

Engaging Effectively with the SAC: A Session for Principals

FACILITATORS:

PAUL ASH (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AFRICAN CANADIAN SERVICES BRANCH, EECD)

AMY HUNT (CHAIR, PUBLIC SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS ASSOCIATION OF NS)

PRINCIPAL PANEL:

GINGER CARSON (SOUTH COLCHESTER ACADEMY, 7-12)

JOANNE LANDRY (ANTIGONISH EDUCATION CENTRE, PP-4)

JILLIAN SABADASH (CUNARD JUNIOR HIGH, 5-8)

RICK WELTON (CAPE BRETON HIGHLANDS EDUCATION CENTRE/ACADEMY, PP-12)



Description:

The EECD and PSAANS is pleased to offer this interactive session designed to support school leaders in strengthening engagement with School Advisory Councils (SACs) across the province.

This session will provide an overview of the principal's role in fostering effective SAC collaboration, followed by a dynamic panel discussion featuring principals from elementary, junior high, and high school settings from across the province.

Participants will also engage in small-group workshopping and collaborative dialogue, sharing insights and strategies with each other. They will leave this session equipped with practical strategies and renewed confidence to enhance SAC engagement in support of student achievement and well-being.



Overview of Session

1. Duties, Responsibilities & Roles
2. SAC Agreement & Bylaws
3. Membership
4. SAC Funds
5. Panel Discussion
6. Small Groups
7. Share



Duties and Responsibilities of the SAC

The SAC has a role in:

- ▶ **advising principals**, RCE, and, as needed, EECD
- ▶ entering into an SAC Agreement and making bylaws
- ▶ participating in efforts to improve student achievement and well-being
- ▶ participating in provincial and regional meetings, consultations, and professional development opportunities
- ▶ determining spending priorities for the funds allocated
- ▶ engage in Innovation Grant opportunities

The SAC does **not** have a role in:

- ▶ advising on personnel-like matters, such as supervision or discipline of staff, the principal, or students.
- ▶ carrying out the responsibilities of staff, each of whom have professional and legal obligations.
- ▶ carrying out the day-to-day operations of the school.



Roles of SAC Members

Principal

- ▶ Provides support for the effective functioning of the SAC.
- ▶ Ensures the Student Success Plan (SSP) is a standing item on the meeting agenda.
- ▶ Supports the preparation of the annual report and ensures that it contains required information.
- ▶ Collaborates with the chair when communicating about the annual report.
- ▶ Supports the review of the SAC Agreement and bylaws.
- ▶ Consults with SACs on educational issues.
- ▶ Supports professional development opportunities organized for SACs by the Minister, RCEs, or other education partners.
- ▶ Communicates with the RCE and EECD on behalf of the SAC.

All SAC Members

- ▶ Provide advice to the **principal** on school programs and policies.
- ▶ Articulate the diverse views that exist within their school communities.
- ▶ Represent the best interests of students.
- ▶ Participate in the writing and review of the SAC Agreement, bylaws, and annual report.
- ▶ **Work in collaboration with principals** and participate in efforts to improve student achievement by receiving information on the school improvement plan and monitoring progress and improvements under the plan.
- ▶ Ensure the SAC Agreement and bylaws are followed.



SAC Handbook

Topics covered:

- ▶ Governance Structure of Education
- ▶ Duties and Responsibilities
- ▶ Establishing a Council
- ▶ Membership
- ▶ Meeting Guidelines
- ▶ Spending Guidelines



Additional support materials available at: <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/SAC>



Membership

SAC membership parameters

- ▶ minimum of five members, maximum of 18
- ▶ must include representation from the following membership groups
 - ▶ parents/guardians
 - ▶ school staff
 - ▶ community members
- ▶ **minimum of two students** are required on SACs for schools with grades 7–12
 - ▶ when SACs represent students from both junior and senior high schools, draw from both levels if possible
- ▶ the term “school staff” includes teachers and support staff
- ▶ the parent/guardian group can make up more than one-third of the SAC membership and may not exceed 50%
- ▶ It is advantageous to have more than one member per each SAC group. This is in order to meet quorum requirements of having at least one representative from each of the SAC membership groups to hold a meeting.
- ▶ **principal (or designate) is a non-voting members**



SAC Funds

A funding allocation of \$5,000, plus \$1 per student is provided to each school's SAC to support the SAC mandate and student achievement and well being.

Spending Guidelines

- ▶ SAC funding decisions should be made during meetings.
 - ▶ While an SAC may serve more than one school (i.e., a joint or regional SAC), funding must be spent at the school it was allocated to.
- ▶ All expenditures must fit into at least one (1) of these spending categories :
 - A. supporting the school improvement plan/SSP (e.g., providing resources to support math and literacy instruction).
 - B. supporting policy development and implementation (e.g., supporting and promoting new policies).
 - C. covering SAC operational expenses. Up to 20% of provincial SAC funding may be used as SAC operational expenses, if necessary, to encourage and support member participation.



Principal Panel: Sharing Experiences & Strategies

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Small Group Discussion

1. In table groups with colleagues, share **ideas from the panel discussion** that have sparked an idea or solution that you'd like to try or learn more about.
2. Share **one success and/or one challenge** that you're currently experiencing for discussion at your table.
3. Offer **helpful strategies** for supporting effective SAC leadership and engagement.
4. Prepare to **share** with the larger group.



Wela'liog, Thank You, Merci.

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