



Alberta

Promoting parent engagement in public education.

School Councils' Association

Overview of ASCA

Presented to:

**Elk Island Catholic
CEPAC**

Presented By:

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&

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The Government of Alberta recognizes the value of parents and the community in the education of children, and requires school councils in every school operated by a school board in Alberta.

School Councils provide a method for parents in the school community to consult with, and offer advice to, the principal and the school board.

Established school councils:

- focus on what is best for all students in the school
- consider the interests of all school stakeholders
- maintain and reflect the culture of the school
- represent the parent voice in the school community

The provincial organization of school councils:

- Brings the parent perspective on education issues to government and others;
- Provides resources and support to enhance school council effectiveness;
- Promotes the involvement and engagement of parents in education;
- Works with education groups and government to promote excellence in public education;
- Provides research and timely information about education to school councils.

Provincial Decision-Making

Alberta Education and organizations representing teachers, school boards, superintendents, universities and others, regularly collaborate on provincial level issues through joint advisory committees.

Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) brings the parent perspective to the education committees.

The ASCA Board also shares member input directly with the office of the Minister of Education and other provincial decision-makers.

The Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) provides support and resources, knowledge and skill development, consultation and workshops, to enhance meaningful parent contribution and participation in school councils across the province.

WORKSHOPS

Progressive Learning Program (PLP) workshop series with 35 topics to choose from, delivered in local school communities at no charge to ASCA members.

Learning platforms for individual school councils, school district groups and fundraising associations.

WEBINARS

Scheduled training, instructional sharing, partner connections and focus group sessions.

CONSULTATION

Telephone support for school councils in Alberta. 1.800.661.3470 or 780.454.9867 Edmonton.

RESOURCES

Website, School Council Resource Manual, Guides, Tutorials, Templates, Tip Sheets.

COMMUNITY

Designated web space for each school council in Alberta. Online community for individuals, with access to discussion forums, blogs, document sharing and social networking.

EVENTS

Presentations, Awards of Recognition, Annual General Meeting and provincial School Councils Conference.

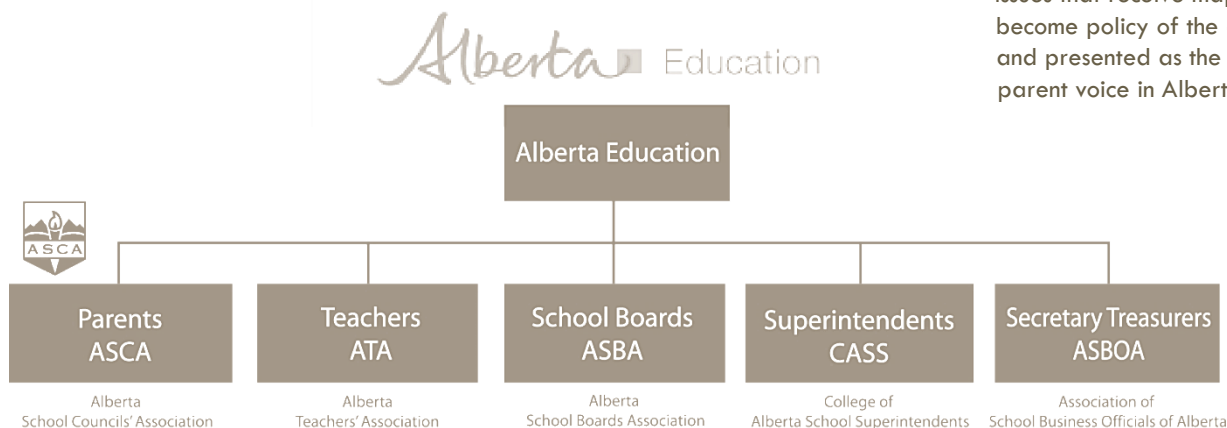
COMMUNICATION

Information, updates, education news, bulletins, research, reports, surveys, requests for input.

