

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP ROLE DESCRIPTION

On acceptance of election to the Seven Hills State School Council, members are entrusted with the long term integrity and viability of the School. In return for this trust, members perform their duties always in the best interests of the School, in good faith and with honesty.

The school will develop a Council Induction process as part of the School's commitment in assisting Council members to fully understand the nature of their duties and responsibilities.

The induction will serve two purposes:

- to induct members in regard to policy, procedures and systems associated with the Council and its governance role
- to provide important information to assist members learn about the Schools characteristics, challenges and successes.

The following role description is provided to potential applicants to assist the understanding of requirements for membership of the Independent Public School (IPS) School Council. This information will also assist those participating in the voting process to ascertain which applicants will be able to contribute most effectively to the strategic responsibilities of the School Council.

Membership Role Description

As a member of the School Council you will be required to:

- Be conversant with the School Council Constitution and the Education General Provisions Act 2006
- Be familiar with Education Queensland's Strategic Plan
- Be familiar with the school's Strategic Plan
- Understand the philosophy and core values on which the school's services and programs are based.
- Demonstrate a personal suite of values aligned to realising harmonious and constructive conversations and decision making.
- Offer an array of personal capabilities to assist creative and productive discussions and decision making relative to the strategic responsibilities of the School Council.
- Be able to work cooperatively with other council members to ensure productive and constructive discussion.
- Be able to leave aside personal agendas and bias.
- Demonstrate personal experience in assisting strategic planning and development.
- Understand the difference and the delineation between operational, governance and strategic issues.

- Work with all other council members and school personnel for the benefit and betterment of all students and the community.
- Demonstrated ability through personal and professional history to be able to follow through on tasks and meet associated timelines.
- Be willing to attend council meetings as required.
- Be supportive of decisions made and be loyal to and portray a positive image of the school council.
- Be prepared to represent the school council as requested by the chair
- Be prepared to undertake extra activities or duties as requested by the Council or the Chair

School Councils

School Council Meetings

The school council may conduct its business, including its meetings, in the way it considers appropriate (subject to the school council's constitution and the Act (s.97)). However, the council may only make decisions about how it will carry out its functions if it does so at a council meeting where a quorum for the council is present.

Time and place of meetings (s.98 of the Act)

Council meetings must be held at least twice in each semester and are at the times and places the council decides. However, a school council's chairperson:

- may call a meeting at any time; and
- must call a meeting if asked, in writing, to do so the by Minister, the chief executive, principal or at least the number of its members required to form a quorum for the council.

The chairperson must, where possible, give written notice of the time and place of the school council meeting to each of the members at least 7 days prior to the meeting.

If the quorum is not present within 30 minutes after the advertised starting time of a school council meeting, the meeting must be adjourned to a time and place decided by the chairperson and members are to be notified.

The school council may:

- hold meetings (or permit members to take part in meetings) by telephone, webconference, etc; and
- decide that any meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to observers.

Presiding at meetings (s.100 of the Act)

The school council's chairperson must preside at all council meetings at which they are present. If the chairperson is absent, another council member chosen by the other members who are present, must preside. A coopted student may not preside at a council meeting.

Conduct of meetings (s.101 of the Act)

Unless the council members present at a meeting decide otherwise, the order of business at a school council meeting is:

1. Apologies
2. Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting
3. Business arising from minutes of previous meeting

4. Correspondence
5. Business arising from the correspondence
6. Reports
7. Motions on notice
8. General Business
9. Next meeting

A question at a school council meeting, other than a question about an amendment of the council's constitution, must be decided by a majority of the votes of the council members present. Each member present at a council meeting has a vote on each question to be decided and, if the votes are equal, the member presiding has a casting vote. A coopted student member does not have the power to vote on a matter before the council. A member present who abstains from voting is taken to have voted for the negative.

A council member who takes part in a council meeting by telephone, webconference or another form of communication, is considered to be present at the meeting.

Minutes and records

The school council must record all proceedings at meetings including the names of:

- members present at each meeting;
- any persons who are not members present at each meeting; and
- any members voting against a resolution carried at a school council meeting and any members abstaining from voting who wish to have their dissent or abstention recorded in the meeting minutes.

Minutes must be submitted for confirmation at the next school council meeting and a copy of the minutes must be distributed to all members as soon as possible after the meeting.

Records of the school council should be retained for 5 years from date of last action as per the *Managing the Department's Records* procedure. Records include, but are not limited to:

- minutes of school council meetings;
- all documents relating to a school council election (including ballot papers); and
- all documents created or acquired by the council in the course of carrying out its functions.

Attendance by proxy (s.102 of the Act)

A member of a council for a state school may not attend a council meeting by proxy. However, the school's principal may attend up to 2 meetings in each year by proxy.

An alternative Parents and Citizens' association (P&C) member for the P&C association president is not a proxy.

School Councils

Elected Staff and Parent Members

Eligibility

To be eligible for election as an elected parent or elected staff member, a person must:

- not be the principal of the school or the Parents and Citizens' association (P&C) president;
- have not been convicted of an indictable offence, unless the Minister gives approval under the Act (s.93);
- attend a meeting called for the purpose of electing parent members or staff members;
- be the parent of a student attending the school (for elected parent member) or be a member of staff at the school (for elected staff member); and
- submit a completed nomination on time.

Term of Office

The general term of office for elected parent members or elected staff members is two years, although a different term may be set by the school council to create uniformity in the end dates of members' terms of office.

