

POLICY 500-19

SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCILS

Implementation of a school community council requires the collaborative involvement of the stakeholders of the school: principal, teachers, non-certificated staff, parents, students, and other community members. The functions of the school community council are to: review the academic and financial plan and either recommend revisions of the plans to the principal, or recommend the plans for approval by the complex area superintendent; ensure that the school's Academic and Financial Plan is aligned with the educational accountability system; participate in the selection and evaluation of the principal; provide opportunities for input and collaboration; recommend to the principal the school's repair and maintenance needs; recommend, develop, amend, or approve school-level policies and rules; request waivers from state agency policies, rules, procedures, and exceptions to collective bargaining agreements, if such exceptions or waivers will improve student achievement.

The Department, through the Board and the Superintendent, shall establish a school community council system for Hawaii's public schools.

The Department shall establish school community councils in all public schools as specified by state law and shall establish procedures to support implementation of school community councils. The procedures shall:

1. Encourage and facilitate increased participation and input by parents, students, community members, and the school staff in the affairs of their schools;
2. Provide clear and concrete delineation of powers and responsibilities among the school community council, principal, complex area superintendent, and Board;
3. Provide an outline of decision making processes that may be used by the school community council; provided that each school community council decision making process includes a fallback procedure whereby the final recommendations of the school community council are made by majority vote, by the principal, or by some other method that is agreed upon by the school community council;
4. Require a well-articulated vision, mission, school improvement process, Academic and Financial Plan, School Community Council By-laws, a commitment to collaboration, and procedures for the recommendation of the Academic and Financial Plan to the complex area superintendent for approval as delineated in Chapter 302A-1124 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes;
5. Specify that decisions regarding the Academic and Financial Plans shall be guided by the legal responsibilities of the Department in the areas of federal and state laws, safety and health, fiscal responsibility, civil rights, and collective bargaining;
6. Define the authority and responsibility of the school principal to facilitate the school community council process, handle the day-to-day operations of the school, implement the policies of the Board, and provide technical assistance in sharing collective bargaining agreements, federal and state laws, policies, and guidelines in the decision making process;

7. Require a focus on student achievement and provision for objective periodic assessment of the school community council process at the school; and
8. Require conformance with all state laws, rules, and Board policies.

Upon request, schools shall provide the results of their objective periodic assessment of the school community council process and other information to the Department and/or Board.

Rationale: The Board of Education (“Board”) supports a school improvement process that involves collaboration by the stakeholders of each school community. A school community council, or SCC, provides a means whereby parents, students, and community members have an increased voice in the affairs of the school. A school community council focuses on the goals of the school, and provides direction, coordination, and communication to improve teaching and learning, resulting in greater student achievement.

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