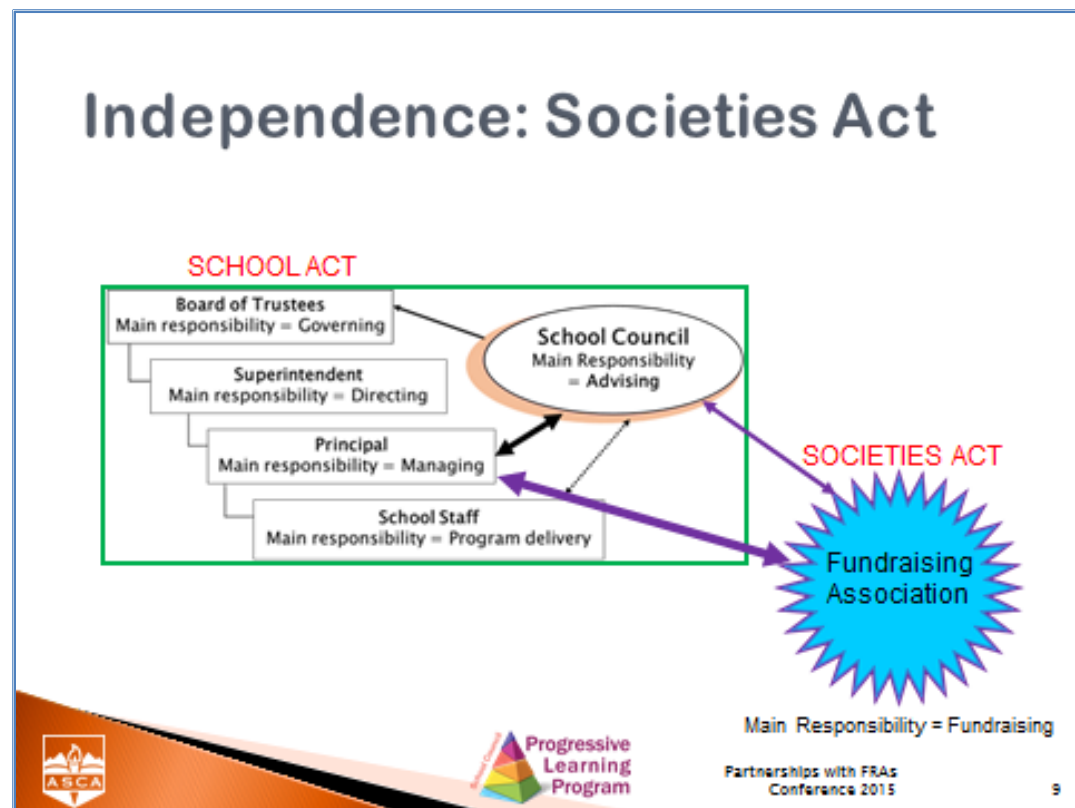
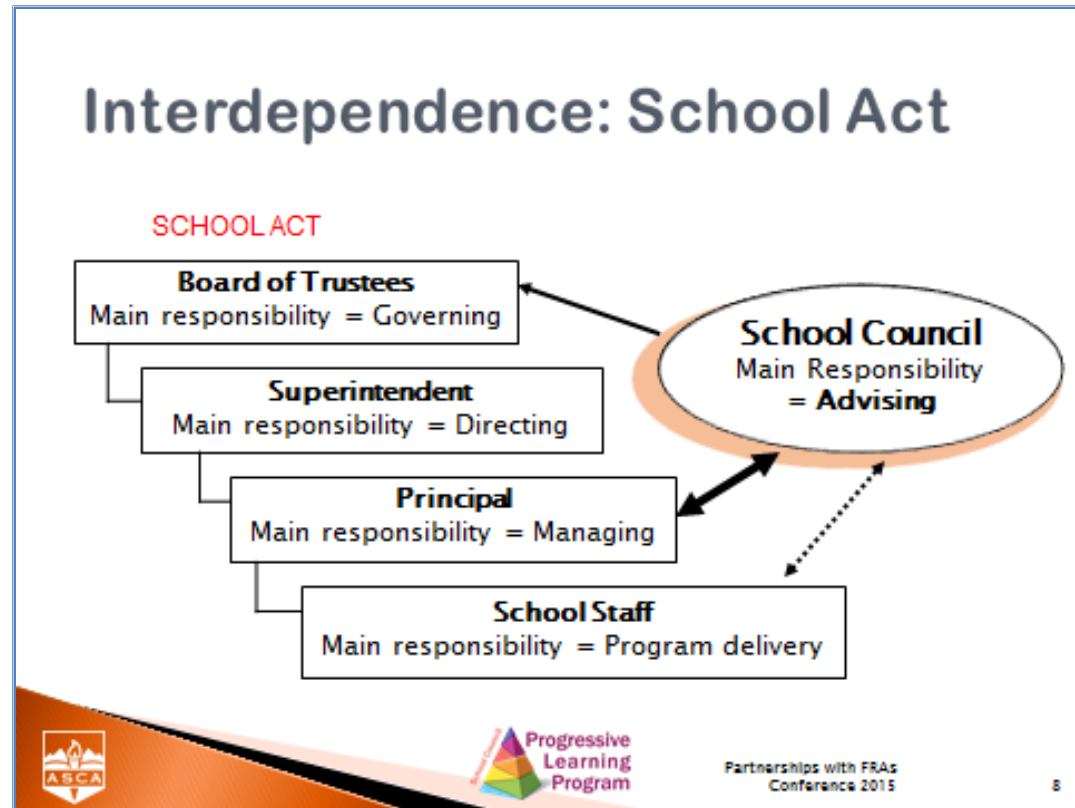
REPRESENTATION

