



EDWIN PARR COMPOSITE SCHOOL



SCHOOL COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE

NAME OF COMMITTEE

The committee shall be known as the “Edwin Parr School Council”

PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

To build collaborative relationships and build meaningful, two way communication between parents / students / administrative personnel.

It is a structured group of parents, principals, trustees, teachers, and community representatives whose purpose is to advise the principal and the school board of respecting matters relating to the school.

It is a means for parents and community members to work together, with the school, to support and enhance student learning, and their environment.

It is designed to assist in increased engagement, to better support our students, and school personnel, and is a vehicle to support meaningful parental involvement in decisions that affect the school and it’s operations.

What is NOT on the table for discussion?

- Personal
- Personnel
- Legal

What School Councils are Not!

As the primary role is advisory, school councils are not eligible to incorporate as societies. It is not the primary intent of school councils to fundraise or lobby.

Roles that are NOT to be taken on by a school council include:

- school governance
- employment issues
- school management
- listening to complaints

**Please review the “School Council Resource Guide” developed by ASCA (Alberta School Council Association) for further information on Schools Council Do’s and Don’ts. **

EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

The committee shall be made up of:

- 1) CHAIR
- 2) VICE-CHAIR
- 3) SECRETARY
- 4) COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST
- 5) DESIGNATES / PARENTS / COMMUNITY MEMBERS / STUDENTS
- 6) PRINCIPAL
- 7) TEACHER

DUTIES OF EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

RESPONSIBILITIES

While individual members of school council may have specific duties, all members are responsible for creating a culture of respect, collaboration and inclusion. They must also be able to attend most set meetings, and understand that if 3 consecutive meetings are missed, they will be required to step down.

Each school council must decide how to fulfill its responsibility in the school community through activities, such as:

- seeking the views of the school community (through questionnaires, informal discussions, topic-specific meetings)
- representing the views of the school community actively and accurately (through consulting as widely as possible with parents, teachers, students and community before making major decisions or providing conclusive advice to the principal or board)
- informing the school community of items, such as meetings, committee work, news and surveys (through newsletters, bulletin boards, emails)
- involving the school community (by inviting, supporting, including)
- encouraging and promoting parental engagement and support (by publicizing opportunities for ways to get involved, not just school council meetings)
- becoming well informed (by asking questions, reading, critically examining what is presented)
- focusing on the best interests of all students (by considering a wide variety of students and families when making decisions and formulating advice)
- becoming familiar with the policies of the local school board and understanding how they impact the school community
- maintaining ethical standards and setting ground rules of respect for meetings (adopting a code of conduct for school council members, rules of order for meetings)

Chair

It is expected that the school council chairperson will be a parent of a student attending the school. The chair should be someone who can work collaboratively and knows how to organize both programs and people. The chair should actively encourage others to become engaged in meaningful ways.

Typical chairing duties include:

- chair all meetings of the school council
- Notify Aspen View School Division of new names and contact information for School Council members following the AGM (email Division office)
- Notify ASCA of the new names and contact information for School Council members following the AGM (form on the website)
- coordinate with the principal to establish meeting agendas
- ensure that the operating procedures are current and followed
- be the official spokesperson of the school council
- ensure there is regular communication with the whole school community
- Review any communication to the school community prior to distribution and include the Principal in same;
- stay informed about school board policy that impacts school council
- comply with the *School Councils Regulation* by providing the school board with an annual report that summarizes the school council's activities for the previous school year.

Chair's Relationship with the Principal:

- The chair's role is key to the success of the school council. An important responsibility is regular and ongoing communication with the school principal. This relationship of mutual trust and respect must be nurtured and supportive of common goals for the school community.

Vice-Chair

The vice-chair's duties are,

- in the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the chair, to fulfill the chair's responsibilities,
- in the absence of the chair, supervise the affairs and preside at meetings of the school council.
- Arrange updating of website with new names and contact information annually after the AGM has taken place.
- Review PIPA and FOIP to ensure guidelines and rules are adhered too.

