



The participation of parents is very important in NSW public schools. School councils are one way to increase that participation.

WHAT IS A SCHOOL COUNCIL?

A school council is the group responsible for setting the goals and the directions that a school will take in the future. It plays an important role in making sure that the whole community is involved in all the important decisions made by the school.

WHAT DECISIONS CAN A SCHOOL COUNCIL MAKE?

The school council works out what the school needs and what are the most important matters the school should focus on. The school council assesses the school's financial needs. The school council gives the principal advice on many matters such as how well the school is reporting the students' achievements to parents or about the welfare of the students in the school.

IS THERE ANYTHING THE SCHOOL COUNCIL CAN'T DO?

The school council does not employ staff and has no power to hire or fire teachers or other members of the school staff. The school council is not responsible for managing the school or choosing the teaching and learning programs taught in the school. The teaching and learning programs are the responsibility of the principal and the teachers.

WHO CAN BE A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL?

The members of the school council are parents, teachers, representatives of the local community and sometimes students. The school's principal is also on the council. The majority of the school council must be made up of parents and community representatives. No one group, for example community representatives or teachers, can have the numbers to outvote the rest of the school council. The only qualification needed to be on the school council is a willingness to help the school.

WHY WOULD I WANT TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL?

Being a member of the school council is a good way for you to express your opinion on important school matters. If you represent a group of people, such as parents or students, you will have the opportunity to express their point of view when decisions are being made. You will also have regular opportunities to advise the principal about matters that affect the school. You will learn a great deal more about the school as a member of the council and you will help to make the school an even better place. If you are a parent of children at the school your own children will also benefit. You will be showing them that you care about their education and that you wish to work for their school.

WILL I HAVE ANY LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES?

As a member of the school council you are protected from all legal liability resulting from your duties on the school council.

HOW OFTEN DOES THE SCHOOL COUNCIL MEET?

Each school council is different, but they usually meet about eight times a year. School council meetings are held at times convenient to the members.

HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL?

Talk about becoming a member of the school council with the school principal or the president of the school's parent group. They will be able to give you more information about school councils in general, your local school council in particular or how to become a member of the school council.

If you would like more information about school councils contact your local school.

The **Telephone Interpreter Service** on

 **131 450**

will assist you to speak with the principal or the president of the school's parent group.