To influence change in education, school councils submit issues each year to be considered by members at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Issues that receive majority support become policy of the association and presented as the collective parent voice in Alberta.



School Council & Fundraising Association Existence and Comparison



School Council & Fundraising Association

Existence and Comparison

School Council: Advisory body given its authority to exist through the School Act.

School councils are collective associations of parents, teachers, secondary students, principals, staff and community representative(s) who work together to effectively support and enhance student learning. They provide one means for members of the school community to provide advice and consult with the principal and to advise the board or the charter board.

School councils were created in 1995 and established under the *School Act*. School councils are mandatory for all schools in the public education system, including charter schools. Their purpose is to be advisory to the principal and the board respecting matters related to the school.

School Councils may:

- advise the principal and the board respecting any matter relating to the school,
- perform any duty or function delegated to it by the board in accordance with the delegation,
- consult with the principal so that the principal may ensure that students in the school have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister,
- consult with the principal so that the principal may ensure that the fiscal management of the school is in accordance with the requirements of the board and the superintendent, and
- do anything it is authorized under the (*School Councils*) regulations (113/2007) to do.

Source: Alberta School Act (Section 22); School Councils' Regulation 113/2007; Alberta School Councils' Association

Society: Incorporated entity given its authority to exist through the Societies Act.

A society is an independent legal entity, a corporate 'person' that exists separate and apart from its members. Because of this, the members cannot be held personally responsible for the debts of the society. However, the Directors (elected "decision makers") can be personally named, and held personally responsible, in any litigation involving the Society. Societies are not covered by any insurance policies other than those they purchase themselves.

Societies are similar to non-profit companies, and **must direct any profits back into fulfilling the objectives of the organization.**

Societies can:

- buy, sell and own property, including land
- enter into contracts
- sue others
- be sued

Societies can't

- issue shares
- declare dividends for members
- distribute property among the members during the lifetime of the society

Source: <http://www.servicealberta.ca/Societies.cfm> ; Alberta School Councils' Association



