



Albany Primary School School Council Information

Background Information from the Education Act 1999

Relevant Acts

Schools Education Act 1999 Division 8 – Parent and community involvement
School Education Regulations 2000 Part 6 – The Constitution

Functions

1. Promote the school in the community
2. Determine the dress code (in consultation with students, parents and staff)
3. Take part in formulating codes of conduct for students
4. Take part in establishing and reviewing the school's objectives, priorities and general policy directions.
5. Take part in planning of financial arrangements necessary to fund and evaluating the schools performance in achieving these objectives, priorities and directions.

Principal to consult Council about

1. General policy concerning the use in school activities of prayers, songs and other material based on religious, spiritual or moral values being used in a school activity as part of general religious education.
2. The implementation of special religious education (which is not to exceed 40 hours in a school year)

Council to Approve

1. Charges or Contributions, determined by the Principal, no later than 2 months before the beginning of the school year.
2. Extra Cost Optional component of an education program participation costs, (where instruction provided by a person other than teaching staff) no later than 2 months before the beginning of the school year.
3. Items, determined by the Principal, to be supplied by a student for the student's personal use in the school's educational program.
4. Consult with the Principal and Teachers in setting the schools objectives and how the objectives and priorities will be achieved, and monitor and report on the schools performance in relation to the plan.
5. An agreement or arrangement for advertising or sponsorship in relation to the school is not to be entered into by the Principal unless the Council has approved it.

Principal to provide Council with such support service as it may reasonably require.

Council cannot intervene in

1. The control or management of the school unless it is Incorporated
2. The management or operation of a school fund
3. The educational instruction of students, or
4. Exercise authority over teaching staff or other persons employed at the school

Minister may dismiss unincorporated Council, in writing, if in the opinion of the Minister the conduct of a Council is incompetent, inadequate or improper or a Council is in breach of Schools Education Act 1999.

With the approval of the Minister, Council may take part in the selection, but not appointment of, the Principal or any other member of the teaching staff.

Meetings

Meetings are generally open to members of the public. Council may close a meeting, or part of a meeting, to the public if dealing with a matter affecting a person employed by the school, the personal affairs of any person, a Contract entered into by Council, legal advice obtained, or in regard to a matter if disclosed would reveal information of commercial value.

Public Meetings - Each calendar year Council is to hold a Public Meeting in which a report is presented on the performance of the Council's functions.

Special Meetings - Families of students (at least 20 families) may call a Special Meeting relevant to the Council's functions, in a notice to the chairperson.

Information About the Functioning of the Council at Albany Primary School

Guidelines for Council Business and Activities

1. The school has a set of guidelines that determine how the School Council will operate.
2. The principal will ensure that at each meeting a financial statement is available and will present a yearly budget for ratification.
3. The principal will also ensure the Contributions and Charges will be available for ratification during the November or December meeting of each year.
4. School policies will be presented to the Council for input and ratification.
5. School Improvement Planning will be presented to the School Council for input and ratification.

Membership

It is a requirement that the majority of members must be parents of students at the school and other members of the general community. In our school we have 6 parents, 4 staff members and the principal. Members may be co-opted from other committees provided they have no voting rights.

Other membership details:

1. One parent is elected onto the Council by the P & C.
2. Both parents and staff are elected on to the Council, for a 2 year term, through two separate elections conducted by the principal. Where possible we attempt to have only half turnover of membership during any given year.
3. Parents and staff may opt for re-election or resign from a position if required. In the event of a resignation through a term of office the principal will conduct an election for the vacancy to be filled.
4. The newly elected School Councillors commence duties at the second meeting of the new school year.
5. A quorum at meetings must include more parents than staff and has been set at 7 representatives including the principal or his proxy.
6. The Council Chair is agreed upon at our first meeting of the new year.

Meetings

1. Our School Council meets twice per term in weeks 4 and 8.
2. Meeting usually take around an hour to an hour and half.
3. Minute taking is rotated between members. The School Council chair conducts the business of the meeting.
4. Decisions are made through general consensus wherever possible but a formal vote can be taken if required.
5. Meeting discussions are open and informal but all decisions are formally put to the meeting and seconded.
6. Each meeting the Principal tables financial records of the school and budget details.
7. Council discussions are wide ranging with parents and staff providing feedback and information on various school matters while recognising the extent of the power invested in the Council.
8. The Council aims to be an effective working group committed to supporting the school and enhance the working relationship between the parents, staff and administrators.
9. All members of the council can ask questions and have input into meeting agendas.
10. The chairperson develops an action plan that enables the council to maintain direction and follow up from items being raised.
11. Minutes from the previous meeting are always part of the agenda.

Elections

1. Elections are held at the beginning of each year or if a vacancy arises throughout a term of office.
2. The principal conducts the election by:
 - a. Calling for nominations through the newsletter including a closing date.
 - b. Places voting slips with a newsletter and providing a date for votes to be in the ballot box by.
 - c. Placing the ballot box at the school office counter and having office staff ensure that each person has voted only once.
 - d. Voters are required to list nominees in preference order and may vote only once.
 - e. Place on the ballot paper are done randomly.
 - f. Preferential counting is used to tally votes.
 - g. Elected members are notified by the principal before this is broadcast to the community.
 - h. The principal ensures processes are checked by another school administrator.
3. An election is only called if there are more nominees than positions.
4. If there are insufficient nominees the principal will re-advertise and canvas the P & C for further possible representation and nomination at the P & C meeting following the election.

Conclusion

The Education Act of 1999 outlines quite clearly the functions of the School Council. You can also view the minutes which are placed on the school's website or discuss School Council structure and matters with the principal or a member of the current School Council.

From time to time School Council information is published in the school newsletter. Parents and staff are encouraged to take an interest in Council business and discuss issues with council members.

