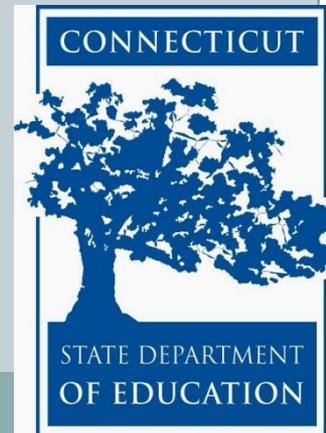


CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

School Governance Councils



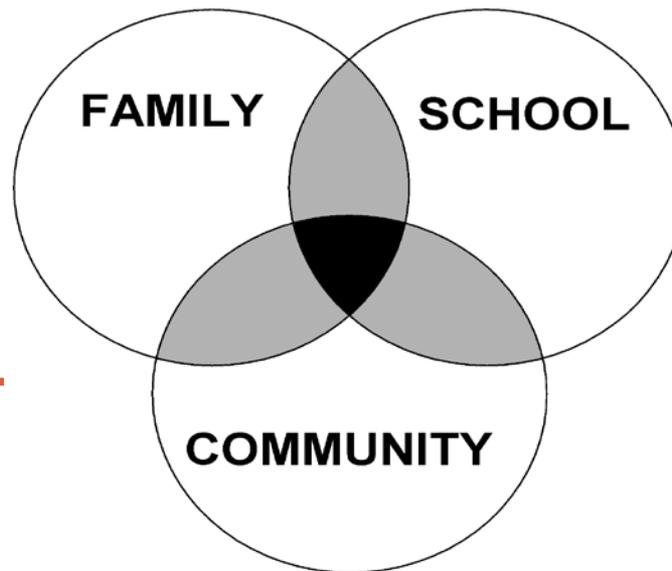
Overview of The Legislation's Purpose and Requirements



School-Family-Community Partnerships

“Schools, families and communities all contribute to student success, and the best results come when all three work together.”

CSBE Position Statement on School-Family-Community Partnerships



Purpose of School Governance Councils



- The intent of Councils is to enable parents, school staff, students (where appropriate) and community leaders to **work together** to improve student achievement in the state's lowest performing schools.
- School Governance Councils serve in an **advisory** capacity to assist the school administration.

Council Responsibilities



Councils shall advise the school administration in these areas:

- Analyze **school achievement data** and school needs as they relate to the school's improvement plan;
- Review the fiscal objectives of the school's **draft budget** and advise the principal before the budget is submitted to the superintendent;
- Participate in the hiring process of the school principal or other administrators of the school by **conducting interviews** of candidates and reporting on such interviews to the superintendent and the local board of education;
- Assist the principal in making **programmatic and operational** changes to improve the school's achievement;

Responsibilities (continued)



- Develop and approve a written school **parent involvement policy** that outlines the role of parents and guardians
 - (Note: Schools that receive federal Title 1 funds are required to have a parent involvement policy developed jointly with, approved by, and distributed to parents. A school's Title 1 parent involvement policy can serve the purpose of the policy required under this section.)
- Work with school administrators in developing and approving a **school-parent compact** for parents, legal guardians, and students that outlines the school's goals and academic focus identifying ways that parents and school personnel can build a partnership to improve student learning.
 - (Note: Schools that receive federal Title 1 funds are required to have a school-parent compact, developed with parents. A school's Title 1 compact can serve the purpose of the compact required under this section.)

In addition to its required responsibilities, *a Council may:*



- Assist in developing and reviewing the **school improvement plan** advise the principal before the report is submitted to the superintendent of schools;
- Work with the principal to develop, conduct, and report the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues related to the **school climate and conditions**; and
- Provide advice to the principal on any other major policy matters affecting the school, except on matters relating to collective bargaining agreements between the teachers and the board of education.

School Governance Councils Do Not



- **Manage the school;**
- **Supervise staff;**
- **Enter into contracts or purchase agreements;**
- **Discuss individual issues between teachers and students and/or parents;**
- **Determine student eligibility for school admission; or**
- **Determine class allocations or student assignments.**

Membership and Selection Process



<i>Member</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Process</i>
Parents or guardians	7	Elected by the parents or guardians of students attending the school, each household with a student attending the school will have one vote
Teachers at the school	5	Elected by the teachers of the school
Community leaders within the school district	2	Elected by the parent or guardian members and teacher members of the Council
School principal or designee (nonvoting)	1	Principal may name a designee
<i>Additional Members in High Schools</i>		
Student members, high school Councils only (nonvoting)	2	Elected by the school's student body

Schools That Must Create Councils



	Criteria	Due Date
Cohort 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identified due to failing AYP in math and reading at whole school level• and lowest 5% of schools (based on 2009 data)	January 15, 2011
Cohort 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identified due to failing AYP in math and reading at whole school level (based on 2009 data)	November 1, 2011
Cohort 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identified due to failing AYP in math and reading at whole school level (based on 2011 data)• OR designated Level 4 or 5 school. *	November 1, 2013

* For information on Level 4 and 5 schools: <https://state2.measinc.com/ct/micpi/>. Level 4 schools are those identified as Review & Focus schools and Level 5 schools are Turnaround Schools.

Voluntary Councils



- Any school board *may* voluntarily establish a council for *any* school this year and may choose to use the model described in the statute or an alternate model.

“Similar” School Governance Council Model



Schools may adopt a “similar” School Governance Council model (per Public Act 11-135)

For a model to be considered similar to the state mandated model it must meet the following requirements:

- **Membership**: The membership must conform to the list of persons/position identified in the law
 - Parents *
 - teachers from each grade level or subject area
 - administrators
 - paraprofessionals

* Note: The number of parents should be comparable to the state model which requires 7 parents making up 50% of the voting members.