SCHOOL ACT – SECTION 22

Revised Statutes of Alberta 2000 Chapter S-3

Current as of October 1, 2005

School Council

- 22 (1)** A school council shall be established in accordance with the regulations for each school operated by a board.
- (2)** The majority of the members of a school council shall be parents of students enrolled in the school.
- (3)** A board of a separate school district or a division made up only of separate school districts, by resolution, may require that the parents of students enrolled in a school operated by the board who are members of the school council must also be of the same faith as those who established the separate school districts, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic.
- (4)** A school council may, at its discretion,
- (a) advise the principal and the board respecting any matter relating to the school,
 - (b) perform any duty or function delegated to it by the board in accordance with the delegation,
 - (c) consult with the principal so that the principal may ensure that students in the school have the opportunity to meet the standards of education set by the Minister,
 - (d) consult with the principal so that the principal may ensure that the fiscal management of the school is in accordance with the requirements of the board and the superintendent, and
 - (e) do anything it is authorized under the regulations to do.
- (5)** Subject to the regulations, a school council may make and implement policies in the school that the council considers necessary to carry out its functions.
- (6)** A school council may make bylaws governing its meetings and the conduct of its affairs
- (7)** Subject to the regulations, a board may develop and implement policies respecting school councils.
- (8)** A board shall establish an appeal process or conflict resolution procedure under which the principal or the school council may apply respecting disputes on policies proposed or adopted for a school.
- (9)** The Minister, on the request of the board, may dissolve a school council without notice at any time if the Minister is of the opinion that the school council is not carrying out its responsibilities in accordance with this Act and the regulations.
- (10)** The Minister may make regulations
- (a) respecting the election or appointment of the members of a school council and the term or other conditions of election or appointment and the dissolution of a school council;
 - (b) respecting the roles of the principal and the school council of a school and their respective powers, duties and responsibilities;
 - (c) respecting any other matter the Minister considers necessary respecting school councils;
 - (d) exempting a school or class of schools from the application of this section.
- 1988 cS-3.1 s17;1990 c36 s6;1994 c29 s8;1995 c27 s3 Source:

Alberta School Council Resource Manual VI Alberta Home and School Councils' Association © 2006, revised 2007.



School Councils Regulation

Alberta Regulation 113/2007

School Act

SCHOOL COUNCILS REGULATION

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Definitions

In this Regulation,

- (a) "Act" means the *School Act*;
- (b) "board" has the meaning given to it in the Act;
- (c) "establishment meeting" means a meeting to be held under section 2 to establish a school council;
- (d) "executive" means the executive of a school council;
- (e) "model of governance" means the process and structure used by a school council to make decisions regarding its business and affairs;
- (f) "school community" in respect of a school means
- (i) students enrolled in the school and their parents,



- (ii) children enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school and their parents,
- (iii) the school staff, and
- (iv) other persons who have an interest in the school;
- (g) “school day” means a day scheduled for the purpose of instruction, examinations or other student activities where student-teacher interaction and supervision are maintained.

School council must be established

- 2** If a school that is required to have a school council has no school council, the school must, in accordance with section 3, hold an establishment meeting within 40 school days after the start of the school year.

Notice of establishment meeting

- 3(1)** If a school is required to hold an establishment meeting, the principal must give notice to the following persons of the meeting:
- (a) a parent of each student enrolled in the school;
 - (b) a parent of each child enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school;
 - (c) the school staff;
 - (d) other members of the school community who, in the principal's opinion, should be given notice.
- (2)** A notice under subsection (1) must
- (a) describe the purpose of the meeting,
 - (b) set out the time, date and location of the meeting, and
 - (c) be given at least 10 school days before the date of the meeting.
- (3)** A notice to persons referred to in subsection (1)(d) must
- (a) meet the requirements set out in subsection (2), and
 - (b) either
 - (i) be posted in 2 or more locations that are accessible to the public in the area around the school, or
 - (ii) be advertised in a publication that is circulated to the general public in the area around the school.



Principal may establish advisory committee

- 4 If there are fewer than 5 parents in attendance at an establishment meeting or if an establishment meeting is not successful in establishing a school council, the principal may establish an advisory committee for that year to carry out one or more of the duties or functions of a school council.

Chair and secretary at establishment meeting

- 5 The principal must decide who is to act as the chair and who is to act as the secretary at an establishment meeting.

Agenda at establishment meeting

- 6(1) The persons attending an establishment meeting must
- (a) decide, subject to section 8, on the size of the school council,
 - (b) decide on the model of governance for the school council,
 - (c) decide, subject to subsection (2), on the term of office of each member of the school council,
 - (d) elect, subject to subsection (2), the initial members of the school council referred to in section 8(1)(d),
 - (e) decide, subject to section 9, on the size of the executive,
 - (f) decide on the term of office of each member of the executive, and
 - (g) elect the initial members of the executive.
- (2) For greater certainty, but without restricting the generality of subsection (1)(a), the persons attending an establishment meeting may decide that for the purposes of section 8(1)(d), the school council may include all parents of students enrolled in the school who wish to be members.

