

# The School Community Council

## Working Together for School Improvement

### Training for new members

#### The purposes of school community councils are:

- To build consistent and effective communication among parents, employees and administrators
- To allow parents an opportunity to be actively involved with the school in the education of their children
- To make good schools great

#### School Community Councils (SCCs) are required to:

- Obey the law which you may review at the following link:  
[http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/SCC\\_Law.pdf](http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/SCC_Law.pdf)
- Obey the State Board rule which you may review at the following link:  
[http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/R277-491passed\\_3rd\\_reading.pdf](http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/R277-491passed_3rd_reading.pdf)
- Charter School LAND Trust Committees have slightly different laws and rules which are available for review at:  
The law is **53A-1a-511**  
[http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/Charter\\_School\\_Exception.pdf](http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/Charter_School_Exception.pdf)  
The rule is **R277-0470-9**  
[http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/Charter\\_Parental\\_Involvement\\_11-06.pdf](http://www.schoollandtrust.org/geninfo/Charter_Parental_Involvement_11-06.pdf)

#### Council Responsibilities:

- Review school U-PASS data  
U-PASS is a series of student tests.  
Councils should review group results but individual data should not be shared.  
Other assessments may also be reviewed.
- Develop a School Improvement Plan
- Develop a School LAND Trust Plan
- Participate in the development of the Professional Development Plan
- Develop a Child Access Routing Plan  
(High Schools are not required to do this.)
- Advise the school administration on local school issues
- Provide an opportunity for issues of concern in the community to be presented to the school administration
- Elementary schools develop a Reading Achievement Plan

## Open Public Meetings and other Reporting Requirements

### **School Community Councils are subject to Open Public Meetings Laws and other Requirements Specific to School Community Councils**

Applicable laws and state board rules are found under General Information at [www.schoollandtrust.org](http://www.schoollandtrust.org)

- The purpose is to keep the public and parents of the school informed about the work of councils and to encourage parents to be more involved in the education of their children.
- SCC meetings are open to the public
- SCC meeting agendas are posted on the school website at least one week in advance and include the date, time, location, and minutes of the last meeting
- SCC meeting agendas are posted on the front door of the school at least 24 hours in advance and include the date, time, and location of the meeting
- All SCC minutes include: date; time; location; names of members present and absent; substance of all matters proposed, discussed or decided; a record of votes; name of each person who is recognized by the chair to speak in the meeting; and substance of what is said
- A simple majority is required to take action.
- The following schedule and report summaries are provided on the school website AND via required means, to each individual household with a student attending the school
  - The SCC provides a yearly meeting schedule within the first two weeks of the school year
  - The SCC provides a mid-year summary of the council's actions and activities to date
  - The SCC provides a summary of the Final Report of the School LAND Trust Program Plan implementation for the prior year in the fall of the following year

## Council Membership, Terms and Elections

### Membership of the School Community Council

- Principal
- Faculty/staff members
- Parent/guardian members
- The size of the council may be determined by each individual school. Most councils have at least five members.
- The number of parent/guardian members must exceed the number of faculty/staff members including the principal.

### Terms of the members

- Members serve two-year terms.
- The beginning date of the term is decided by the school – in consultation with the local board.
- A council member may be elected for up to three consecutive terms.
- Initially terms were staggered - approximately half of the council is up for election each year.

### Elections

- Notice of the election is provided to staff and parents at least two weeks in advance and includes the date, time, location at the school, the positions up for election and how to become a candidate.
- When more candidates file than there are positions for a formal election is held
  - The principal, or designee oversees the election
  - The vote is by secret ballot and ballots are deposited in a secure box
- Election results are made available on request.

### Teacher/Employee Members

- Teacher/Employee Members, except the principal, are elected by employees
- Principals serve and fill an employee position.

### Parent/Guardian Members

- All Interested parents, who will have a child at the school during the two-year term, are encouraged to file with the principal.
- Parents may be candidates for parent positions if they work up to an average of six hours per week at the school.
- Parents/guardians of students may vote.

