



What is a School Advisory Committee?

The School Advisory Committee (SAC) is a school-based group intended to represent the school, the community, and those persons closest to the students. The group shares responsibility for guiding the school toward continuous improvement.

What is the role of the School Advisory Committee?

The School Advisory reviews the criteria and implementation of the school's Improvement/Accountability Plan and reviews the school's Title I Plan.

Who serves on the School Advisory Committee?

Beginning July 1, 2008, it is a requirement that the majority of the members of the School Advisory Committee are persons who are not employed by the school district. A SAC should be composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community citizens who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. Certain members are elected by their peers, while business and community members are appointed, and the principal automatically serves.

How are business and community members selected?

The district school board is responsible for establishing procedures for selecting business and community members. This includes a means of ensuring wide notice of vacancies and seeking input on possible members from local businesses, chambers of commerce, community and civic organizations, and the public at large.

How are elections conducted?

The nomination and election procedures should be fair, equitable, and clearly outlined in the SAC's adopted bylaws.

The SAC must represent teachers, education support employees, parents, and students who are elected by their respective peer groups at the school as follows:

- Teachers shall be elected by teachers
- Education support employees shall be elected by education support employees
- Parents shall be elected by parents
- Students shall be elected by students

Voting can occur at meetings or by mail, using written ballots or a show of hands. Ballots are counted, recorded, and retained. Ballots and voting records should be kept by a SAC officer, and the results are to be reflected in the official SAC minutes.

Who serves as Chair of the School Advisory Committee?

Any member can be elected to serve as Chair. We recommend that neither a principal (in order to invite greater shareholder involvement) nor a student (due to lack of experience and maturity) fills this role. Some schools elect co-chairs so that a parent/community member and a school-based member can lead jointly.

Are persons serving as a School Advisory Committee member required to be screened?

No. If the SAC member is a parent or business volunteer, no screening is required. However, districts are required to check volunteers' names with the sexual offender/predator database.

What is a quorum?

A majority of the membership of the Committee, more than half, constitutes a quorum.

Who develops the bylaws?

Each School Advisory Committee adopts its own bylaws. The district may require procedures, policies, sample by-laws or a uniform template for all SACs in their district.

How much money is allotted to each SAC?

In the past, the annual General Appropriations Act has provided each SAC up to \$10.00 per student to be used for implementing the School Improvement Plan. On July 1, 2008, the SAC allocation was reduced to \$5.00 per unweighted Full Time Enrolled (FTE) student. If funds are insufficient to provide \$5.00 per student, the available funds will be prorated. The money is sent by FDOE to each district, which forwards allocations to each local school's SAC. Expenditures are reported to the State and are subject to annual audit.

How much notice is given to School Advisory Committee members for agenda items?

The law states that each school is required to give at least three business days advance notice in writing to all members of the SAC on any matter that is scheduled to come before the Committee for a vote. Meeting dates can be posted on school web sites, marquees or bulletin boards, published in newsletters, announcements or local newspapers, or broadcast on TV.

When are SAC meetings scheduled?

SAC meetings are to be scheduled when parents, students, school staff, and members of the community are able to attend. Location and time of day are important considerations for promoting attendance and participation.

Can members who have been absent be replaced?

Yes. When replacing any member who has two or more consecutive unexcused absences from SAC meetings, the SAC will follow procedures in its bylaws or in district policies.

Are meeting minutes required?

Yes. Minutes should be written or tape recorded and kept for one to three years.

When is the best time to start the school improvement planning process?

Even though the school improvement planning process is ongoing, it is useful to start the evaluation and needs assessment processes in the spring. Districts select planning cycles that accommodate local needs.

Is a charter school required to have a School Advisory Committee?

Yes. However, charter schools sometimes are able to have their governing body serve as their SAC. Refer to agreements in the charter contract on a school-by-school basis.

Does a charter school need to have a School Improvement Plan (SIP)?

Yes. It is a public school; therefore, it must have a SIP approved by the district or, if stated in the terms of its contract agreement, it may substitute its charter contract and annual report as the annual SIP.

Are schools required to include their dropout prevention and academic intervention programs in their School Improvement Plan?

Yes. Schools must “reflect” those programs in their SIPs. Response to Intervention (RtI) is among the academic interventions which should be reflected in the SIP.

Are SACs allowed to sponsor fundraisers?

It is generally preferable to have the PTA, PTSO, Education Foundation, or other groups conduct school fundraisers in order to keep SAC allocations separate. Consult with your local school board about district policy.

If SAC funds are left over at the end of the school year, can they be carried over to the following year?

The intent of the Legislature is to have funds used during the school year in which they are awarded. A school board might allow funds to be carried forward, but always check with your school's bookkeeper or District Finance Director first, and consult with your school board about district policy.

Who provides training for new SAC members?

The district office is responsible for training. Some education consortia also provide training.

What topics are typically covered in SAC?

Topics generally covered in SAC trains include, but are not limited to:

- Structure, Purpose, and Roles
- Family Involvement
- Needs Assessments
- Data collection and analysis
 - School test scores
- School Climate Surveys
- Review of the Improvement/Accountability Plan
- School Events