Right to vote at establishment meeting

- 7 Despite section 6, only persons who attend the establishment meeting and are
- (a) parents of students enrolled in the school, or
 - (b) parents of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school are entitled to vote on matters raised at the meeting.

School council membership

- 8(1) A school council must include the following members:
- (a) the principal of the school;



- (b) at least one person who is a teacher at the school, elected or appointed by the teachers at the school;
 - (c) if the school includes a senior high school program, at least one person who is a student enrolled in the high school, elected or appointed by the students enrolled in the high school;
 - (d) subject to section 22(2) of the Act, parents of students enrolled in the school.
- (2) The members of a school council referred to in subsection (1) may establish a process to appoint as members of the school council one or more persons who are not parents of students enrolled in the school but who have an interest in the school.
- (3) The members of a school council referred to in subsection (1) may establish a process to appoint or elect as members of the school council one or more persons who are parents of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school.

School council executive

- 9(1) A school council must have a chair and any other members of the executive determined by the persons attending an establishment meeting.
- (2) A parent of a student enrolled in the school must be elected chair of the executive.
- (3) Despite subsection (2), a member who is not a parent may be elected chair of the executive if no parent is willing to be nominated as chair.
- (4) Subject to subsection (2), every member of a school council is eligible to be elected as a member of the executive.

Faith of school council members

- 10 Unless a resolution has been passed under section 22(3) of the Act, the members of a school council may be of any faith

Remuneration of school council members

- 11 No member of a school council shall receive any remuneration for acting as a member of the council.

Prohibition against incorporation

- 12 No school council shall incorporate under the *Societies Act* or Part 9 of the *Companies Act*.

Responsibilities of board

- 13(1) A board must provide the school council with an opportunity to provide advice on the development of the school's
- (a) mission, vision and philosophy,



- (b) policies,
- (c) annual education plan,
- (d) annual results report, and
- (e) budget.

- (2) A board must provide the school council with the school's provincial testing program results and other provincial measures and a reasonable interpretation of those results and measures.
- (3) A board must at all reasonable times allow the school council free and full access to timely and accurate information of the board that is publicly available, including board policies and minutes of board meetings.

Duty to report to the board

- 14(1) The chair of a school council must prepare and provide to the board by September 30 of each year a report
 - (a) summarizing the activities of the school council in the previous school year, and
 - (b) including a financial statement relating to money handled by the school council in the previous school year, if any, and how the funds were used.
- (2) A school council must retain at the school a copy of the minutes for each meeting of the school Council and make them available to the board or the public on request.
- (3) School council must retain the minutes for each meeting of the school council for at least 7 years.

Date for first meeting of school council

- 15 For any school year, the first meeting of the school council must be held within 20 school days after the start of the school year or as specified in the bylaws of the school council.

Suspension of school council

- 16(1) If a quorum is not available for a meeting of a school council and the meeting has been re-scheduled on 2 or more occasions, the board may suspend the operation of the school council until the following year.
- (2) If the operation of a school council is suspended, the principal may establish an advisory committee to carry out one or more of the duties or functions of the school council until a new school council is established under subsection (3).
- (3) If the operation of a school council is suspended under subsection (1), a new school council must be established within 40 school days after the start of the next school year in accordance with sections 2 to 9.



Bylaws of school council

- 17(1)** Each school council may make bylaws respecting the conduct of its business and affairs including, without limitation, bylaws
- (a) respecting the calling of regular, special or annual meetings of the school council;
 - (b) subject to section 6, respecting the election of members of the school council;
 - (c) subject to section 6, respecting the election of members of the executive;
 - (d) respecting the role of the chair and other members of the executive relating to the conduct of the school council's affairs;
 - (e) respecting the number of times the school council must meet each year;
 - (f) respecting the location of school council meetings;
 - (g) respecting the number of school council members that constitutes a quorum at meetings of the school council;
 - (h) respecting a conflict resolution process for internal school council disputes.
- (2)** A Bylaw under subsection (1) does not come into force unless it is approved by a majority of
- (a) parents of students enrolled in the school, and
 - (b) parents of children enrolled in an Early Childhood Services program at the school who vote at a special meeting of the school council called for that purpose.
- (3)** The bylaws continue in force from year to year unless
- (a) they are amended at a special meeting of the school council called for that purpose, and
 - (b) the amendment is approved in accordance with subsection (2).