- **Duration:** The model must have been in place at the time the school was designated as in need of improvement or as a low achieving school.
- **Current Use:** The model must have been adopted by the school and currently in use as of July 1, 2011.

Recommending School Reconstitution



After being in place for three years, a Council may vote to recommend that a school be reconstituted using one of the approved models under NCLB or state statute.

- However, a Council cannot vote to reconstitute a school if it was already reconstituted for another purpose.
- The statute provides a process whereby the Council's recommendation for reconstitution must be heard by the local board of education which must accept, modify or reject the proposal.
- In a case where the Council and the local board of education cannot agree on reconstitution, the Commissioner of Education must decide. The State Board of Education cannot allow more than 25 schools per year to be reconstituted under this law.

Possible Reconstitution Models



Federal Models:

- “Turnaround Model”
- “Restart Model”
- “Transformation Model”
- Any other model developed by Federal law

State Models:

- “CommPACT School”
- “Innovation School”

Training for Councils



Local boards of education are required to provide appropriate training and instruction to members of School Governance Councils to aid them in executing their duties.

CSDE Responsibilities



The legislation requires the CSDE to oversee and report periodically – *within available appropriations* – to the Connecticut General Assembly on matters such as:

- the number of Councils;
- the schools that have been reconstituted;
- the level of parent involvement; and
- school progress related to student attendance, achievement and discipline.

CSDE Guidance and Support



- CSDE convenes a stakeholder advisory group
- Community forums and informational sessions have been taking place across the state
- Guidance on topics such as: conducting the election and nomination processes and implementing effective school-parent compacts
- A School Governance Council web page on the agency's Web site provides updated information and resources

www.sde.ct.gov/sde/SGC

Outreach Strategies and Representation

What is a School Governance Council?

How should my school get started?

How are members elected?

What does the law say?

What do Councils do?

How will this help my school?



Engaging Families and Community Members: Outreach Strategies...



- **Raise awareness about the importance of School Governance Councils.**
- **Create opportunities for families to get to know more about what the School Governance Councils can provide for all children.**
- **Motivate parents to become members of their School Governance Council.**
- **Provide multiple venue opportunities for families to ask questions about the role and responsibilities of Council members.**

The Election Process



The election process should signal to the entire school community that the School Governance Council will be a collaborative body that represents the diversity of the students

Creating A Valid Election Process



Election Committee

- Represent the diversity of the school
- Unaffiliated with potential candidates
- Principal may serve as the coordinator
- May consist of representatives from other school groups
- Should assist in conducting election activities:
 - Scheduling dates
 - Posting announcement
 - Collecting nominations
 - Overseeing the voting
 - Announcing the results

Process (continued)



Nominations for Parents and Teachers

- A call for nominations should be made available to all parents/guardians in family friendly language for the 7 available positions.
- A call for nominations should be sent to all teachers for the 5 available positions.
- The election committee should verify those nominated are eligible and willing to serve.

Process (continued)



Voting

- Ballot for parent/guardian election should be distributed to each household (**only 1 per household**).
- Ballot for teacher election should be distributed to all teachers.
- Voting procedures that will maximize participation should be determined by the election committee:
 - Providing sufficient time to cast a ballot
 - Offering multiple voting opportunities
 - Consider voting opportunities within the community
 - Allowing ballots via the U.S. mail.

Creating a Valid Election Process Electing Teachers



- The Teachers' Union may establish a process for electing teacher representatives.
- The Teachers' Union may assign the responsibility of electing teachers to the teachers in the school.
- The Teachers' Union may follow the process outlined by an Election Committee.
 - If an **Election Committee** process is followed, the Teachers' Union will appoint the teacher representative serving on the committee.
 - Distribution of ballots may be appropriately adjusted.
 - The teacher representative to an **Election Committee** may determine other adjustments within the process as deemed appropriate.

Teachers are Leaders!



- Remember, as a teacher member of your SGC, your contributions reflect all teachers in your school
 - Seek Input
 - Share information
- Take the lead in building community
- If you have questions contact:
Carole Clifford, American Federation of Teachers CT, cclifford@aftct.org or
Joanne Gay, Connecticut Education Association, joanneg@cea.org

Process (continued)



Results

- Should be counted immediately following the election.

- Under the supervision of the election committee or at least the school administrator, one parent and one teacher who are unaffiliated with any candidate.

- Principal should announce the results of the election:
 - Newsletter
 - Website
 - Key locations throughout the school

Guidance & Sample Documents for Elections



- For a simple checklist to guide your election see **“Guidance on Election Procedures”**
- Sample forms are available:
 - **Candidate Information Form**
 - **Election Ballot**
 - **Nomination Form**
 - **Recruitment Flyer**

Sample Process and Checklist for Parent Elections

The table below presents a sample process for conducting School Governance Council elections. Schools should determine the timeline they will use to solicit nominations and conduct the election.

PROCESS	INSERT DATE	
1. Notice of election and call for nominations distributed to all parents.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Closing date for nominations. Once the nomination forms come back, notify the persons(s) and determine if they are eligible and if they accept or decline.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Date by which the list of candidates will be displayed. Prepare your ballot with all names of nominees.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4. Date by which voting ballots will be prepared and distributed. Send out ballots to every household with deadline for return.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
5. Provide an opportunity for parents to meet the candidates.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
6. Close of ballot. Provide various times and methods for parents to cast their ballots.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7. Vote count. Once ballots are returned, determine election results.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8. Announcement of new council members. Send election results out to school community and post on Web site.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9. First council meeting to introduce new members and discuss election of community members (principal will preside). Begin following FOI procedures.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10. Second council meeting to elect community members and begin setting the council's goals, agenda and operational procedures (principal will preside).		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Working Together

