

District School Council Meeting

Minutes – Oct 5th, 2017

7:00 p.m. Board Room at Central Office

* indicates written report/attachment provided

1. Call to order – Oct 5, 7:02 p.m.
2. Introductions.
3. Election of Chair – Bob Burgess elected to remain Chairperson – accepted.
4. Appointment of Recording Secretary – Karen Johnson volunteered – accepted.
5. Appointment of one person to sit on Coordinating Committee – Amanda Kenny volunteered – accepted.
6. Report from Alberta School Council AGM – Chelsey Cowan and 2 others attended.
 - a. participated in a “Blanket Exercise” consisting of a live-action story telling of indigenous history from pre-contact through to present.
 - b. AB Minister of Education was available for Q&A.
 - c. Early Childhood Development and Drug Education presentations.
 - d. Breakout sessions provided information of many different topics.

Summary: ASCA is underutilized as it offers free educational opportunities, resources, and information for school councils.

7. Trustee Comments – Caroline Freeman
She strongly encouraged everyone to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming election. The ATA is sponsoring a Candidate Forum Medicine Hat Golf & Country Club as well as a Candidate Forum for students at Roy Wilson on Oct 12. The Medicine Hat News will also feature the candidates’ responses to questions put forth.
8. Alberta School Council's Association Presentation – Brenda and Mary
Presentation began with acknowledgment of Treaty 7 Territory followed by an introduction of what ASCA does, a definition of what a School Council is, what “Parents” can be, what a School Council is legislated to do, and a clarification between School Council and Parent Fundraising Association/Society.
 - What Does ASCA Do? It provides representation, consultation, resources, events/conference, communication, online learning, and site services.
 - School Council definition: A means for parents and community members to work together with the principal and the school to support and enhance student learning.
 - “Parents” can be mothers, fathers, adult siblings, step-parents, engaged community members, primary caregivers, elders, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.
 - School Councils are legislated to advise the principal and the board respecting matters relating to the school.

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- Clarification between School Council and Parent Fundraising Association/Society is that School Councils are guided by the School/Education Act, support and enhance student learning, and are advisory only, while the Fundraising Association/Society is guided by the Societies Act, can be recreational, cultural, scientific, or charitable interest, and can have legal authority, ability and liability.
9. Breakout Sessions – School Council Purpose or Partnerships with Fundraising Associations
- a. School Council Purpose
Objective was to understand how a school council may fulfill its legislated purpose to the principal, community, and the board and on what items, and in which areas, School Councils may make decisions. Handouts of the presentation slides and the School Act – Section 22 were provided.
 - b. Partnerships with Fundraising Associations
Objective was to gain a basic understanding of the main similarities and differences between School Councils and Fundraising Associations, who has the authority to make decisions related to their areas of responsibility, and how both organizations can work together to benefit students and the school community. Handouts of the presentation slides and Existence Explanation.
10. Superintendent Report – Mark Davidson
There was no time for an official report but a new School Councils and Parent Associations Insurance Coverage policy was provided (see attachment).
11. Next Meeting(s)
~~Thursday, January 25, 2018~~ revised
Thursday, February 1, 2018

Medicine Hat School District No.76
School Councils and Parent Associations
Insurance Coverage

1. We value the important work done by our parent groups and we want to protect the organizations and their members.
2. If a lawsuit arises due to bodily injury that occurred as a result of an activity organized by the groups not covered under the District's policies, the group and possibly the individual parent executives could be named in the lawsuit. In this case there are two major costs, both of which can be crippling to an organization or individual:
 - a. Defence & legal costs
 - b. Final claim costs
3. Prior to Oct 5/17:
 - a. **School Sponsored Activities (SSA)** – These are covered under the District's General Liability (GL) policy. To qualify as a SSA, an administrator or teacher needs to be actively involved in the following:
 - i. Planning the activity
 - ii. Organizing the activity
 - iii. Supervising of the activity
 - b. **School Council** an unincorporated entity which operates within its school under the authority of the principal of the school.
 - i. Advisory Role - Covered under the District policy
 - ii. Non-Advisory Role – This was not covered under the District policy.
 - c. **Parent Association (Society)**
 - i. Activities of this group were not covered under the District's policy. Many are only doing casinos through this organization.
4. Effective Oct 5/17 - Changes negotiated for 2017/18
 - a. **School Sponsored Activities (SSA)** – These are covered under the District's General Liability (GL) policy. To qualify as a SSA, an administrator or teacher needs to be actively involved in the following:
 - i. Planning the activity
 - ii. Organizing the activity
 - iii. Supervising of the activity
 - b. **School Council** an unincorporated entity which operates within its school under the authority of the principal of the school.
 - i. Advisory Role - Covered under the District policy
 - ii. Non-Advisory Role – This is **now** covered under the District policy.
 - c. **Parent Association (Society)**
 - i. Activities of this group are **now** covered under the District's policy.

Highlights of the new coverage:

5. Parents groups and individuals have adequate protection in the case of a lawsuit.
6. A list of the individual directors/executive on each Parent Association (Society) need to be forwarded to Central Office by Sept 30th so they can be added for coverage.
7. The coverage extended to the above groups will include General Liability and Directors & Officers coverage.
8. Since the District is accepting additional risk by having these groups added on our policy, a school administrator must be added as an Associate Member on the Parent Associations (Societies) to ensure that all activities are following the risk management policies of the District. This includes fundraising activities, events, etc. An Associate Member is non-voting member and has no signing authority.
9. Principals are already members of the School Council through legislation and the same risk management oversight of the School Council would be expected.