

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

School Governance Councils



Overview of The Legislation's Purpose and Requirements



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.

Schools That Must Create Councils



By January 15, 2011

Schools that

- are among the state's lowest performing 5%

AND

- failed to make AYP in math and reading at the whole school level*

By November 1, 2011

- Schools that failed to make AYP in math and reading at the whole school level*

** Prior to July 1, 2010*

Early Implementation



- Districts required to establish councils by January 15, 2011 (Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven and Windham), are **strongly encouraged** to examine the list of schools slated for November 2011 implementation and establish as many councils as possible by the January deadline.
- Districts that must meet the November 1, 2011 deadline are urged to start a year ahead of schedule by establishing as many councils as possible now.
- 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.

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

Council Responsibilities



Councils may 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 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** and 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.

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 is convening a stakeholder advisory group
- A series of community forums is planned for September and October in collaboration with the Connecticut Parent Information and Resource Center (CT PIRC)
- Guidance on topics such as: conducting the election and nomination processes, training and support for effective governance; considering school reconstitution; and implementing effective school-parent compacts
- A School Governance Council web page on the agency's Web site to provide updated information and resources

Contact



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