Secretary

The school council secretary typically acts as a recorder at each meeting and ensures that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting.

Communication Specialist

The Communication Specialist works under the direct supervision of the School Council and undertakes all responsibilities in consultation and cooperation with the School Council Chair and the School Principal.

- the Communication Specialist applies his/her communications expertise to improve the links between the School Council and the School Community and to advance the goals and profile of the School Council.
- Managing social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, website).
- Attend School Council meetings regularly.

The Communication Specialist of the School Council, in consultation with the Chair and the Principal, may:

- Assist the School Council in developing, implementing and evaluating a Communication Policy and Communications Plan.
- Prepare School Council Newsletters and the School Council's section of the School Newsletters.
- Provide information for the School Council section of the School website to inform of the purpose and structure of the School Council, highlight activities and accomplishments of the School Council and to promote parental involvement.
- Develop promotional material for the Annual General Meeting, special events, projects and programs and other School Council materials as directed by the School Council and in keeping with the School Council Communications Policy and the Communications Plan.
- Collaborate with Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) in obtaining templates and samples for promotional and other School Council materials.
- Assist the Chair and the School Council by proofreading and editing reports, correspondence and other material, to ensure they reflect the School Council in a professional and consistent manner.
- Develop communication strategies which facilitate two-way communication between the School Council and the School Community. (Surveys, discussion groups, social media).
- Promote the School and its activities with the public (local media, community newspapers), as requested by the Principal.
- Assess the effectiveness of School Council publications, distribution systems, etc. And recommend improvements.

Designates/Parent Guardians/Students/Community Members

Parents of children enrolled at the school form the majority of the members of school council, and:

- encourage participation of parents and representatives from the school community
- share their professional knowledge, expertise and life experience
- encourage feedback and participation from community groups and individuals
- communicate information of interest to the school council and the school community
- share information from school council meetings with the community
- have a clear understanding of the school council objectives
- attend school council meetings and create an inviting environment
- identify possible topics for agendas and recommend training sessions on school council effectiveness

School councils are encouraged to have a community members attend meetings. The community representative can play a strong role in bringing the community perspective into the school. The member helps the school and school council build partnerships with the larger community and, in many instances, acts as a resource to promote cooperative ventures between community and school to enhance student learning. The student is the centre of the education system and, in high school, has an important role to play as a participant on school council. A student presents the student perspective on issues, helps with school policies, seeks other students' views to share with school council and communicates school council's information to fellow students.

Principal

The Principal is the instructional leader who manages the day-to-day operations of the school and is a key member on School Council.

The Principal promotes cooperation between the school and the community and is the ultimate decision-maker in the school.

The Principal implements the policies of Alberta Education and the local school board, ensures instruction is consistent with the Programs of Study, ensures the standards of education are met, evaluates the programs, maintains order and discipline within the school, evaluates and supervises teachers and supervises the evaluation and advancement of students.

As a provincially-mandated member of the School Council, the Principal:

- Works in collaboration with the Chair to co-create School Council agendas
- Supports the Chair in running efficient School Council meetings, as per the School Council Rules of Order

- Provides contextual information, as requested by the School Council, on matters relating to the school
- Promotes cooperation between the school and the community it serves
- Seeks input from the School Council, parents and community on major decisions that affect the school
- Establishes, facilitates, communicates and encourages opportunities for School Council, parent and community engagement in school matters
- Encourages and supports the formation and continuous improvement of School Council
- Interprets and shares results of provincial achievement tests and diploma exams
- Shares information about the school community
- Provides information on the programs in the school and the needs of the students
- Refers School Council to the appropriate resource for information on laws, regulations and policies that affect School Council
- Enables the School Council to provide input into the school's education plan.

