-scheduled COSC meeting.
- E. The Executive will carry out the day-to-day operation of the COSC.

8. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

It is expected that the COSC Chair will be a representative as described in 1 (c). Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of COSC will:

- 1) Chair all meetings of the COSC;
- 2) Coordinate with the EIPS liaison to establish meeting agendas;
- 3) Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
- 4) Ensure that COSC Operating Procedures are current and followed;
- 5) Be the official spokesperson of the COSC;
- 6) Ensure that there is regular communication with the whole COSC community;
- 7) Review any communication to the COSC community prior to distribution
- 8) Have general responsibility for all activities of COSC;

B. Vice-Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of COSC will:

- 1) In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities;
- 2) In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of COSC;
- 3) Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
- 4) Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;
- 5) Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

C. Secretary

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of COSC will:

- 1) Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
- 2) Work together with the EIPS liaison to maintain a dated record of all meetings and members of COSC and their information, in compliance with PIPA;
- 3) Work together with the EIPS liaison to distribute, as determined by COSC, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events;

In the absence of the Secretary, COSC shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

9. VACANCIES

Elections for a vacant position will be held at subsequent meetings of COSC until the vacancy is filled.