

Chapter 4

School Community Council Elections

4.1 – General Considerations for Council Elections

1. To ensure consistency and coherence of operation, legislation calls for annual council elections of two year term positions. This system creates staggered terms of office, with one-half of the representative members being elected one year, and the other half the next year. (legislation)
2. For the first year that elections are held, the half of the representative members receiving the largest number of votes serves for two years and the remaining half, receiving the lesser number of votes, serves for one year. This creates staggered term positions. (legislation)
3. The Board of Education must appoint an employee of the School Division, other than any member of the SCC, as Returning Officer for SCC elections. (legislation) The Board delegates this responsibility to the principal.
4. The employee selected by the principal as Returning Officer may not be a member of the Council (permanent, elected or appointed).
5. If, following the nomination process, there are vacant positions on a council, the Board may allow for a reduction in membership. If there are fewer than five members, the Board may appoint members to fill vacant positions.

4.2 – Initial Election Procedures for School Community Councils

Annual Meeting and Elections

1. Once a council is established, the Annual Meeting shall be held before November 30.
2. The Annual Meeting of council serves as a focal point for reviewing activities of the past year and preparing for the coming year. As such, the Annual Meeting shall include:
 - a. An Annual Report that addresses council activities and finances for the past year.
 - b. Elections for non-appointed representative members.
3. Should a representative member position become vacant during the year, that position may be filled by Board appointment in consultation with the council.
4. The Annual Meeting agenda shall follow an outline closely resembling Appendix 2.1.1 School Community Council Annual Meeting Agenda.

5. The council shall post on the SCC page of the school website a list of council members, officers, meeting dates and meeting times by September 30.

Public Notice (legislation)

1. The Returning Officer shall provide public notice of the meeting to elect SCC members at least four weeks in advance.
2. The notice shall set out the attendance area, time, place and purpose of the meeting.
3. The notice must be reasonably expected to reach parents, guardians and community members.

Nominations

1. The Returning Officer shall issue a Public Call for Nominations, at least four weeks ahead of the Annual Meeting. A template for this call is included in Forms and Templates: Form E – Call for Nominations to a School Community Council.
2. The Public Call for Nominations shall be posted:
 - a. In a school bulletin or newsletter.
 - b. On the school website.
 - c. In five prominent locations within the community.
 - d. In the local newspaper. (optional)
3. Nomination forms will be available in the school office and must be submitted during office hours by 3:30 pm, at least two days before the Annual Meeting.
4. Nominations may also be accepted from the floor of the Annual Meeting.
5. Individuals may be nominated by another person or volunteer to stand for election.
6. All nominees must identify if they are standing for election as a parent or community member.
7. If an election is necessary, the Annual Meeting Chair will call upon the Returning Officer to conduct the election.

Eligibility to Vote (legislation)

1. The following persons are eligible to vote:
 - a. Parents of students enrolled in the school.¹¹

¹¹This includes parents who do not reside within the school attendance area.

- b. Electors that reside within the school attendance area.¹²
2. In order to recognize their right to vote, eligible parents and resident electors must sign a declaration of eligibility to vote *before* the meeting begins.
3. Parents with students enrolled in more than one school are eligible to vote in elections for each council where their children attend school.
4. Electors residing within a school attendance area are eligible to vote in the election of only one council.

4.3 – Duties of the Returning Officer

1. The Returning Officer shall:
 - a. Announce who is eligible to vote.
 - b. Announce that eligible parents and resident electors must sign a declaration of eligibility before meeting begins in order to exercise their right to vote.
 - c. Announce that parents of students enrolled in more than one school (*including parents who do not reside within the attendance area of the school*) are eligible to vote in each of the elections for each council where their child attends school.
 - d. Announce that electors who reside within the school attendance area are eligible to vote in the election of only one council in their community of residence.
 - e. As individuals are nominated or volunteer, display names so that they are clearly visible to all in attendance. This display must also indicate if nominees are standing as a parent or community members.
 - f. Distribute and collect ballots.
 - g. Arrange for ballots to be counted in the presence of the Council Chair.
 - h. If there is a tie between nominees to fill the last available position, the Returning Officer will break the tie by lot.
 - i. Ensure the majority of members elected are parents of students enrolled in the school.
 - j. Announce election outcomes.

¹²The provisions do not limit or restrict the election or participating in voting of parents of students who may be employed by the School Division and work in a particular school.

4.4 – Duties of the Council Chair Elect

1. The Returning Officer will facilitate the selection of Council Chair.
2. Once elected, the Council Chair will review the nominations that have come forward in response to the Public Call for Nominations.
3. The Council Chair will call for further nominations for representative members.
4. If an election is necessary, the Council Chair will call upon the Returning Officer to manage the voting process by secret ballot.
5. If the outcome of the election is not contested, the Council Chair will ask for a motion to have the Returning Officer destroy the ballots.

4.5 – First Nations Representation

1. The Returning Officer, with the principal's assistance, will invite each First Nation with a significant percentage of students living on the reserve and attending the school to select an individual to be appointed as a representative member for a two year term.
2. Officials from the First Nation will be asked to advise the Returning Officer or school principal regarding the appointed membership before the date of the Annual Meeting.
3. The Superintendent of Education may fill any vacant positions should a First Nations member not be appointed before the date of the Annual Meeting.

4.6 – Contested Election

1. The outcome of an election may be contested within four school days of the Annual Meeting.
2. If the outcome of an election is disputed, the ballots will be held in safe keeping by the Returning Officer while the matter is referred to the Superintendent of Education.
3. Within seven days of the Annual Meeting the Superintendent of Education will investigate the election and recommend a course of action to the Director of Education/CEO.
4. Following receipt of the report from the Superintendent of Education, the Director of Education/CEO will make a final determination and inform the Board, the council, the principal and the candidates of the decision.