

# Emery County School District



## Policy: KCBC—School Community Councils

Date Adopted: 2 February 2000  
Current Review / Revision: 16 June 2015

The Board of Education recognizes the value of involving parents as partners in the education of their children. Such involvement promotes open communication and unity of purpose, and encourages a shared-responsibility in meeting the educational needs of the students.

Along with encouraging parental support in school activities, involvement as volunteers and resources to enhance curriculum, and in attendance at SEOP, SEP, and parent teacher conferences, the board also recognizes the value of parental insight into issues related to school improvement planning, goal setting, curriculum, discipline, student activities, student safety, etc.

It is therefore the policy of the Board of Education that each school shall establish and maintain a school community council to provide for a cooperative means of improving the educational programs and conditions within the school.

### **Membership**

A school community council includes the principal or designee, school employee members and parent members. There shall be at least a two-parent member majority. The size of the Council may be determined by a majority vote of a quorum of the School Community Council. Organization shall be in accordance with Utah Code 53G-7-1202 and USBE Administrative Rule R477-491.

An educator may not serve as a parent member on a school community council at a school where the educator is employed. However, an educator may serve as a parent member on a school community council at a school where the educator is not employed. Following the election, however, if there are more parent members who are educators in the district than parents who are not educators in the district, elected to the council, the parents on the council shall appoint additional parent members until the number of parent members who are not educators exceeds the number of parent educators in the district.

A parent or guardian member of a school community council may serve successive terms provided the parent member continues to have a student attending the school or will be enrolled at the school during the parent's or guardian's term of office. Employee members may continue to serve successive terms as long as they meet the qualifications for an employee member.

### **Selection of Members**

Each employee member, except the principal, shall be elected by a majority vote of the employees and serve a two-year term. The principal shall serve as an ex officio member with full voting privileges.

Each parent or guardian member shall be elected at an election held at the school by a majority vote of those voting at the election and serve a two-year term.

Only parents or guardians of students attending the school may vote at the election.

Any parent or guardian of a student who meets the qualifications of this section may file or declare himself/herself as a candidate for election to a school community council.

The school community council chair, with assistance of the school administration, shall provide notice of the available community council positions to school employees and parents or guardians at least 10 days prior to the elections. The notice shall include:

- The dates and times of the elections
- A list of council positions that are up for elections
- Instructions for becoming a candidate for a position

An election for the parent or guardian members of a school community council shall be held near the beginning of the school year or held in the spring and completed before the last week of school. The selected time period of election of parent or guardian members of the council must remain consistent for at least a four-year period.

The Principal, or the principal's designee, shall oversee the elections.

Results of the elections shall be made available to the public upon request.

If a parent or guardian position on a school community council remains unfilled after an election is held, the other parent and guardian members of the council shall appoint a parent or guardian who meets the qualifications to fill the position.

If an employee position on a school community council remains unfilled after an election is held, the other employee members of the council shall appoint an employee to fill the position.

A school need only conduct an election if the school community council position(s) are contested.

The principal shall enter the names of the council members on the School Landtrust website on or before October 20 of each school year.

Initial terms shall be staggered so that approximately half of the council members stand for election each year.

Each school community council shall elect a chair and vice chair from its parent or guardian members and a vice-chair from either its parent or guardian members or school employee members, excluding the principal.

A school community council may create subcommittees or task forces to:

- (a) advise or make recommendations to the council; or
- (b) develop all or part of plans required as part of the community council duties.

A majority of the members of a school community council is a quorum for the transaction of business. The action of a majority of members of a quorum is the action of the school community council.

## Community Council Responsibilities

Each school community council shall:

- (a) develop a school improvement plan in accordance with Utah Code 53G-7-1204;
- (b) develop the School Landtrust plan in accordance with Utah Code 53F-2-404;
- (c) assist in the development and implementation of a staff professional development plan as provided by Section 53G-11-303; and
- (d) advise and make recommendations to school administrators regarding the school and its programs and other issues relating to the community environment for students.

In addition to the duties specified, a school community council for an elementary school shall develop a reading achievement plan in accordance with Section 53E-4-306.

A school community council may appoint individuals who are not council members to serve on a subcommittee or task force, including parents or guardians, school employees, or other community members.

Any plan or part of a plan developed by a subcommittee or task force shall be subject to the approval of the school community council.

A school community council shall also consider the approval of a plan for the use of School Landtrust Program money in a meeting of the school community council at which a quorum is present. Landtrust funds must be used to meet the greatest academic needs of the school. In developing the Landtrust Plan, the School Community Council shall annually review the school's state-wide achievement test results, reading achievement plans, class size reduction needs, technology needs, and professional development plan. If a majority of the quorum votes to approve a plan for the use of School Landtrust Program money, the plan is approved. The school community council shall submit its plan for the use of School Landtrust Program to the School Board for the School Board's approval and include with the plan a report noting the number of school community council members who voted for or against the approval of the plan and the number of members who were absent for the vote. The School Community Council shall include in the plan funding to implement a component of the school's improvement plan.

