Administrative Rule

**ADVISORY COMMITTEES - SCHOOL**

**IMPROVEMENT COUNCILS**

*Code* **BDF-R** *Issued* **1/19**

# Purpose

* Provide means of representative participation by parents/legal guardians, teachers, students, and the community in planning and monitoring school improvement outlined in the five-year plan.
* Disseminate information to other parents/legal guardians and citizens within the community and clarify information concerning school programs and school improvement initiatives.
* Provide suggestions to school principals for program improvements.
* Annually review an evaluation of school programs and make suggestions to the school principal concerning changes or continuation.

# Duties

State law sets forth the following specific duties for school improvement councils:

* Assist in the preparation of the five-year school improvement or renewal plan and the district performance-based accountability system and annual updates.
* Assist with the development and monitoring of school improvement and innovation.
* Consult with the school on development of the family engagement portion of the School Reading Plan as required by the Read to Succeed Act.
* Prepare the annual SIC *Report to the Parents* each year. The report will provide information on the school’s progress in meeting the school district goals and objectives.
* Assist the principal in writing the narrative report for the annual *SC School Report Card.*
* Provide advice on the use of school incentive grant awards.
* Provide additional assistance as the principal may request.
* Carry out other duties prescribed by the local school board.
* Work with an external review team if a school receives a rating of unsatisfactory or a school rating below average; is this occurs, the council will gather additional information on strengths and weaknesses of a school for the purpose of revising the school improvement plan.
* Provide membership information to the School Improvement Council Assistance office at the University of South Carolina as prescribed by law.

**Composition**

Each school council will be comprised of at least two parents/legal guardians, elected by the parents/legal guardians of the children enrolled in the school; at least two teachers, elected by the faculty; and, if applicable, at least two students in grades nine and above in the school, elected by the students. The principal will appoint additional members of the council from the community. The number of appointed community members must equal half the number of elected members. This means that schools without grade nine and higher must have at least two appointed community members and schools with grade nine and higher must have at least three appointed community members. If an SIC chooses to increase the number of elected members, it must also increase the number of appointed members. The council will also include ex-officio members such as the principal or other individuals holding positions of leadership in the school or other school organizations.

# Eligibility

*Parent/Legal guardian representatives*

To serve as a parent/legal guardian representative on the school improvement council, the parent/legal guardian must have a child attending the schools in the district.

*Teacher representatives*

The teacher representatives will be any certificated employees working at least half-time at the local school level. The certificated employee’s seat will be declared vacant if the employee is no longer employed at the school.

*Student representatives*

No student may serve as the student representative after the student has left the school. No student will be prohibited from nomination or election due to grade level, academic standing, race, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, or any related medical conditions), color, disability, national origin, or any other applicable status protected by law.

*Community representatives*

A community member may be appointed by the principal if he/she meets the following criteria:

* Does not currently have a child enrolled in the school.
* Is not employed by the school system.
* Lives and/or does business in the school’s attendance zone or surrounding community.

# Election/Appointment Process

## Parents/Legal guardians

Parents/Legal guardians will be elected by nomination either from themselves or from another parent/legal guardian. The school will prepare a ballot of all nominations and a method of casting ballots which encourages the broadest participation. Ballots will be counted and election results announced by the principal.

## Teachers

The faculty of each school will elect a minimum of two teachers in a manner determined by the faculty. Schools are encouraged to hold elections during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting or other event that all teachers are required to attend.

## Students

Student representatives will be elected during the time the student body of the school is holding its regular elections for student government offices. The student council will determine a process to elect a minimum of two students.

## Community members

The principal of the school will appoint qualifying community members who will connect the school with diverse neighborhoods, community groups, and/or resources and who have skills and expertise not otherwise represented among elected SIC membership.

## Ex-officio

The principal, PTA/O president, past SIC chair, Title I parent advisory council chair, business partner, and/or others may be seated on the council, as stated in the by-laws.

**Term of Office**

The elected members of the council will serve a minimum term of two years; the terms will be staggered and determined by lot. Parents/Legal guardians of a student or students in their last year of enrollment at an individual school may serve terms of only one year. The names of all council members and other information will be submitted to the School Improvement Council Assistance office at the University of South Carolina for the purpose of sharing information.

The term of office for appointed members will be established by the by-laws adopted by each council.

# Time of Election

Annual elections will occur within district guidelines as set out in the council by-laws. Elections should occur no later than October 15th annually and may be held at the beginning of the new school year or the preceding spring (May-June). Elections should be organized to ensure broad participation by parents, faculty, and students.

**Vacancies**

Vacancies will be filled by appointment from the principal with approval of the council.

# Meetings

Each council will meet monthly (at least eight times a year). The school will maintain a record of actions in the school office. As public bodies, SICs are subject to all applicable state open meeting and public record requirements in accordance with the SC Freedom of Information Act.

# Council Operations By-Laws

All school improvement council operations will conform to state and federal laws and regulations, district policies, and professional ethics.

Each council will develop a set of by-laws governing its operations consistent with district policy. A copy of the by-laws will be filed with the district office.

**Information to Be Made Available**

The principal will provide each improvement council with appropriate information so that they can provide advisory assistance with the development and monitoring of the school’s improvement efforts. This information will include, but not be limited to, the following:

* test data for the school
* total school improvement plans
* demographic composition of the local school community
* success of graduates during first year of college, if applicable
* dropout information, if applicable
* needs assessment information as related to student achievement progress, including survey information

Cf. CM

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