



School Advisory Council

Operations Manual



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Section I:

Role of the School Advisory Council



What is a School Advisory Council (SAC)?

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is a formally established body of stakeholders at each public school site in Pinellas County. The SAC serves as an advisory body to the principal on general school operations and functions as the final decision-making authority at the school level for matters related to school improvement and accountability.

A primary responsibility of the SAC is to develop, review, and monitor the School Improvement Plan (SIP), ensuring it reflects the identified needs of the school and is grounded in data-driven decision-making. In support of this work, the SAC also oversees the allocation and use of designated school improvement funds, ensuring resources are directed toward strategies that align with the SIP and promote student achievement.

The SAC plays an important role in fostering communication and collaboration among the school, families, and the broader community. Through this work, the SAC helps ensure that school improvement efforts are collaborative, data-informed, and locally driven, while remaining aligned with state accountability requirements and district governance structures.



What is a School Improvement Plan (SIP)?

A School Improvement Plan (SIP) is a required, data-driven strategic plan developed annually by each public school in Florida to improve student performance and advance state and district academic goals. Under Florida Statute 1001.42(18) and 1001.452, the SIP must include measurable objectives, evidence-based strategies, and action steps addressing identified school needs. The plan is grounded in student achievement and other school performance data and must address areas such as instruction, staffing, professional development, student support services, school safety, and resource allocation.

The SAC plays a central role in the SIP process by assisting in its development, review, monitoring, and evaluation. The SAC serves as the school-level body responsible for final decision-making related to implementation of the SIP and related accountability requirements. The SAC also provides input on priorities, reviews school data, helps identify needs, and ensures that the plan reflects the school community's goals for student achievement.

The SIP must be formally approved by the Pinellas County School Board and is typically reviewed and updated throughout the school year as new data becomes available. SAC involvement continues beyond initial approval, as the council monitors progress toward SIP goals and helps guide adjustments based on student performance and other relevant data.



What laws/policies regulate the SAC?

The School Advisory Council's establishment and duties are outlined in Florida Statute 1001.452.

Pursuant to F.S. 1001.452, the Pinellas County Schools Bylaws and Policies also have adopted Policy 2125 which defines the membership, nominations, elections, duties, operational procedures, and SIP processes.

You can review both policies at the links below.

[Florida Statute 10001.452](#)

[Pinellas County School Board Policy 2125](#)

School Advisory Council operations are also regulated by Florida's Government-in-the-Sunshine Law, which can be found in Chapter 286 of the Florida Statutes.

[Florida Statute Chapter 286](#)



Section II:

Composition of the School Advisory Council



SAC Roster Requirements:

PCSB Policy 2125

Each council shall be composed of the principal and an appropriate balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community citizens.

The SAC membership shall be representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. The term community shall refer to the geographic area served by the school. While the composition of the SAC shall represent the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school, there need not be a precise percentage or ratio of each ethnic, racial, and economic group within the community equal to the percentage of the general population served. The Board shall monitor and review the membership composition of SACs. Should the Board determine that the membership elected by the school is not representative, the Board shall appoint additional members to achieve proper representation.

A vacancy in any membership category, as defined by each individual SAC, may be filled utilizing the regular election/selection process. The principal will inform the Superintendent or designee in writing of any replacement members.

If not specified in the SAC bylaws, the principal shall determine the size of the SAC which is most functional for that particular school and which allows for all categories to be represented. Student representation shall be required for SACs established at career-technical centers and high schools and may be included for SACs serving middle schools. Elementary school SACs shall not include student representatives.

The principal is a member of the SAC not included in the above percentages. A majority of the members of each SAC must be persons who are not District employees.



SAC Elections:

PCSB Policy 2125

Each principal is to facilitate a nomination and election process (including, but not limited to, peer nomination and self-nomination) to determine from within the school and community those individuals willing to make a commitment to participate on the SAC.

- The principal will inform the school community, including parents of upcoming students, that nominations to the SAC are invited. The principal may notify potential members by using a variety of written and oral communications. Schools should maximize recruiting efforts to be inclusive of the school community. Documentation of recruitment strategies should be kept.
- The invitation for nomination must clearly note the deadline, membership categories, and the process by which the vote shall be taken. The election process shall encourage the participation of each peer group.
- The following SAC members shall be elected by their respective peer group in a fair and equitable manner as set forth in the bylaws of the SAC:
 - teacher(s) shall be elected by teachers;
 - education support employee(s) shall be elected by education support employees;
 - student(s), when appropriate, shall be elected by students; and,
 - parent(s) shall be elected by parents.
- If these elections do not fulfill statutory requirements, the principal shall recommend additional members to provide proper representation.

Documentation of the nomination and election process will be maintained at the school as a public record.



SAC Roster Submissions

As outlined in PCSB Policy 2125, the Board shall monitor and review the membership composition of SACs. As such, the Office of Strategic Partnerships and the Office of School Planning and Policy collect SAC Rosters from each school.

These rosters contain the following information:

- The name, role, race, and ethnicity of each appointed SAC member
- Whether each appointed SAC member is a Pinellas County School Board employee

Additionally, the principals of each school must confirm that their school complies with the assurances below.

