

St. James Assiniboia School Division  
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## **PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS**

### **PART A: PARENT ORGANIZATIONS**

#### **1. Statement of Board Support**

- 1.1 It is the policy of the School Board to ensure the establishment of parent organizations in all schools. Such organizations have proven to be of significant benefit to the educational program offered to our students.
- 1.2 These school parent organizations shall be titled herein, depending on their format:
  - a) Parent Councils, or
  - b) School Advisory Committees, or
  - c) Booster Committees, or
  - d) Advisory Councils for School Leadership
- 1.3 Under the Public Schools Act the Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for policy development and for the total operation of the school division, including instructional activities in schools. The Board discharges this responsibility through designated personnel employed by the Board. Parent organizations, therefore, are advisory and supportive in nature, and shall work with the principal to operate in ways consistent with school division policy.
- 1.4 Parent organizations shall be non-profit organizations associated with individual schools.
- 1.5 This policy, and related policies KMA-R, KMAA, KMAB, and KMAC are intended to ensure that parent organizations are characterized by fair representation of all parents, consistency of organizational structures, and approved financial and business procedures.

#### **2. Requirement for Principal to Call an Establishment Meeting**

- 2.1 The principal of a school shall call an annual Establishment Meeting to form a parent organization no later than the third week of October.
- 2.2 The Annual Establishment Meeting shall be publicized as follows:
  - a) By special notice in the school newsletter in the spring of the preceding year

- b) By special notice in the school newsletter twice in the fall, the second notice no later than one week in advance of the date of the meeting
- c) By Division-wide advertisement in the local newspaper in early September, arranged by the Chief Superintendent or his designate on behalf of all schools.

The Principal of the school shall ensure that all arrangements and preparations are made, and shall be the chairperson of the Annual Meeting for the period of the elections.

- 2.3 The Establishment Meeting shall be held at the school.
- 2.4 The first order of business at the Establishment Meeting shall be the decision, to be voted on by the parents/ guardians in attendance, regarding the form of parent organization the parents wish to establish.

Before the vote is taken the Principal shall review Division Policies KMA, KMA-R, KMAA, KMAB and KMAC, as well as Regulation 54/96, to help the assembly understand the main features of each form of parent organization.

- 2.5 If the decision is to form a Parent Council (or one of its subsidiary forms) then the remaining part of the meeting shall be devoted to the election of a Parent Council Executive, under the procedures and terms outlined in Policy KMAB.

Further, Division policies KMA-R, KMAA, and KMAB shall apply to the operation of the Parent Council (or one of its subsidiary forms) as applicable.

- 2.6 If the decision is to form an Advisory Council for School Leadership, then the meeting shall be adjourned, and the Principal shall, under the procedures and terms outlined in Regulation 54/96, arrange a second meeting to elect an Executive for the Advisory Council for School Leadership.

Further, Division policies KMA-R and KMAC shall apply to the operations of the Advisory Council for School Leadership, as well as Regulation 54/96.

### **3. Purpose of Parent Organizations**

The purposes of parent organizations (hereinafter referred to as "Parent Organizations") may include the following:

- 3.1 Promote cooperation and communication between the home, school, and community.

- 3.2 Promote parental involvement in their schools.
- 3.3 Promote positive relations between the school and its community.
- 3.4 Promote the objectives of the school recognizing the student is the most important and vital component of the educational system.
- 3.5 Promote the welfare of children and support the educational purpose of the school.

#### **4. Forms of Parent Organizations in Schools**

##### **4.1 Parent Council**

This form of Parent Organization is characterized by a high level of parent involvement, multiple functions and revenue sources, moderate to high cash flows, and high organizational need. Historically, it has been the common form at K-5 schools, and less common at 6-8 or S1-S4 schools.

This form could be selected by schools with a high level of parent involvement and a large and active activity agenda. The quorum of the annual meeting to elect an Executive shall be a number of parents equal to or greater than five percent of the student enrolment of that school.

