

EVALUATION BRIEF

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Results From the 2018 School Planning Council Survey and Principal’s Advisory Committee Survey

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ABSTRACT

Each school has a School Planning Council (SPC) and Principal’s Advisory Committee (PAC) for the purpose of developing and implementing the school’s Plan for Continuous Improvement. This brief summarizes the 2018 results from the School Board mandated SPC Survey and the PAC Survey. Overall results from the 15-item SPC and 16-item PAC surveys were positive with high levels of agreement to all survey items at the division level. Results of the PAC Survey were somewhat more positive (89% - 99%) than SPC Survey results (84% - 95%). Further, SPC results showed higher agreement levels at elementary schools, and PAC results were generally high across all three school levels.

School Board Policy 2-42 prescribes that each school maintain a School Planning Council (SPC) and a Principal’s Advisory Committee (PAC) for the purpose of developing and implementing the school’s Plan for Continuous Improvement (PCI).¹ The function of the SPC, as specified in School Board Regulation 2-42.1, is primarily to develop and oversee the school’s PCI which is chiefly concerned with student achievement, attendance, and instructional quality. To ensure community input, SPC membership is required to consist of equal representation from school staff and the community (to include school partners, volunteers, parents, and students as feasible). Each school’s total number of SPC members must be at least ten individuals not including the principal who is a mandatory member. In a related capacity, the purpose of the PAC, as specified in School Board Regulation 2-42.2, is to advise the principal on employee issues related to the effective and efficient operation of the school. This includes communicating with principals about on-site conditions that negatively impact student achievement and employee morale. Membership on the PAC consists of only school staff, and there are no requirements for the number of members required. In support of principals’ efforts to assess the effectiveness of the SPC and PAC, the Office of Planning, Innovation, and Accountability administers an annual survey to SPC and PAC members as required by School Board regulations 2-42.1 and 2-42.2. This brief summarizes the results from the 2018 SPC and PAC surveys.

SURVEY DATA COLLECTION

SPC Survey

The SPC survey was administered online from May 14 through June 1, 2018. Survey invitations were emailed to 1,137 SPC members: 457 community-based and 680 school-based. The email invitations included a unique link that provided participants with access to the SPC survey. However, no identifying information about the respondent was included in the results data file to ensure anonymity.

The SPC survey consisted of 15 closed-ended items and one open-ended comment item. The items on the SPC survey related to the function and operation of the SPC. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with each item using a 4-point Likert scale with the following options: strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

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¹ School Board policies and regulations described in this section were based on those in effect for the 2017-2018 school year.

PAC Survey

The PAC survey was administered online from May 14 through June 1, 2018. Survey invitations were emailed to 993 PAC members. These invitations included a unique link that provided participants with access to the PAC survey. However, no identifying information about the respondent was included in the results data file to ensure anonymity. The PAC survey consisted of 16 closed-ended items. Respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with each item using a 4-point Likert scale with the options of strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

Survey Response Rates

Table 1: Response Rates for 2018 SPC and PAC Surveys

School Level	SPC Survey Response Rates	PAC Survey Response Rates
Elementary School	33.71% (209 of 620)	46.17% (301 of 652)
Middle School	34.06% (78 of 229)	57.42% (89 of 155)
High School	27.43% (79 of 288)	55.91% (104 of 186)
All Schools	32.19% (366 of 1,137)	49.75% (494 of 993)

Of the 1,137 SPC survey invitations sent, 366 (32%) SPC members across the division responded. The response rate for the PAC survey was higher; 494, or approximately 50 percent, of PAC members responded. Table 1 summarizes the SPC and PAC response rates. For both surveys, rates varied by school level with middle school rates being the highest.