- **SIP Involvement:** The SAC shall assist in the preparation and evaluation of the SIP
- **Stakeholder Representation:** The majority of the members of the SAC shall not be employed by the school district.
- **SAC Composition:** The SAC is composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community members who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. High school SACs must include students; middle and junior high SACs may include students (elementary schools do not include students).

General Timeline

- Early August - School Advisory Council Roster Information sent to principals by area superintendents.
- Late October - School Advisory Council Roster Information is submitted by principals to the Office of Strategic Partnerships.
- Early November - The Office of Strategic Partnerships sends all School Advisory Council Roster Information to the Pinellas County School Board for approval.



Section III:

SAC Operating Procedures



SAC Responsibilities:

Sunshine Law

- Meeting must be open to the public, though only SAC members can vote.
- Reasonable public notice must be provided.
 - Pinellas County Schools recommends posting your SAC meeting calendar on your school's website at the start of each academic year.
 - Consider using your school newsletter, marquee, etc. to advertise upcoming meetings at least one week in advance.
- Minutes must be taken and made available to the public.
 - Pinellas County Schools recommends digital minutes kept on a shared file, such as Microsoft SharePoint.
 - If your minutes are displayed on your school's website, please only have minutes from the current academic year.
- SAC Meeting Minutes are public record and must include motions, votes, and decisions.
- SAC Members cannot discuss SAC business privately (including in in-person discussion, emails, group texts, etc.) with other SAC members outside of publicly noticed meetings.



SAC Duties:

PCSB Policy 2125

The SAC shall:

- perform such functions as may be prescribed by the Board;
- assist in the preparation, implementation, and evaluation of the school improvement plan required by Florida statutes;
 - The plan shall address issues relative to budget, training, instructional materials, technology, staffing, student support services, and other resource allocations as determined by the Board.
- promote communication among students, staff, parents, administration, and the community;
- assist in the preparation of the school's annual budget;
- request waivers of Board policies, Florida statutes, or State Board of Education rules which will allow the SIP to be implemented or school personnel to establish innovative educational practices and methods; and
- serve as a resource for the principal and perform such other functions as are requested by the principal.



SAC Bylaws:

PCSB Policy 2125

Bylaws shall be established and adopted by members of the SAC.

The bylaws shall:

1. state the functions and governance of the SAC;
2. indicate the procedure for electing and appointing members as specified herein;
3. provide procedures for the removal of members for just cause including replacing any member who has two (2) unexcused consecutive absences from properly noticed meetings;
 - a. A member's absence is considered unexcused if the member does not notify the school that they must be absent and, when contacted by the school, no valid reason is given for their absence. The final determination of an unexcused absence rests with the school's SAC.
4. state that when a vote is taken a quorum must be present;
 - a. A majority of the SAC membership constitutes a quorum.
5. require three (3) days advance notice in writing to all members of the SAC of any matter scheduled to come before the SAC for a vote;
6. define the scope of and procedures for SAC involvement in assisting with budget preparation as specified herein;
7. establish procedures for recording minutes of SAC meetings;
 - a. A record of these minutes shall be maintained at each school.

All meetings of the SAC shall be open, public, and advertised to the school community. Meetings shall be scheduled when all stakeholders can attend.

The Board may review all SAC bylaws.



Establishing Quorum

In accordance with Pinellas County School Board Policy 2125, a vote may only be taken when a quorum, defined as a majority of the SAC membership, is present.

Based on guidance from the Pinellas County Schools Legal Department, this quorum of voting members must be physically present at the meeting.

Additional members may participate and vote virtually provided that the in-person quorum requirement is met.



Section IV:

Additional Resources



SAC Templates

The School Advisory Council templates are provided as optional guides to assist each School Advisory Council in developing materials that best meet the needs of their school community. These templates are not intended to be binding or prescriptive. School Advisory Councils may modify, omit, add, or revise any content as deemed appropriate and approved by the Council. Schools are encouraged to customize these resources or use them to enhance existing materials in a manner that best supports their individual goals and processes.

Templates can be found at <https://www.pcsb.org/departments/district-services/strategic-partnerships/family-community-engagement/school-advisory-councils>.

Templates include:

- SAC Description & Calendar for School Website
- SAC Bylaws Template
- Meeting Agenda Template
- Meeting Minutes Template



Suggested Meeting Topics

- Review/update bylaws for the new school year (first meeting)
 - School Advisory Council processes and procedures (voting, quorum, attendance, etc.) (first meeting)
- School accountability funds
- Florida school recognition program (A+ funds)
- Mid-year School Improvement Plan reflection
- School and district data
- District department plans (Title 1/Equity)
- Extended learning program (ELP)
- District and regional advisory updates
- School environmental safety incident reporting (SESIR)
- Florida Department of Education and district plans
- FDOE updates, statutes, laws, bills, etc.
- Department and grade level updates
- Promotion criteria
- Report cards, progress monitoring plans (PMPs), etc.
- Upcoming district/school events and meetings
- District and school testing
- School grading process
- School grants and awards
- Monthly academic tips for families (reading, math, test-taking tips, etc.)
- School/district survey results