Fees prohibited

- 18** No school council shall be charged a fee for the use of the school or school facilities for the purpose of holding a meeting of the school council.

Exemptions

- 19** The following are exempt from the application of section 22 of the Act and this Regulation:
- (a) a school for resident students of the Government as described in section 44(7) of the Act that is provided in an institution approved by the Minister;



- (b) a school for students that is provided in an institution approved by the Minister.

Repeal

- 20** The *School Councils Regulation* (AR 171/98) is repealed.

Expiry

- 21** For the purpose of ensuring that this Regulation is reviewed for ongoing relevancy and necessity, with the option that it may be repassed in its present or amended from following a review, this Regulation expires on June 30, 2017.

Coming into force

- 22** This Regulation comes into force on July 1, 2007



Workshop series designed to enhance school council effectiveness and parent engagement in public education.

School Council Foundation Workshops

Foundation	1.5 hour each
Introduction	Understanding some of the language in the education community, the legislation that mandates the rights, responsibilities and choices of school councils, as well as their value and importance, is the first step to creating a meaningful, vibrant school council and school community.
Establishment	School council establishment must follow legislated requirements. Provided those requirements are met, school councils are permitted flexibility and choice in how they operate.
Purpose	Understanding the legislated role of school councils including which topics/areas are open for discussion and which require caution helps to prevent tension and dysfunction within a school council and the school community. Learning how to identify each, how to frame a “personal issue” from a school council perspective and how to broach sensitive topics will assist all school council members.
Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose	Fundraising Associations (FRAs) are separate, legal entities with distinct rules to follow, responsibilities to comply with and liabilities to consider. Positive, collaborative, mutually respectful relationships with the principal and school council are integral to the success of each and in the best interests of students. Clarity of who has authority for what, is essential.
Meeting Management	Meaningful school council meetings require strong leadership and clear, easy to follow processes for all participants. Having a solid <i>Agenda</i> , some simple <i>Rules of Order</i> and learning how to <i>Direct Discussion</i> will help to ensure the school council meetings are not a waste of anyone’s valuable time.
Tools for Effective School Councils	Understanding the culture of the local community and basic volunteer psychology will help to identify tools and strategies that can assist the school council in its work.
Productive Meetings	Productive school council meetings rely on all school council members contributing to the value and success of the school council. Understanding the role of Chair and principal, as well as the importance of meaningfully engaging other members, is vital. Use of consistent processes, expectations, ongoing documentation, evaluation and recognition are essential.
Building Relationships in the Education Community	Building relationships with others in the Education Community can help school councils to be more effective in the school community. Always with a focus of supporting and enhancing student learning, <i>Internal Relationships</i> are informative, collaborative, and respectful of boundaries and authorities.
Relationship Building in Your Local Community	School councils can build relationships with people, businesses and organizations in their community to support their work in the school. These <i>External Relationships</i> , established with a focus to support and enhance student learning, should be informative, collaborative, and respectful of boundaries and authorities.



Workshop series designed to enhance school council effectiveness and parent engagement in public education.

School Council **Operation** Workshops

Operation	2 hours each
Mission and Vision	Mission defines the purpose of a group, the reason for being. Vision communicates that purpose through values; reveals desired outcome or ideal state. Clearly understanding and communicating the school council purpose, mission and vision is essential to engaging the school community.
Operating Procedures	A school council has discretion to decide what works best for them, within the context of legislation and their community. Topics include; model of governance, membership, decision making, terms of office, conflict resolution.
Policies and Practices	School council policies should reflect legislation, the context of their communities, and the work their members choose to do. Topics include; communication - internal and external, record-keeping, fundraising and accounting, privacy, location of meetings, official mailing address, new member orientation, group evaluation and social media.
Effective Engagement in Your School Community	School councils would like their school community to be dynamic, exciting places, where parents feel authentically engaged in supporting and enhancing student learning. Not easily accomplished, effective engagement means many different things. Explore what this means in your school community, and how it might be achieved.
Creating a 1 Year Plan	Meaningful involvement, recruitment and effective engagement require planning. A plan should be simple to communicate and achievable - given the time and resources available. Evaluation and potential modification are vital to the creation of ongoing plans.
Working with <i>Inspiring Education</i>	A school council is well positioned to support school efforts to implement elements of <i>Inspiring Education</i> . Being familiar and comfortable with new practices and initiatives is essential to creating a supportive environment in the school community.