TEACHER

Each School Council must have at least one Teacher Representative, as per the legislation. A Teacher Representative contributes to a successful School Council in the following ways:

- Promotes a collaborative, collegial model of decision making at the school and for the School Council and provides support for the decisions of the School Council
- Shares professional knowledge with School Council members
- Encourages parents and community members to become involved in school activities
- Shares School Council activities and information with other staff, parents and community members
- Follows the code of ethics and professional protocols set out by the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA)
- Represents the teachers' perspective.

Example: Feature Teacher on the agenda – a different teacher each month gives a brief update/summary of what their class/grade is doing. May want to include a few students as well (bring in new parents to the meetings).

TERMS OF OFFICE

The executive has no set terms of office. Once elected, it would be expected that the committee member would complete that school year. If under certain circumstances that board member must step down, the board will attempt to fill

with volunteers and hold official elections at upcoming AGM. Elections for available positions will occur annually at the AGM.

QUORUM/VOTING

The committee will vote if unable to unanimously come to resolution. This will be based on majority rules format.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

If conflict should arise, with a member of the public, the chair and Principal will discuss at separate meeting and then bring to committee for final resolution.

If conflict should arise, with a member/s of the School Council, the chair and Principal will discuss and bring said members in for further discussion/resolution. If resolution cannot be found, then the involved parties will be asked to step down as board members, and new members will be re-elected in a “special” council meeting as determined by the chair and Principal.

Other factors that could result in a member being asked to step down:

- 1) Confidentiality Breach
- 2) Unable to attend required meeting quota.
- 3) Unethical conduct

PRIVACY

In the Parent Council Reference Guide, Page 17, our Terms of Reference requires us to decide how to govern personal information. FOIP and PIPA as per the “Privacy Legislation” and “Recommendations for School Councils”

RECORDS

The secretary of the committee will take accurate minutes and said minutes will be reviewed by the chair. The minutes will then be passed to school administrative personnel decided upon by the principal, to ensure accurate and reliable information sharing for school/community personnel. They will post on-Edwin Parr School Council Facebook Page as well as the Edwin Parr Community School website.

AGENDA

The agenda will be created by the Chair and reviewed by the principal at least 7-10 days prior to scheduled meeting. It will then be sent out to the board and parents for review. The administrative support designated to the committee, by the principal, will then assist with preparation for the upcoming scheduled meeting.

MEETINGS

Meetings will be held every month during the current school year. These meetings will occur at 7pm the 1st Monday of every month, unless there is no school due to holiday / PD Day. It will then be held the Monday afterward.

The meetings will be kept to a 60-minute duration, or as close as possible, and will consist of Chair or Vice Chair, Secretary +/- or designates.

There will be a school administrator representative (ex. Principal, Vice-principal), if possible at most, if not all meetings. Their contribution to the meeting may be done via email/hybrid as necessary.

There will be a school board trustee at most, if not all meetings. Due to conflicts in scheduling their contribution to the meeting may be done via email/hybrid as necessary.

There will be a Fundraising Committee representative at most, if not all meetings. Their contribution to the meeting may be done via email/hybrid as necessary.

Parent and Student feedback will be added to the agenda for discussion, if given to the necessary channels prior to the circulation of the completed Agenda / or to be tabled until the next scheduled meeting as necessary.

AMENDMENTS

Any amendments must be brought to the attention of the chair at the scheduled meetings or via email to ensure accurate information details, and proper reconciliation. Amendments will be made note of in writing, suggested amendments will be emailed to the entire council members for review, and the suggested amendments will be discussed at the AGM with final motions for same documented. The agreed upon changes, will be reflected upon in the minutes and the revised Terms of Reference will be distributed following.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of reference should be reviewed annually by the board and if accepted, the chair is to sign below.

If amendments are to be made, this will be made by a designated board member and again reviewed by the board for acceptance.

Terms of Reference must be signed off annually by the current / or newly appointed Chair of School Council.

	CHAIR NAME	CHAIR SIGNATURE	COMMENTS
