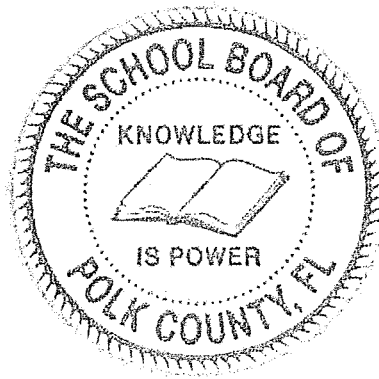


Polk County School District



School Advisory Council Handbook

Mission

The Mission of Polk County Public Schools is to provide high quality education for all students.

Florida State Law

F.S. 1001.452 states that every school must have a School Advisory Council (SAC) that works collaboratively with the principal and staff to develop the annual School Improvement Plan (SIP). The SAC analyzes relevant data to determine the goals in the plan and how progress toward the goals will be measured.

School Advisory Councils are not fundraising organizations. They do not conduct fundraising activities, accept donations or maintain bank accounts.

Each School Advisory Council is composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced team of people with parents, teachers, students, administrators, support staff, business and community members that mirror the ethnic, racial and economic makeup of the school community.

Your participation as a School Advisory Council member is one of the most important functions you will perform for your school. As a member, you will learn many new things about complicated issues that impact student success. This handbook is designed to clarify your responsibilities as a member of your School Advisory Council and can be found [here](#).

Five Star School Award

School Advisory Councils approve the decision to apply for the Five Star School Award. In order to qualify for the Five Star School Award, the SAC must:

- A minimum of eight (8) meetings are held per year. Attendance averages 80 percent of members.
- Annual presentation of School Improvement Plan is made to school community after public notice to all stakeholders (e.g., school marquee, flyers, and school website).
- Evidence of ongoing training and/or development of the School Advisory Council is available.
- School Improvement Plan reflects one new idea that involves the community in its implementation (Supportive Environment Goal in SIP)
- School Advisory Council participates in the development and/or interpretation of the needs assessment data.
- Training provided for staff and SAC members on collaborative partnering and shared decision-making.

The Five Star School Application can be found at Outlook/ Public Folders/All Public Folders/Public Relations/Five Star Golden and Silver School Applications.

Membership and Election

Each advisory council shall be composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community citizens who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. Career center and high school advisory councils shall include students, and middle and junior high school advisory councils may include students. School advisory councils of career centers and adult education centers are not required to include parents as members. Council members representing teachers, education support employees, students, and parents shall be elected by their respective peer groups at the school in a fair and equitable manner as follows:

1. Teachers shall be elected by teachers.
2. Educational support employees shall be elected by education support employees.
3. Students shall be elected by students.
4. Parents shall be elected by parents.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that the elections take place and the composition of the SAC complies with the law. **If the election process does not yield a SAC that reflects the racial, ethnic, and economic diversity of the student population at the school, the principal may appoint additional members to achieve the appropriate representation.**

Each year the School Board reviews and approves the membership rosters of all School Advisory Councils. All members should be able to explain the process and date they were elected. Approved SAC Membership rosters are maintained by the respective Regional Assistant Superintendents and can be available upon request.

Election Process

1. The principal will inform the school community that they are invited to nominate their peers to the school's advisory council. The School Advisory Council needs to include parents of upcoming students.
2. The invitation for nomination must clearly note a deadline, membership categories and the process (time, date, event) by which the vote shall be taken.
3. After elections have taken place, the principal shall submit the list of members to the School Board which includes name and ethnic/racial category.
4. Documentation of the nomination and election process will be maintained at the school as a public record. Once Council membership is approved by the School Board, a copy of the approved form is sent back to the principal to share with the Council.
5. Vacancies in any membership category during the year may be filled by principal appointment. The principal will inform his/her Regional Assistant Superintendent of any replaced members.

Roles in School Improvement Planning

SAC Members

- Operate within the boundaries of School Board policy and State legislation
- Assist in developing and reviewing school vision statement, goals and objectives
- Analyze School Grade, Student Achievement and Learning Gains Data
- Solicit input from peer groups regarding school improvement
- Vote on the expenditure of SAC Allocation Funds, School Recognition Funds and Five Star School Award
- Review all funds reported in School Improvement Plan
- Support school improvement implementation
- Publicize the School Improvement Plan effectively
- Provide ongoing evaluations of school improvement progress
- Review impact of zoning changes as needed

School Principal

- Is knowledgeable about legislation governing School Advisory Councils
- Facilitates election process stated in Bylaws
- Provides testing, behavior, discipline, and attendance data to the SAC
- Manages the day-to-day operations of the school
- Coordinates personnel development consistent with the school improvement plan objectives
- Seeks input from staff and the SAC on school budget
- Aligns school budget to School Improvement Plan
- Leads revision implementation and evaluation of the school improvement plan
- Keeps all written records for public review

District Superintendent & Staff

- Provide district data to SACs to support school improvement planning
- Provide technical assistance to local schools in the planning, implementation and evaluation of School Improvement Plan
- Supervise schools and personnel
- Review school improvement plans and submits to School Board for approval
- Ensure effective evaluation of plans

School Board Members

- Approve SAC membership for each school
- Review and approve annual school improvement plans
- Provide an environment conducive to teaching and learning
- Provide appropriate materials and equipment through the district planning and budgeting process

- Develop policies to govern school operations
- Approve the annual district school improvement budget
- Review district and school data
- Exercise legal interventions where schools fail to make adequate progress toward the achievement of strategic objectives

Meeting Agenda Items

- Analyze testing, attendance, and discipline data
- Create subgroups in order to research, provide input and create School Improvement Plan goals
- Review and provide input on curriculum issues
- Assist in preparing the school budget
- Review impact of zoning changes (as needed)
- Decide how to spend SAC Funds and School Recognition Funds

What is the Sunshine Law?