COMMITTEE REQUIREMENTS

Table 2: Committee Requirements for 2017-2018 SPC

School Level	Membership Number Requirement Met	Equal Representation Requirement Met	Both Requirements Met
Elementary School	58.49% (31 of 53)	11.32% (6 of 53)	3.77% (2 of 53)
Middle School	73.33% (11 of 15)	6.67% (1 of 15)	0.00% (0 of 15)
High School	86.67% (13 of 15)	0.00% (0 of 15)	0.00% (0 of 15)
All Schools	66.27% (55 of 83)	8.43% (7 of 83)	2.41% (2 of 83)

For the 2017-2018 school year, School Board Regulation 2-42.1 specified the total number of SPC members that were required along with the expected division of member type (school based vs. non-school based). These requirements were assessed based on the SPC survey distribution list. Table 2 summarizes the percent of schools who met each of these requirements along with the percent of schools who met both requirements. Of the 83 schools, 55 schools (66%) met the total number requirement, 7 schools (8%) met the equal representation requirement, and 2 schools (2%) met both requirements. Requirements for SPC committee membership were revised in School Board Regulation 2-42.1 as of October 2, 2018 to better align with current practice. Currently, the recommended size of the SPC ranges from 8 to 12 members and each SPC will determine the proportion of membership within the staff and community sectors.

School Board Regulation 2-42.2 specifies that all PAC members are chosen from employees assigned to the school but does not require a specific number of members. Based on the PAC survey distribution list, all schools met this requirement.

SPC SURVEY RESULTS

Table 3 shows a comparison of the agreement percentages, which includes both “strongly agree” and “agree” responses, by school level. The highlighted cells indicate the school level with the highest percent agreement for each of the 15 items on the 2018 SPC Survey. Items in the table are in descending order by agreement for all schools. Divisionwide agreement on the SPC survey was 90 percent or above for all but three items. The lowest items related to whether adequate training opportunities are provided to SPC members for overseeing and monitoring the school’s continuous improvement efforts (84%), whether measurable objectives in the school’s PCI are established by the SPC (87%), and whether members are provided adequate opportunities to submit agenda items (88%).

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Responses to the SPC items varied by school level. Elementary school SPC members had the highest agreement levels on all of the 15 items. The item with the largest difference between school levels (11%) is related to the members having adequate training opportunities for SPC members to oversee and monitor the school's continuous improvement efforts. At the elementary school level, 87 percent of SPC members agreed with this item, compared to 84 percent at the middle school level and 76 percent at the high school level. The agreement level on this item for high schools declined from 85 percent in 2017.

Table 3: Percent Agreement by School Level on 2018 School Planning Council Survey

SPC Survey Item	Percent Agreement			
	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	All Schools
I understand the responsibilities of the SPC for overseeing and monitoring continuous improvement in the school.	96.62	94.87	92.41	95.33
I am knowledgeable of the measurable objectives in my school's PCI as established by the SPC.	97.10	92.31	92.41	95.05
The school principal effectively leads the SPC decision-making process.	96.57	93.33	91.03	94.68
The SPC and principal work together effectively to achieve continuous improvement in school.	95.65	91.03	89.87	93.41
Members of the SPC work effectively in collaboration with the principal to achieve continuous school improvement.	95.10	90.79	89.74	93.02
I am kept adequately informed about the meetings, activities, and accomplishments of the SPC.	95.17	92.31	87.34	92.86
The SPC effectively identifies needed school improvement efforts to raise student achievement.	94.20	90.91	91.14	92.84
The school division's Continuous Improvement Model with a PCI is an effective means for raising student achievement.	93.72	91.03	91.03	92.56
Meetings of the SPC are scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time.	95.07	89.19	87.18	92.11
The membership of the SPC adequately represents the various populations served by my school.	93.24	91.03	89.87	92.03
The SPC uses staff and community input for continuous improvement planning.	92.27	89.74	89.87	91.21
The SPC receives reports from action teams on the school's PCI and monitors progress on the action plans.	92.12	88.16	87.18	90.20
Members of the SPC are provided adequate opportunities to submit agenda items.	90.59	84.93	85.90	88.39
The measurable objectives in the school's PCI are established by the SPC.	88.61	86.49	87.01	87.82
Adequate training opportunities are provided to SPC members on the responsibilities of the SPC for overseeing and monitoring the school's continuous improvement efforts.	87.19	83.78	76.32	84.14

Note: Shaded cell represents highest percent agreement for item.