Election process

Note: School councils can choose to elect a parent member either by P&C association processes or by secret ballot (as for an elected staff member) as outlined below.

1. Official members must appoint a returning officer for the election.
2. The returning officer must provide public notice (e.g. school newsletter) that an election will be held, at least 28 days before the date of the election. The notice must include the:
 - election date and the final date for receipt of nominations. The final date for receipt of nominations must be at least 14 days prior to the election date;
 - meeting venue where the election will be held;
 - day or days on which the meeting is to be held; and
 - start and end times for the meeting.
3. After the final date for receipt of nominations, the returning officer must (without unreasonable delay) prepare voting papers by setting out the names of the candidates in an order determined by lot. If there are the same number or fewer nominations than required, the nominees are elected (s.86(4) of the Act). If this occurs, there is no need for a ballot.
4. At the meeting where the election will be held, the returning officer must give a voting paper to every person entitled to vote at the election. A person is eligible to vote for an elected parent/staff member if that person is eligible to be elected themselves as an elected parent/staff member.
5. The returning officer must record the name of each person provided with a voting paper at the meeting where the election is conducted.

6. Each voter must deposit their completed voting paper into a sealed ballot box before leaving the meeting.
7. The returning officer must take the necessary steps to ensure that only persons entitled to vote at the election have voted and that the secrecy of the ballot is preserved.

Post Ballot process

8. Each candidate may appoint (by written notice to the returning officer) one scrutineer for the examination of the voting papers when the returning officer opens the ballot box containing the voting papers on the day of the election. A notice of an appointment of a scrutineer by a candidate must be received by the returning officer at least 5 days prior to the day of the election.
9. The returning officer must open the ballot box containing the voting papers directly after the meeting at which the election was conducted. This should be done in the presence of the scrutineers but not the candidates. Assistants who are not candidates may also be present to aid the returning officer.
10. The voting paper must be rejected and the vote must not be counted if:
 - the intention of the voter cannot, with certainty, be ascertained; or
 - it was indicated on a form, other than a formal voting paper.
11. If, in examining the voting papers, the returning officer forms the opinion that:
 - the number of voting papers in the ballot box is not equal to the number of persons who have been recorded as having voted in the election; or
 - any voting paper has been altered or otherwise interfered with after being placed in the ballot box and prior to the ballot box being opened by the returning officer or at the returning officer's instruction

the returning officer must declare the ballot to be invalid and make arrangements for another ballot to determine the result in the election.

12. After examining the voting papers, the returning officer must record the number of votes received by each candidate.
13. The candidate/s who receives more votes than any other candidates in the election must be declared by the returning officer to have won the election.
14. Where two or more candidates have received an equal number of votes, the returning officer must determine by lot which of the candidates is to be declared elected.

Declaration of result

15. When the returning officer has determined which of the candidates is to be declared elected, he or she must prepare, sign and date a written statement (which may be countersigned by any scrutineers who are present) containing the numbers in words as well as figures of the votes for each candidate and declaring the result of the election.

Circumstances where an election cannot be deemed invalid

An election cannot be deemed invalid for the following reasons:

- Any formal error in any declaration made, or in giving public notice under the constitution;
- The public notice of the election was provided less than 28 days before the election date;
- Delay in holding the election at the time specified;

- Any inadvertent failure to give any person entitled to vote at the election any notice or ballot paper;
- Any other error of a purely formal nature, which is not relevant to the outcome of the election.

School Councils

ROLE DESCRIPTION

On acceptance of election to [Insert School Name] School Council, members are entrusted with the long term integrity and viability of the School. In return for this trust, members perform their duties always in the best interests of the School, in good faith and with honesty.

The school will develop a School Council Induction as part of the school's commitment to assisting council members understand the nature of their duties and responsibilities.

The induction will serve two purposes:

- to induct members into the council's purpose, functions and systems; and
- to provide important information to assist new members understand the council governance role and learn about the school.

The following role description is provided to potential applicants to assist the understanding of requirements for membership of the [Insert School Name] School Council. This information will also assist those participating in the voting process to ascertain which applicants will be able to contribute most effectively to the strategic responsibilities of the school council.

Membership Role Description

As a member of the school council you will be required to:

- Be conversant with the School Council Constitution and the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*
- Be familiar with Education Queensland's strategic plan
- Be familiar with the school's strategic plan
- Understand the philosophy and core values on which the school's services and programs are based
- Demonstrate a personal suite of values aligned to realising harmonious and constructive conversations and decision making
- Offer an array of personal capabilities to assist creative and productive discussions and decision making relative to the strategic responsibilities of the school council
- Be able to work cooperatively with other council members to ensure productive and constructive discussion
- Be able to leave aside personal agendas and bias
- Assist in strategic planning and development

- Understand the difference and the delineation between operational, governance and strategic issues
- Liaise with relevant stakeholder groups to effectively represent views and opinions of staff, parent and community bodies
- Engage in shared leadership
- Work with other council members, school personnel and other decision-making bodies, for the benefit and betterment of all students and the community
- Demonstrate ability to follow through on tasks and meet associated timelines
- Attend council meetings as required
- Represent the school council and support decisions made
- Actively promote and portray a positive image of the school council
- Undertake extra activities or duties as requested by the council or the chair
- Approve key strategic documents, as well as reviewing and monitoring school performance
- Develop strategic initiatives that meet the unique needs of the students of the school
- Keep the broad school community involved in the activities of the school council