### **What happens if a position is unfilled after the election or if a seat is vacated before the term has been completed?**

- Parent/guardian positions are filled by the parent/guardian committee members selecting a parent/guardian to fill the position.
- Faculty/staff positions are filled by the faculty/staff committee members selecting a faculty/staff person to fill the position.

### **Election of officers**

- The council elects a council chairperson from either the parent/guardian group or the principal/faculty/staff group.
- The council elects a vice-chair from the other group.

### **Subcommittees of the Council**

- Non-elected persons may be appointed to sub-committees or task forces to accomplish specific assignments.
- The work of those groups should be overseen and approved by the elected council members

## **Developing Required Plans and Reports**

### **School Improvement Plan**

- Evaluate U-PASS test results
- Develop a School Improvement Plan (SIP)
  - Identify the most critical academic needs of the students
  - Recommend a course of action
  - List what is needed for plan implementation
  - Prepare the School LAND Trust Plan, and academic subset of the SIP, to be funded through the School LAND Trust Program
  - Assist in the preparation of the Professional Development Plan
  - The School Improvement Plan may include school environment issues that need to be addressed.
  - For elementary schools, the Reading Achievement Plan is part of the School Improvement Plan
  - In elementary and middle/jr., high, prepare a Child Access Routing Plan

### **The School LAND Trust Program**

- The funding for the program comes from school trust lands.
  - There are 3.4 Million acres in Utah
  - Trust Lands Administration manages the land – see [www.trustlands.org](http://www.trustlands.org)
    - They generate income from; leases and sales, production of oil, gas and coal; lot sales for homes, businesses and agriculture, commercial and residential development and grazing
- All net proceeds are saved in a Permanent Fund.
  - The State Treasurer invests the fund
  - Interest and dividends are distributed each July that provide funding for the School LAND Trust Program
- Schools receive funds based on a per-pupil formula
  - 10% is divided equally among the school districts
  - 90% is per pupil
  - Districts add the two together and distribute the total on a per pupil basis to district schools
  - Charter schools are collectively treated as a district for purposes of the 90/10 formula.
- School Community Councils annually prepare a Plan to address the greatest academic need(s) of students at the school
  - They prepare and approve a plan for the next school year
  - Plans are submitted on the website [www.schoollandtrust.org](http://www.schoollandtrust.org)
  - Local school boards review and approve the plans
  - Funding is distributed in July for all schools with approved plans for the next school year
  - A Final Report is completed in the fall, following the implementation year

### **Professional Development Plan**

- It must align with the School Improvement Plan, School LAND Trust Plan, the Utah Performance Assessment System, Educator Licensing and Professional Practices, Teacher Career Ladders and Educator Evaluation
- The plan is to be systematic, comprehensive and long-term

### **Child Access Routing Plan**

- See <http://www.udot.utah.gov/index.php/m=c/tid=1388>

### **Reading Achievement Plan**

- See **53A-1-606.5**

### **Plans to be submitted and approved by the local school board**

- School Improvement Plan
- School LAND Trust Plan and Budget
- School Professional Development Plan
- School Performance Report
- Elementary Reading Achievement Plan

## **Frequently Asked Questions and the Answers**

### **What is the role of the PTA or Parent Group at the School?**

PTAs and other parent groups are encouraged to have representatives on the SCC

- Find someone to serve as liaison during the organization's nominating process
- Those selected must file with the principal to run
- Relay information between the PTA (parent group) and the SCC
- Coordinate efforts
- Support each other

### **Effective Councils**

- Everyone's input is important
- The process fails when members don't participate or don't share their feelings or insights
- If possible, it is best to make decisions by consensus
- Voting is appropriate and necessary on some issues

### **Ideas to increase available dollars to implement School LAND Trust Plans**

- School LAND Trust funds can be "seed" money for grants supporting the plan's academic goals
- Business partners have provided matching dollars, equipment and people to implement projects
- Volunteers also make the money go further

### **For more information go to [www.schoollandtrust.org](http://www.schoollandtrust.org) Choose General Information**

- Choose "Find a School" to see what your school is doing with their trust money
- Choose "Articles for Newsletters" to learn about projects and issues related to the land management
- Choose "Search Plans" to search the database and find what other schools are doing