



# School councils procedure

Version: 2.0 | Version effective: 17/01/2018

## Audience

All state schools, parents, school councils.

## Purpose

This procedure outlines processes for the establishment, operations and dissolution of school councils. Under the [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) (the "Act") (s.79), the chief executive may establish a school council for a state school.

## Overview

School councils can be established in all state schools and where established, can enable greater involvement of the school community and other stakeholders, such as industry, in setting the strategic direction for the school.

The Independent Public School (IPS) policy framework provides that schools selected to join the IPS initiative should form a school council within 12 months of becoming an IPS.

The key [functions](#) of a school council are to guide the strategic direction of the state school for which it is established and to operate in a way that achieves the best learning outcomes for the school's students (s.81 of the Act).

Information on the functions and limitations of a school council are referenced in the [School council handbook](#).

Every school council adopts a standard [model constitution](#). The size of the school will determine the number of [parent, staff and student members](#) on the school council. However, the school council may not comprise fewer than six or more than fifteen members.

School council elections should be held at the beginning of the year, either in February or March.

Each elected member, or appointed member, of a school council holds office for two years unless the school council decides otherwise as stated in Schedule 2 of the school council's [constitution](#). However, if newly established, half of the first elected members may hold office for a term of not longer than three years (s.90 of the Act).

Blue card requirements apply to school council members who are not parents, teachers or students under the age of 18 years. A valid blue card must be obtained before commencing duty for the school council which includes attending council meetings (see [frequently asked questions](#)).

A member of a school council does not incur civil liability for an act done, or omission made, honestly and without negligence (s.117 of the Act). For council members who are public servants of the State of Queensland, protection from civil liability is afforded under s.26C of the [Public Service Act 2008 \(Qld\)](#).

## Responsibilities

### Principals

Principals are responsible for facilitating the [establishment of a school council](#), participating on the school council as an official member, and informing the school council of legislation and departmental policies.

### School councils

School council members are responsible for establishing strategic direction and priorities of the school and approval of the school's strategic plan, facilitating and developing relationships between the school, the community and community organisations, and complying with the school council's [code of conduct](#).

## Process

### Establishing a school council

1. The principal prepares an initial draft [constitution](#), in consultation with parents, school staff, students and other appropriate entities for the establishment of a school council (s.109 of the Act), see [Getting started flowchart](#).
2. The principal seeks approval of the draft constitution by:
  - ensuring that, where there is a Parents and Citizens' Association (P&C) formed for the school, the president of the P&C holds a special meeting; or
  - holding a meeting of the parents of children attending the school if the school does not have a P&C (see [Getting started flowchart](#)); and
  - ensuring that a school staff meeting is held.
3. The principal establishes the school council by following the [Steps to publish a notice in the Queensland Government Gazette](#).
4. The school council's official members – the principal and the president of the P&C (if one exists) – organise school council elections by appointing a returning officer (e.g. deputy principal/head of department) to oversee the election process for school council elected members (see [Getting started flowchart](#)).
5. School councils may appoint no more than two appointed members (see [Getting started flowchart](#)).

### Operating a school council

The [School council handbook](#) provides a range of processes to be followed in operating a school council, including electing and appointing school council members.

School councils are to ensure that relevant members have a valid blue card before participating in school council activities (see [frequently asked questions](#)).

## Dissolution of a school council

A school council may be dissolved if:

- the Minister dissolves the school council for non-compliance with a written direction (see [Minister's direction and show cause process](#)). In this case, the Minister must give the council a notice stating that the council is dissolved (s.57 of the Regulation); or
- the school for which the school council is established closes (s.112 of the Act); or
- the Chief Executive dissolves the school council because it is not satisfactorily performing its functions or the school community generally supports the dissolution of the school council. In this case, the Chief Executive (or Chief Executive's delegate) will publish a notice in the gazette stating that the council is dissolved (s.58 of the Regulation).

The school council is dissolved from the day the notice is published in the gazette; or if a later date for dissolution is stated in the gazettal notice, that date (s. 58(2) of the Regulation).

Further information about the dissolution of a school council, including the dissolution process, can be found in [Dissolution of school councils by the Chief Executive](#) and [Minister's direction show cause process](#).

## Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Constitution (s. 94 of the Act)</b>	The school council constitution: provides for the council's establishment, membership, and election of members; specifies the conduct of business and meetings; and outlines the way the council will perform its functions and other relevant matters.
<b>Determining by Lot</b>	When a tie vote is decided by lottery, or drawing lots. The process used for this in practice is up to the school and returning officer, although it would be beneficial to decide on the method before the election.
<b>Definitions of the following terms are referenced in s.77 of the Act</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointed member</li> <li>• Chairperson</li> <li>• Co-opted student member</li> <li>• Elected parent member</li> <li>• Elected staff member</li> <li>• Elected student member</li> <li>• Official member.</li> </ul>
<b>Quorum (s.99 of the Act)</b>	A quorum for a school council is the number equal to two-thirds of the number of its members or, if two-thirds is not a whole number, the next highest whole number.

Term	Definition
<b>Returning officer</b>	A member of school staff (e.g. deputy principal/head of department) that is appointed by the official members of the school council to oversee the election process for school council elected members.
<b>Scrutineer</b>	Scrutineers are appointed by candidates for election as elected members to observe the voting, and counting of the votes. Scrutineers have the right to be present when the ballot boxes are sealed and opened and when the votes are sorted and counted so that they may check any possible irregularities.
<b>Secretary</b>	A member of the council who undertakes all administration regarding the council, and creates and maintains records. The secretary assists the chairperson in facilitating the effective operation of the council's business.

## Legislation

- [Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#) Chapter 6
- [Education \(General Provisions\) Regulation 2017 \(Qld\)](#) Part 7
- [Public Service Act 2008 \(Qld\)](#)

## Delegations/Authorisations

- [Director-General's Delegations under the Education \(General Provisions\) Act 2006 \(Qld\)](#)
- [Director-General's Delegations under the Education \(General Provisions\) Regulations 2017 \(Qld\)](#)

## Policies and procedures in this group

- Nil

## Supporting information for this procedure

- [Dissolution approval letter to school](#)
- [Dissolution of school councils](#)
- [Minister's directions and show cause process](#)
- [School memo for dissolution of school council](#)

## Other resources

- [Independent Public School Policy Framework](#)
- [School Planning, Reviewing and Reporting Framework](#)
- [Blue card requirements for school council members](#)

- [Getting started flowchart](#)
- [School council handbook](#)
- [School council model constitution](#)
- [Steps to publish a notice in the Queensland Government Gazette](#)

## Contact

For further information, please contact your [closest regional office](#)

## Review date

17/01/2020

## Superseded versions

*Previous seven years shown. Minor version updates not included.*

1.0 School Councils

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