PAC SURVEY RESULTS

Table 4 shows a comparison of the agreement percentages by school level and highlights the school level with the highest percent agreement to each of the 16 items on the 2018 PAC Survey. Items in the table are in descending order by agreement for all schools. Divisionwide agreement to the items on the PAC survey, which includes both “strongly agree” and “agree” responses, was high and ranged from approximately 89 to 99 percent.

Table 4: Percent Agreement by School Level on 2018 Principal’s Advisory Committee Survey

PAC Survey Item	Percent Agreement			
	Elementary School	Middle School	High School	All Schools
The membership of the PAC adequately represents the various departments and grade levels in my school.	99.00	98.88	99.04	98.99
I am kept adequately informed about the meetings, activities, and accomplishments of the PAC.	96.67	95.51	98.08	96.75
Members of the PAC are provided adequate opportunities to submit agenda items.	94.59	98.88	99.04	96.32
Teachers serving on the PAC work effectively with the principal on issues addressed by the PAC.	95.27	94.25	95.10	95.05
I understand the responsibilities of the PAC for identifying obstacles that impede high student achievement.	94.92	94.32	95.10	94.85
I understand the responsibilities of the PAC for identifying obstacles to high staff morale.	93.31	96.63	96.15	94.51
The school principal effectively leads the PAC decision-making process.	94.56	92.05	96.08	94.42
Meetings of the PAC are scheduled at a mutually agreed upon time.	92.67	94.38	97.12	93.91
I am knowledgeable of the measurable objectives in my school’s PCI.	95.02	91.01	92.31	93.72
The PAC effectively identifies needed school improvement efforts to raise student achievement.	95.90	89.66	90.20	93.57
The PAC and principal work together effectively to achieve continuous improvement in the school.	92.57	90.91	93.07	92.37
The PAC uses staff input for maintaining an effective and efficient operation of the school.	91.22	91.95	94.12	91.96
The PAC uses appropriate avenues for conflict resolution.	90.85	94.32	92.08	91.74
The school division’s Continuous Improvement Model with a PCI is an effective means for raising student achievement.	91.33	95.51	89.32	91.67
The PAC provides an effective method for teachers to share concerns for maintaining high staff morale.	88.33	90.91	91.35	89.43
The PAC effectively identifies needed school improvement efforts to maintain high staff morale.	88.78	87.50	89.22	88.64

Note: Shaded cell represents highest percent agreement for item.

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Differences in the percent agreement for the 16 items were found across school levels. For the majority of the PAC items (10), high school PAC members had the highest agreement levels, followed by middle school (3) and elementary school (3) PAC members. Based on the data in Table 4, items with the largest differences between school levels were that the Continuous Improvement Model with a PCI is an effective means for raising student achievement (6% difference between middle and high schools) and that the PAC effectively identifies needed school improvement efforts to raise student achievement (6% difference between elementary and middle schools).

SUMMARY

Overall, the perception data gathered from the SPC and PAC surveys suggest that the activities and roles of the SPC and PAC align with School Board Policy 2-42 and School Board regulations 2-42.1 and 2-42.2. The results from the 2018 SPC Survey were positive with 12 of the 15 items having agreement levels that were 90 percent or above at the division level. Agreement levels differed by school level with the elementary school level having the highest level of agreement on all 15 items. Overall, the lowest levels of agreement were found at the high school level, although the high school levels of agreement were generally high at 85 percent or more on all but one item.

Although SPC survey results were positive, the adherence to School Board Regulation 2-42.1 in regards to membership numbers and the division of the SPC members among school-based and non-school-based members continued to be a challenge during 2017-2018. Based on past discussions regarding site-based management, the SPC regulation was revised in October 2018 to better align with current practice around membership requirements given individual school/community constraints and the division's interpretation of site-based management.

The results from the 2018 PAC Survey were also positive with all of the 16 items having agreement levels at approximately 89 percent or above at the division level. Agreement levels by school level differed negligibly for the most part but PAC survey results demonstrated that high schools had the highest levels of agreement on a majority (63%) of the items. Generally, the agreement levels were high at all three school levels, ranging from approximately 88 to 99 percent.

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