1. What is the Sunshine Law?

The law applies to any gathering of two or more members of the same board or committee to discuss some matter, which will in the foreseeable future, come before the School Board or committee for a vote.

2. Who does it apply to?

The Law applies to any School Board appointed committees including School Advisory Councils and their working committees.

3. What does it mean to me?

SAC members may not participate in any communications (in person, on the phone and/or by email) about issues that are coming up for a vote. No part of any SAC proceedings can be secret.

4. What is required to properly notice a meeting?

All School Advisory Council business must be discussed in meetings that have been announced publicly no less than 2 weeks prior to the meeting. The notice should contain the time, place and agenda of the meeting, and should be prominently displayed at the school. If at all possible, some form of written or oral notice should be sent home or published in the local media. Members must have at least 3 days advance notice of any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote.

5. What kind of minutes and records must be kept?

The law requires that all meeting minutes be promptly recorded and should include all votes taken. Roll call votes do not have to be taken. Sound recordings may be made but are not required. Meeting minutes and the School Improvement Plan are to be kept in a safe place accessible by the public.

6. Where are committee meetings held?

All meetings must be held in a facility or location that does not discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, creed, color, origin or economic status. The location cannot restrict public access in any way.

Bylaws

F.S. 1001.452 require **School Advisory Councils to adopt Bylaws**. Each School Advisory Council shall adopt Bylaws establishing procedures for:

1. Requiring a quorum to be present before a vote may be taken by the School Advisory Council. A **majority of the membership** of the Council constitutes a quorum.
2. Requiring at least 3 days' advance notice in writing to all members of the Advisory Council of any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote.
3. Scheduling meetings when parents, students, teachers, businesspersons, and members of the community can attend.
4. Replacing any member who has two unexcused consecutive absences from a School Advisory Council meeting that is noticed according to the procedures in the Bylaws.
5. Recording minutes of the meeting.

The district School Board may review all proposed Bylaws of a School Advisory Council and shall maintain a record of minutes for Council meetings. **Schools must upload their SAC approved Bylaws annually to the School Based Monitoring site folder by the end of the 1st – 9 Week Grading Period or any date before.**

Public Input

The public has the right to observe School Advisory Council meetings. They may speak only at designated times. They may not vote.

Guidelines

- Speakers must submit a written request to the principal and the chairperson seven days prior to the meeting
- The principal and chairman designate a limited time for public input at the beginning and/or at the end of the meeting and record it on the agenda
- Speakers will be called forward in the order that their request was received
- Speakers must state their name for the record before making their remarks. Speakers' remarks should be included in the minutes
- Speakers should limit their remarks to three minutes. The chairman will indicate when the speaker has run out of time
- Under F.S. 230.173 the chairman may remove any person who interferes with the agenda of the meeting

Effective Meetings

- Highly recommended to meet at least 4 times a year
- SAC members set dates and times of meetings for the entire school year by consensus of membership
- SAC members may call additional meetings as needed
- SAC Chair provides a membership roster to each member (include all members' phone number, address and email)
- SAC members elect a District Advisory Council (DAC) representative and alternate to attend all District Advisory Council (DAC) meetings

Before Meetings

- Chair and principal set agenda
- Meeting notice, including agenda, is mailed, faxed and/or emailed 2 weeks prior to meeting
- Provide 3 days advance notice for any meeting in which votes will be taken and confirm attendance of members

During Meetings

- Chair presides over meetings
- Secretary records and publishes minutes of meetings which reflects members (present and absent) and all votes taken
- Members sign in at each meeting
- Only members can vote on action taken
- The public may speak only if they have followed public input procedures
- Roll call votes do not have to be taken.
- Members of the Council must vote publicly, not by secret ballot

After Meetings

- Meeting minutes must be given to members and kept in a place for public access

SAC Allocation Funds

Per student allocation has varied over the past years due to budget restraints.

- SAC is charged with discussion and vote on approval of expenditures for School Improvement Plan implementation only
- Requests for school improvement funds are cosigned by the principal and SAC chair, submitted to the District Office of Finance and a copy is sent to the District Office of Accountability
- Meeting minutes must reflect when the SAC discussed and voted to approve the expenditure of these funds
- Expenditures are reviewed at the end of the year

School Recognition Funds

School Advisory Councils vote on use of school recognition funds (F.S. 1008.36) in cooperation with school staff. Funds must be used for:

- Nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or material to assist in maintaining and improving student performance
- Temporary personnel for the school to assist in maintaining and improving student performance
- Nonrecurring bonuses to faculty and staff

The School Board of Polk County, Florida, prohibits any and all forms of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, age, homelessness, or disability or other basis prohibited by law in any of its programs, services, activities or employment. To file concerns, you may contact the Office of Equity & Compliance in the Human Resource Services Division at (863) 534-0513.

HOW TO REQUEST ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require any type of accommodation to complete the application process due to a disability, please call the Human Resource Services Division at (863) 534-0781. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, please contact the Polk County School District by calling Florida Relay Service.