

## HOW DO SCHOOL COUNCILS ACHIEVE THE MANDATE?

### Consultation with Parents

Regulation 612/00 clearly directs school councils to consult with parents of students enrolled in the school about matters under consideration by the council. It is therefore expected that any advice provided to the school principal or school board will be based on the general views of the school community and the best interests of all students in the school.

“To consult” means to seek advice, to confer, to discuss, or to deliberate on the views and opinions held by others. In the spirit of the regulations regarding school councils, there are clear expectations that all partners be consulted:

- School boards and principals are to seek advice from their school councils.
- School councils are to seek input from the parents of their school community about matters under their consideration

### Staying Focused on the Mandate

While school councils play a significant role, it is important that they act within the scope of the duties that are outlined in the provincial regulations and policies.

It is important that school councils maintain a broad focus on a range of issues of school-wide concern.

As specified in the regulation, school councils can provide advice to the principal and the board on any matter. It should be noted, however, that they are not authorized to perform managerial or administrative responsibilities that belong to the principal or to other school administrators. For example, assessing teacher performance in the classroom is the responsibility of principals and superintendents, who are granted this authority under the Education Act.

### Effective school councils are those that:

- ✓ focus on student learning and the best interests of all students;
- ✓ are actively involved in setting school priorities for improving student achievement;
- ✓ promote meaningful parental and community involvement and actively seek the views of their school communities;
- ✓ have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities;
- ✓ include members who represent the diverse views of their school communities;
- ✓ keep well informed about school and board policies and procedures;
- ✓ have clear and consistent processes for decision making;
- ✓ communicate with the community about their activities;
- ✓ maintain high ethical standards;
- ✓ have members who have developed mutual trust and respect for one another

**From time to time, a school council may encounter the particularly difficult situation in which a council member demands that the council devote all of its attention and energy to a single issue. In some cases, the member’s passion for the issue may be counterproductive to the council’s efforts to achieve its goals. Despite such challenges, members should try to focus their energy on fulfilling their mandate.**