If such a quorum cannot be achieved, the principal shall initiate formation of the next level of Parent Organization, a School Advisory Committee.

##### **4.2 School Advisory Committee**

This form of Parent Organization is characterized by lower levels of parent involvement, negligible cash flow, and lower organizational need. It functions to create communication and dialogue with the school staff and to provide advice to the principal in an informal setting. This form is rarely seen in K-5 schools, but predominates in 6-8, and S1-S4 schools.

This form could be selected when insufficient parents show committed involvement in the Parent Organization. It could be their choice or the choice of a principal faced with too few parents to establish a Parent Council. The members of a School Advisory Committee experiencing increasing involvement of parents could upgrade at any suitable time to a Parent Council.

##### **4.3 Booster Committee**

This form of Parent Organization is characterized by a high level of specific-interest parent involvement. It focuses on a single activity, such as school band, and has potentially high cash flows and high

organizational needs. It also provides advice and support to the principal on the student activity of interest.

This form meets the needs of certain school activities. It could operate reporting directly to the principal, or it could operate as a committee of a School Advisory Committee or Parent Council and, through one of these bodies, report to the Principal.

#### **4.4 Advisory Council for School Leadership**

This form of Parent Organization is established and operated under the terms of Regulation 54/96 and under Division Policy KMAC, and under Division Policy KMA-R regarding financial procedures.

### **5. Parent Organization Resource Book**

The Division administration shall prepare a Parent Organization Resource Book consisting of two sections:

- 5.1 materials relating to the operation of Parent Councils, School Advisory Committees, Booster Committees, and Advisory Councils for School Leadership, such as sample constitutions, sample financial reports, procedures, guidelines, etc.
- 5.2 materials of general interest, relating to activities, fund-raising ideas, and other articles of potential benefit to Parent Organizations.

The resource book shall be prepared by the Chief Superintendent or his designate, and a copy shall be retained by the principal of each school for use by the Parent Organizations, and the Executive as required. Two copies shall be maintained at the school division office.

The resource book shall be updated periodically by the Chief Superintendent or his designate, who shall review potential resource book articles and items coming to his attention, and shall forward these either to all schools or to schools at either the elementary or secondary levels, as appropriate.

### **6. Parent Organizations - Divisional Forums**

The School Division, under the sponsorship and leadership of the Chairman of the Board, shall arrange a minimum of one meeting per school year for Parent Organization representatives. This meeting should facilitate orientation of Parent Organization officers, and sharing and discussion on matters of interest to Parent Councils. Further meetings may be called as necessary.

**7. Parent Organization-Operated Lunch Programs**

Parent organization -sponsored lunch programs operate under the direct supervision of the school principal. The regulations accompanying day care legislation require lunch programs to be under the direct supervision of the school principal if they are to be exempted from the normal day care regulations.

**PART B: INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS****1. Parental Involvement in Planning for Special Needs Students**

The Division believes in a cooperative approach to education involving parents and professionals working together to provide the best opportunities for the special needs learner. To achieve this cooperative approach, parents are involved in the following ways:

- a) Development of the student's Individual Education Plan.
- b) Development of an Individual Transition Plan for the more handicapped learners.
- c) A formal appeal process to resolve disagreements that may develop between the parent and the school.
- d) Access to all school records and files upon parental request.
- e) Involvement of parents when referrals are made to Educational Support Services.
- f) Involvement of parents in informational evenings at the school or Divisional level.
- g) Ongoing communication between the school and home for special needs students.
- h) Annual review of special education placements involving parents.
- i) The Annual A.D.A.P. is forwarded to the Education Committee of the Board for study and recommendation.

**2. Parental Input to the Division's Special Education Planning Committee**

Each school containing a special program is required to appoint a parent of a special needs child to serve on the Parent Council or School Advisory Committee. Each year the Divisional Special Education Planning Committee will convene a meeting of the Special Education parent representatives to receive input and suggestions regarding the Division's Special Programs and Services.

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