



## School Councils

### Version Number

1.7

### Implementation Date

18/07/2016

### Scope

All state schools

### Purpose

Under the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006](#) (the "Act") (s.79), the chief executive may establish a school council for a state school with the purpose of improving student learning. This procedure outlines processes for the establishment, operations and dissolution of school councils.

### Overview

School councils can be established in state schools and will enable greater involvement of the school community and other stakeholders, such as industry, in setting the strategic direction for the school.

The functions of a school council (s.81 of the Act) are to:

- monitor the school's strategic direction;
- approve plans and policies of the school of a strategic nature, or other documents affecting strategic matters including the annual estimate of revenue and expenditure for the school;
- monitor the implementation of the plans, policies and other documents mentioned above; and
- advise the school's principal about strategic matters.

The council must perform its functions in a way that achieves the best learning outcomes for the school's students (s.81(2) of the Act).

A school council may not:

- interfere with management by the school's principal of day-to-day operations of the school and its curriculum;
- make operational decisions about the use of teaching or learning resources at the school;
- make decisions about the individual teaching style used, or to be used, at the school;
- make a decision that is contrary to law or a written policy of the department;
- have control of funds;
- enter into contracts;
- acquire, hold, dispose of or deal with property;
- sue or be sued; or
- establish a committee or subcommittee.

The size of the school will determine the number of [parent, staff and student members](#) on the

school council. However the school council may not comprise less than six or more than fifteen members.

School council elections should be held at the beginning of the year, either in February or March.

Each elected member, or appointed member, of a school council holds office for two years **unless the school council decides otherwise as stated in the council's [constitution](#)**. However, if newly established, half of the first elected members may hold office for a term of not longer than three years.

Blue card requirements apply to school council members who are not parents, teachers or students under the age of 18 years. A valid blue card must be obtained before commencing duty for the school council which includes attending council meetings (see [Frequently Asked Questions](#)).

A member of a school council does not incur civil liability for an act done, or omission made, honestly and without negligence under section 117 of the Act.

A school council will be dissolved if:

- a school (for which a school council is established) closes (s. 112 of the Act); or
- the Minister dissolves the school council for noncompliance with a written direction (s. 55 of the Regulation); or
- the Chief Executive dissolves the school council because the school council is not satisfactorily performing its functions or the school community generally supports the dissolution of the school council (s. 56 of the Regulation).

## Responsibilities

**The principal is responsible for:**

- facilitating the [establishment of a school council](#), participating on the school council as an official member, and informing the school council of legislation and departmental policies.

**School Council members are responsible for:**

- establishing strategic direction and priorities of the school and approval of the school's strategic plan, facilitating and development of relationships between the school, the community and community organisations, and complying with the [code of conduct](#).

## Process

**Principal:**

- prepares an initial draft [constitution](#), in consultation with parents and school staff and/or other appropriate entities for the establishment of a school council (s.109 of the Act, see [Getting started flowchart](#))
- ensures that a parents and citizens' association (P&C) meeting and school staff meeting are held for approving the draft constitution. If the school does not have a P&C, a meeting of the parents of children attending the school must be held
- follows the [Steps to Publish a Notice in the Queensland Government Gazette](#) to establish a school council.

School councils are to ensure that appropriate processes are followed, as outlined in the [School Council Handbook](#), and that relevant members have a valid blue card before participating in school council activities (see [Frequently Asked Questions](#)).

The following may apply when School Councils are not appropriately performing functions or the school is closing:

- [Minister's Direction and Show Cause](#)
- [Dissolution of School Council](#)

## Online Resources

### Supporting documents

- [Dissolution approval letter to school](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions on blue card requirements for school council members](#)
- [Getting started flowchart](#)
- [School Council Handbook](#)
- [School Council Model Constitution](#)
- [School memo for dissolution of school council](#)
- [Steps to Publish a Notice in the Queensland Government Gazette](#)

## Review Date

21/01/2017



## Definitions

### **Appointed Member (s.77 of the Act)**

A local community, business or industry person appointed without election by the council.

### **Chairperson (s. 77 of the Act)**

A member of the council who presides at meetings, manages the business of and provides leadership to the council.

### **Constitution (s. 94 of the Act)**

The school council constitution that provides for membership, elections, conduct of business, the way that the council performs its functions and other appropriate matters.

### **Co-opted student member (s.77 of the Act)**

Where a school council is established for a primary school, a Year 6 student may be co-opted as a member of the council under the council's constitution.

### **Determining by Lot**

When a tie vote is decided by lottery, or by drawing lots. The process used for this in practice is up to the school and returning officer, although it would be beneficial to decide on the method before the election.

### **Elected parent member (s. 77 of the Act)**

A parent of a child at the school, elected by other parents to be a member of the school council.

### **Elected staff member (s. 77 of the Act)**

A member of staff at the school, elected by other staff members to be a member of the school council.

### **Elected student member (s.77 of the Act)**

Means a student in Year 10, 11 or 12 who is elected by a poll, held under the council's constitution, in which only those students may vote.

**Official member (s.77 of the Act)**

The school's principal and the P&C president.

**Quorum (s.99 of the Act)**

A quorum for a council is the number equal to two-thirds of the number of its members or, if two-thirds is not a whole number, the next highest whole number.

**Returning officer**

A person who is responsible for overseeing the election process for school council elected members.

**Scrutineer**

Scrutineers are appointed by candidates for election as elected members to observe the voting, and counting of the votes. Scrutineers have the right to be present when the ballot boxes are sealed and opened and when the votes are sorted and counted so that they may check any possible irregularities.

**Secretary**

A member of the council who undertakes all administration regarding the council, and creates and maintains records. The secretary assists the chairperson in facilitating the effective operation of the council's business.






## Authority

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\) Chapter 6](#)
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2006 \(Qld\) Part 7](#)

## Related Policy Instruments

- [School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework 2012-2015](#)

## Attachments

-  [Dissolution approval letter to school](#)
-  [Minister's direction and show cause](#)
-  [Dissolution of school council](#)
-  [Contact List](#)
-  [School memo for dissolution of School Council](#)

## Contact

For further information, please contact your [closest regional office](#).

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