



PARENT SCHOOL SUPPORT COMMITTEE (PSSC) INFORMATION BOOKLET

The Parent School Support Committee (PSSC) advises the Principal, enhancing student learning and development, and enriching education for all children by increasing family and community involvement.

Successful Parent School Support Committee (PSSC) members:

- *focus on the collective needs of the school's students
- *promote open, effective communications
- *commit to partnerships
- *encourage parental involvement
- *establish and follow a conflict resolution mechanism

Glossary of Terms

School Mission – gives direction and focus for the school, often developed along with a statement of the school's beliefs and guiding principles

School Partners/School Community – staff, students, principal, parents, Parent School Support Committee (PSSC), community members, parent organizations

School Improvement Plan – blueprint for the school, contains a clearly-stated purpose (mission), goals, measures, standards, objectives, actions and resources required to reach objectives, monitoring, assessment and evaluation

School Profile – profile of resources available to the school to support learning, includes indicators of how well the school completed the previous year

School Report Card – annual summary of the school's student achievement of the past year, compared to set standards, previous achievements, and the school's achievement in relation to the whole province

Provincial Report Card – annual report of student achievement in each school district, includes results of provincial assessments by grade, district and high school

Roles

Parent School Support Committee Member – participates in all meetings - maintains high ethical standards - respects other members - works collectively toward improved education and student achievement – limits discussion to matters in the best interest of the whole school

community – works for a positive school environment – supports open communication – strengthens relations between parents, teachers, students, school staff, community – encourages parental involvement and support – follows principles established by the PSSC to achieve goals and objectives identified in the School Improvement Plan

PSSC Chair – chairs the meetings – sets meeting dates, time, agenda with Principal and PSSC members - stimulates discussion by asking questions - ensures participation by interrupting monopolizers, encouraging silent members, being assertive when needed - keeps to agenda by setting/keeping time limits – helps members reach consensus and resolve conflicts – ensures PSSC minutes are maintained

Principal – provides educational leadership, management of day-to-day operations - ensures establishment and operation of PSSC – encourages collaborative relationship – seeks input from the PSSC – acts as resource on school laws, regulations, collective agreements, policies, practices – presents School Improvement Plan, reports on achievement, performance and improvement - creates a positive climate within the school and community – assists PSSC communication with the community – keeps a copy of the minutes from each PSSC meeting at the school

Teachers – make decisions on professional practices in their classrooms and school – provide instructional leadership in their classes - use professional skills, expertise to attain student achievement – collaborate with other teachers – provide input to School Improvement Plan

PSSC Responsibilities

- * Advise Principal on establishment, implementation and monitoring of the School Improvement Plan
- * Participate in the selection of the Principal and Vice-Principal(s)
- * Review results of the School Performance Report
- * Advise Principal in development of school policies in accordance with district and provincial policies
- * If requested by the Superintendent, provide input on performance evaluation of PSSC involvements for the Principal and Vice-Principal(s)
- * Communicate with the District Education Council (DEC) relating to PSSC

Meetings of the Parent School Support Committee

During the PSSC meetings from September to June, many items will be discussed. All meetings should be publicized and public attendance is encouraged. A quorum (majority of members) is necessary for the proceedings to be binding. Observers cannot participate in the discussions unless they have requested and been granted time on the agenda when being drafted by the PSSC Chair and Principal.

Early Fall –The Principal provides the School Profile, identifying available resources, and how well last year's objectives have been achieved. If the School Improvement Plan ended the

previous June, an evaluation of its success is presented. The new School Improvement Plan is reviewed, and actions for the current year are described. If the school is in Year Two or Three of its Plan, the current Plan is reviewed and a monitoring report is presented identifying any changes that have occurred.

Late Fall - The Principal presents the School Report Card, identifying all measures of student achievement, with an analysis of the results showing the degree of improvement over the previous year.

Early Winter – When the Provincial Report Card is available, the Principal provides an analysis of the school's achievement compared to the school district and province.

Mid-Winter – The current School Improvement Plan is reviewed to see if strategies need modification for the coming year.

Spring –The Principal presents the School Improvement Plan and a final monitoring report of the current year plan for review. Coming school year resources should be known.

New School Year – the pattern starts again at the first PSSC meeting in the Fall.

Communication with Parents and the Community

Suggestions to ensure community awareness of PSSC activities include - posting minutes in the school and accessible public places - distributing an annual report - distributing a PSSC/school newsletter - encouraging local media to report on progress - providing opportunities for community input - communicating with parents, parent associations

Code of Conduct for Parent School Support Committees

Your PSSC will develop its own Code of Conduct. Some suggestions include:

A PSSC member:

1. Accepts the education and best interest of all students as first priority
2. Limits discussion at meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole
3. Applies democratic principles
4. Promotes high standards of ethical practice within the school community
5. Is guided by the mission of the school
6. Respects the role of the PSSC members
7. Is honest, discreet, and respectful in discussing problem and conflict matters
8. Never discloses confidential information; respects the confidential nature of some school business, and the limitations this may place on the PSSC
9. Encourages a positive atmosphere where individual contributions are encouraged and valued
10. Uses appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise
11. Declares any conflict of interest

Individual Concerns or Complaints

Parents/guardians are encouraged to speak to and/or meet with their child's teacher first. If not resolved, the parents/guardians should meet with the Principal. If still not resolved, the matter should be directed to the Superintendent of the school district.

Establishment of Parent School Support Committees

Principals establish PSSCs in their schools, ensuring that elections are properly conducted by:

- notifying parents with date, time and location of election, the nomination process, the number of parent member positions open for election. The PSSC facilitates the election and encourages parental interest and involvement. Elections are to be held by September 30th.

Membership - 6-12 members reflecting community diversity, the majority being elected parent members. Others include a teacher elected by the teachers in the school and at the high school level, a student elected by the students. PSSC members may appoint one student where there is no high school program in the school; one member where there is a Home & School Association; one or two community members, with strong interest in school issues, but not employees in the school. Parent members serve three-year terms, all others one-year terms. The Principal attends all meetings. A member of the District Education Council (DEC) may attend and participate in meetings. Decisions are made by majority vote or consensus.

Seats may be declared vacant - when a member dies – resigns - was eligible when elected but no longer has a child enrolled in the school - contravenes the *Act* or Regulations - is convicted of an indictable offence - becomes an employee of the school - misses three meetings in 12 months without good reason. These vacancies are filled through appointment by the other members of the PSSC.

Parents of a student enrolled in your school are eligible to run, as well as any NB resident 18 years of age older who is not a pupil. No school district employee working in the school can be elected or appointed to a parent position. Nominations can be submitted to the Principal by any eligible person, prior to the close of nominations; can also be requested/accepted from the floor. Parents and guardians may nominate themselves or any other eligible person. Voting must be done in person by secret ballot at the school.

If there are complaints about the election, an appeals process can be implemented. Appeals must be filed with the District Education Council (DEC) within two (2) weeks. The DEC will advise the Principal of the complaint and advise all parties to respond within one (1) week. The DEC reviews the information received, and within five (5) days may – declare the election of one or more members void – declare the election of one or more members duly elected – order a new election for one or more members – dismiss the complaint.

Serving as a Member of the PSSC

Members of the PSSC are volunteers serving without pay. Travel expenses may be reimbursed at the approved government rate through the district. PSSC budgets are set by the District Education Council.

Your willingness to participate in the important role of enhancing the education of the children of New Brunswick is very much appreciated. Thank you.

NOTE: The information presented in this leaflet is an outline only. Additional, in-depth information is available in the PSSC Manual prepared by the Department of Education. The manual is available from your school Principal or District Office.