



Summary of Changes to the School Council Law

Membership

School councils may now have more than 7 members. Each council in its own bylaws specifies the number and type of members. The number of parent members and teacher members must be equal. The council may specify additional members, such as, but not limited to, students, staff, representatives of school related organizations, representatives of community organizations, etc. Selection procedures for these additional members are determined in the bylaws.

Terms

Staggered terms are now required. Terms beginning after July 1, 2004 must be staggered so that half of the parents, half the teachers, and half the business members will be elected to a one year term and the other half to a two year term. Once the staggered terms are established, the term of office is as determined in the bylaws. The school council would designate the length of the term and the beginning and ending dates of the term. Those already in office serve their original term. Members may serve more than one term.

Elections

Elections no longer have to be in May. The school council will decide in what month to have elections. The nomination and election process are also specified in the bylaws. Selection procedures for the business members and additional categories of members must be stated in the bylaws.

Meetings

The school council must meet four or more times a year. The number of meetings must be stated in the bylaws. Meetings no longer have to be at the school, but the same public notice rules apply.

Officers

The school council elects the chair, vice-chair, and secretary. Any council member may be elected chair. The term of the officers is specified in the bylaws.

Training

There is no longer a requirement that training be held in July. Local boards are required to provide a training program covering the organizational, legal, and procedural aspects of school councils. Additional training must be offered annually.

Charter and Alternative Schools

An alternative governance body or advisory council may be substituted by board policy at charter schools, alternative schools, and psychoeducation centers.

School Council Votes

The adoption and amendment of bylaws require a two-thirds vote. Removal of a member due to inactivity or other reasons specified in the bylaws requires a majority vote.

Local Board of Education

School site budget and expenditure information and site average class size by grade are specifically listed as items of information the local board is required to provide upon request. The central administration is required to respond to requests for information from a school council. The local board must receive and consider all recommendations of the school council in accordance to the process provided in the law. The school council will determine who speaks for them before the board.

Principal Vacancy

The local board must provide a written policy defining the principal selection process and the role the school council shall play.