School Council **Expansion** Workshops

Expansion	2.5 hours each
Understanding the School Results Report, Accountability Pillar and 3 Year Plan	Schools, school districts and Alberta Education have a responsibility to assess and report on the status of student success and school community satisfaction, to identify areas requiring improvement, and to implement improvement strategies. Understanding the meaning and importance of the three provincially mandated tools which guide this work will assist a school council to identify meaningful paths of participation.
Developing a 3 Year Plan	Meaningful involvement, participation and effective engagement require planning. A plan should be simple to communicate and achievable - given the time and resources available. Evaluation and potential modification are vital to ongoing development of plans.



Workshop series designed to enhance school council effectiveness and parent engagement in public education.

Fundraising Association **Foundation Workshops**

Foundation 1.5 hour each

Fundraising Association Introduction

Relevant legislation (provincial and district), how to incorporate, legal liability, governing documents.

Fundraising Association Purpose

Fundraising Associations (FRAs) are separate, legal entities with distinct rules to follow, responsibilities to comply with and liabilities to consider. They can choose how to raise and spend funds, but cannot compel the principal or school community to participate/accept funds. Positive, collaborative, mutually respectful relationships with the principal and school council are integral to the success of each and in the best interests of students. Clarity of who has authority for what is essential.

Fundraising Association **Operation Workshops**

Operation 2 hours each

Mission, Vision and Objects of Incorporation

The mission and vision should be aligned with the *Objects of Incorporation*. The registered *Objects of Incorporation* provide the legal justification for the existence of the society. The mission defines the purpose of a group; the moral or social reason for being. Vision communicates that purpose through values; reveals desired outcome or ideal state.

Fundraising Association Bylaws

An incorporated fundraising association/society has the discretion to decide what bylaws work best for them, in keeping with the Societies Act, and within the context of their community. Topics include; model of governance, membership, decision making, terms of office, conflict resolution, bylaw changes, and dissolution.

Fundraising Association Policies and Practices

Fundraising association policies should reflect legislation, the context of their communities, and the work their members choose to do. Topics include: communication - internal and external, record-keeping, fundraising and accounting, privacy, location of meetings, official mailing address, new member orientation, group evaluation and social media.



Webinar Wednesdays

Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA) is pleased to present **Webinar Wednesdays** with scheduled training, instructional sharing, partner connections and focus group sessions for the 2015/2016 school year.

ASCA utilizes the online platform of Blackboard Collaborate™ to present the webinars - accessible through home computers, laptops or mobile devices.

SEPTEMBER

9	Student Learning Assessments (Gr. 3)
16	Student Learning Assessments (Gr. 3)
23	School Council Purpose
30	Chair Basics

NOVEMBER

4	School Council Purpose
18	Chair Basics
25	Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose

JANUARY

6	Tools for Effective School Councils
13	CAREERS: the Next Generation
20	

MARCH

2	School Council Purpose
9	Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose
16	Chair Basics
23	Meeting Management

MAY

11	School Council Purpose
18	Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose
25	Chair Basics



Morning (9:30 am) and Evening (8:30 pm) 1 hour sessions will be offered. Information and online registration is available on the website. Check often for updates as **schedule is subject to change**.

OCTOBER

7	Fundraising Association Partnership Purpose
14	Meeting Management
21	CAREERS: the Next Generation
28	Masterful Minutes

DECEMBER

2	Meeting Management
9	Masterful Minutes

FEBRUARY

3	
10	
24	

APRIL

6	CAREERS: the Next Generation
13	Masterful Minutes

JUNE

1	Meeting Management
8	Masterful Minutes



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