

ANGLOPHONE SCHOOL DISTRICT – SOUTH DISTRICT EDUCATION COUNCIL

POLICY TYPE: Governance Process

POLICY NO: GP-8

POLICY TITLE: Effective Communications

PAGE: 1 of 4

The governance structure requires effective communications between the District Education Council (DEC) and the system it serves. This policy includes, but is not limited to, communications between the DEC and the; Superintendent, media, PSSCs, parents, municipal councils, MLAs and public agencies as well as communications between the PSSCs and their respective parent communities.

To this end, regular communication shall be accomplished as follows:

Regular DEC Meetings

- All public meetings, will be announced a minimum of 1 week prior to, through the media, emailed to the PSSC chairs as well as posted on the ASD-S website. PSSC Chairs, Principals and the DEC Manager will also receive a copy of the agenda.
- The minutes of regular meetings, and the related public presentations and documents discussed will be distributed to councillors electronically and will be available to the media and members of the public on the ASD-S website. The DEC secretary is responsible to ensure documents are posted within 1 week after being approved. Paper copies will be available upon request.
- The location of DEC meetings will be determined by the DEC at the beginning of the school year and posted on the ASD-S website. The Chair may change meeting locations as required. Whenever possible a minimum of 1 week notice must be given for a change of location. The DEC secretary should ensure all members have been notified and reasonable attempts have been made to notify the public of a change in venue

Other Meetings

- The DEC may meet with various stakeholders in the course of their duties. These meetings include, but are not limited to, formal consultations, information sharing forums or opportunities for the DEC to liaise with students, parents and/or the public.
- All presentations made on behalf of the DEC should be available for review by the entire Council, a minimum of 24 hours, prior to the public presentation. This could include, but not be limited to, handouts, PowerPoint presentations and press releases

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- The DEC may meet with MLAs, municipal politicians, and community groups, as requested. These requests will be referred to the Chair, who will ensure all DEC members are informed of the request and included on the invite where appropriate.

Communication with Parents, Students and the General Public

- The DEC may utilize various methods to communicate with parents throughout the district. This may include but not be limited to public meetings, communications via the Superintendent to parents district wide, newsletters and surveys.
- The DEC operates on a policy governance model and does not discuss individual student matters. DEC members will advise parents and students on proper protocol. Concerns should first be reported to the teachers and principals in the school. If the matter is not resolved at the school level, it will then follow the district complaint process beginning with subject coordinators, managers, Directors, and ultimately the Superintendent.
- DEC members may request, through the Chair, to have issues raised by parents, students, or the general public which have policy governance implications added to the DEC agenda.
- The DEC website should be reviewed annually by a subcommittee of the DEC. As well, DEC members should communicate issues they find with the website to the Superintendent who will ensure they are corrected.

Communication With the Superintendent

- The Chair represents the DEC in facilitating two-way communication between the Councillors and the Superintendent.

Communication with the Media

- Communication with the media will be the responsibility of the Chair and the Superintendent. Council issues will be addressed by the Chair and district operational issues will be addressed by the Superintendent unless deemed otherwise after consultation between the Chair and the Superintendent.

PSSC Communications

- The DEC liaison role is recognised for its importance in DEC to PSSC communications. To foster this relationship, DEC members will be responsible for communicating regularly with the PSSCs and Chairs of their liaison schools. DEC members shall make best efforts to attend at least one meeting of each liaison school each year. At the regular February meeting, Councillors will

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identify PSSCs that won't be visited in the school year. This will allow Council to take steps to facilitate a DEC member attending at least one PSSC meeting for all liaison schools. As per the Education Act, DEC members have the right to attend and participate in any PSSC meeting in the district, members are not limited to attending only meetings at the liaison schools.

- DEC members have a role to play in ensuring PSSC issues are brought to the DEC for consideration when they relate to the DEC's policy and mandate. Members may request that the Chair add such items to the DEC agenda.
- PSSCs may request DEC representation at a particular meeting by contacting their liaison or the DEC Chair, or any member of Council.
- The PSSC Chair may raise any concerns about DEC representation at their meetings to the DEC Chair or any member of Council.
- DEC members may attend and participate in any PSSC meeting. Their attendance should be reflected in the minutes but they do not have a vote, cannot serve as Chair, and do not count towards establishing a quorum.
- PSSC chairs will be encouraged to forward approved minutes of PSSC meetings to the DEC secretary. Any minutes received will then be made available on the DEC member portal. Minutes should reflect attendance of PSSC and DEC representatives.

PSSC/Parent Communications

- PSSCs play a key role in advising the principal on School Improvement Plans and communicating effectively with parents.
- PSSCs may create and distribute a calendar of events to parents.
- PSSCs may use regularly available school communication methods to communicate with parents. These communication methods may include, but are not limited to, newsletters, website, paper notices to parents/students, or broadcast methods such as Synervoice. The communications must be related to PSSC matters, such as reminding parents of meetings and key items on the agenda. The use of school communication methods will be coordinated via the principal.
- PSSCs may hold a parent and/or student forum to generate ideas of school needs and areas for improvement.

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- PSSCs may have a section in the school's newsletter, on the school's webpage, and may contribute to a student newsletter.
- PSSCs may use available social media to keep the community informed. Social media channels must be monitored by the PSSC to ensure discussion is within the PSSC mandate and inappropriate posts are promptly removed.

Communication with the Provincial DEC Manager

- The minutes of the regular DEC meetings will be provided to the DEC Manager.
- The DEC manager is available to any DEC member seeking information on policy, rules of order or governance issues.

Public Participation at District Education Council Meetings

- A 15 minute allotment of time is available during the regular meeting for public comment and/or questions.
- Members of the public wishing to speak are asked to raise their hands and be acknowledged by the Chair.
- The Chair will maintain a speaker's list and comments/questions will be monitored by the Chair.
- Issues regarding specific students or staff are not appropriate at a public meeting and presenters will be directed to the appropriate staff.
- The Chair will remind members of the public that the District Education Council operates under policy governance and the daily operations are the responsibility of the Superintendent.