The School Board may approve or disapprove a plan for the use of School Landtrust Program money.

If a local school board disapproves a plan for the use of School Landtrust Program money, the School Board shall provide a written explanation of why the plan was disapproved and request the school community council who submitted the plan to revise the plan. The school community council shall submit a revised plan to the local school board for approval.

The School Community Council shall also plan and provide for awareness of safe technology use and digital citizenship that helps students make smart media and online choices and assists parents to know how to discuss safe technology with their student(s). The Council shall also work with the school administration to ensure that filtering systems are in place for devices used by students and personnel.

## Reporting and Posting Requirements

By October 20th of each school year, the school principal shall post on the school website:

1. A list of the members of the school community council and each member's direct email or phone number, or both;
2. A proposed meeting schedule for the year; and
3. How the school's School Landtrust Program money was used to enhance or improve academic excellence at the school and implement a component of the school's improvement plan.
4. The school community council meeting information (time, place and date of meeting; meeting agenda and previous meeting draft minutes) on the school's website at least one week prior to each meeting.
5. Opportunities for parents to serve on the school community council and how parents can directly influence the expenditure of School Landtrust funds.
6. Dollar amounts received each year through the School Landtrust program.
7. Rules of order and procedures the council uses to conduct meetings.

A school community council shall identify and use methods of providing the information listed above to a parent or guardian who does not have Internet access.

By October 20<sup>th</sup> of each school year, the school principal shall post on the Landtrust website:

- (a) The School Community Council Membership Report
- (b) The Signed Principal Assurance Form
- (c) The final report on the previous year's implementation and results.

Prior to the Spring deadline established by the school district, school principal shall post on the Landtrust website:

- (a) The Progress Report for the current year Landtrust program.
- (b) The School Plan for the next year's Landtrust program.
- (c) The Committee Signature Form

The school principal shall also:

- (a) Ensure that council members and leaders receive annual training about the duties of the school community council and the role of council leadership.
- (b) Ensure that written minutes are kept of each school community council meeting and that minutes are maintained for three years as the official record of action taken at each meeting.

- (c) Provide a signed, written assurance that the membership of the school community council is consistent with the membership requirements and that the members were elected or appointed consistent with selection requirements.

### **Additional Provisions**

School Community Council meetings are exempt from the Utah Open Meeting Act. However, school community councils may not hold closed meetings. No final action may be taken on a topic in a meeting unless it is listed on the agenda included with the required advanced notice.

The Board of Education shall, through each school principal, provide each school community council member a copy of the statutes governing school community councils. (53G-7-1202, 53G-7-1203, 53F-2-404).

A school or school district administrator may not prohibit or discourage a school community council from discussing issues, or offering advice or recommendations, regarding the school and its programs, school district programs, the curriculum, or the community environment for students.

The school community council shall function as a resource to the school principal. The council shall provide a sounding board for the community and the school by discussing issues and helping to solve school problems. It shall provide input, suggestions and recommendations to the school administration for school improvement.

This policy is superseded by Utah State Board of Education Rule or Utah State Code, if a conflict exists.

### **Individual Member Roles**

- Serve as a member of “good will.” Be willing to subordinate special and personal interests to that of the school and the students. This sometimes requires setting aside personal agendas to work for the common good of the school. Be a neutral representative.
- Seek first to understand. Be a courteous listener who truly listens and tries to understand. Ask questions until others’ points of view are understood.
- Articulate ideas, concerns, suggestions to the entire group. Make certain that all members have been heard and understand.
- Be an active participant.
- Share information and solicit input from others.
- Be sure that responsible issues are brought before the council and that complaints are handled in a different setting.
- A willingness to pursue concerns.
- Be a solution finder.
- Share in group decision making.
- Attend scheduled meetings.

## Chair / Co-chair Roles

- Develop meeting agendas and notify members. Solicit agenda items for council members.
- Conduct council meetings. Facilitate the accomplishment of meeting objectives.
- Listen and provide focus for the group.
- Encourage participation by all members.
- Facilitate team building.
- Insure that minutes are taken and assist with meeting details (materials, refreshments, equipment, etc.)
- Participate as a council member being careful not to dominate discussions or intimidate members. Help get all ideas out on the table.
- Provide leadership so that meetings are productive, not gripe sessions.
- Provide follow-up; once the decision has been made, help make it work.