

R277. Education, Administration.

R277-491. School Community Councils.

R277-491-1. Authority, Purpose, and Oversight Category.

(1) This rule is authorized by:

(a) Utah Constitution Article X, Section 3, which vests general control and supervision over public education in the Board; and

(b) Subsection 53E-3-401(4), which allows the Board to make rules to execute the Board's duties and responsibilities under the Utah Constitution and state law.

(2) The purpose of this rule is to:

(a) provide procedures and clarifying information to a school community council to assist the council in fulfilling school community council responsibilities consistent with Sections 53G-7-1202, 53G-7-1203, and 53G-7-1206;

(b) provide direction to a local school board, school, and school district in establishing and maintaining a school community council;

(c) provide a framework and support for improved academic achievement of students that is locally driven from within an individual school;

(d) encourage increased participation of a parent, school employee, and others to support the mission of a school community council;

(e) increase public awareness of:

(i) school trust lands;

(ii) the permanent State School Fund; and

(iii) educational excellence; and

(f) enforce compliance with the laws governing a school community council.

(3) This rule is categorized as Category 4 as described in Rule R277-111.

(4) This rule does not apply to charter schools.

R277-491-2. Definitions.

(1) "Local school board" means the locally elected school board designated in Section 53G-4-201.

(2) "Parent member" means the same as the term is defined in Section 53G-7-1202.

(3)(a) "Principal" means an administrator licensed as a principal in the state and employed in that capacity at a school.

(b) "Principal" may include a specific designee of the principal, who is licensed with a school leadership license area of concentration.

(4) "School community" means the geographic area a school district designates as the attendance area, with reasonable inclusion of a parent of a student who attends the school but lives outside the attendance area.

(5) "Student" means a child in a public school, grades kindergarten through 12, counted on the audited October 1 fall enrollment report.

R277-491-3. School Community Council Member Election Provisions.

(1) In addition to the election notice requirements of Section 53G-7-1202, the principal shall provide notice of:

(a) the location where a ballot may be cast; and

(b) the means by which a ballot may be cast, whether in person, by mail, or by electronic transfer.

(2)(a) A school community council may establish a procedure that allows a parent to mail a ballot to the school in the event the distance between a parent and the voting location would otherwise discourage parental participation.

(b) A mailed or hand-delivered ballot shall meet the same timeline as a ballot voted in person.

(3)(a) A school, school district, or local school board may allow a parent to vote by electronic ballot through a district approved election process that is consistent with the election requirements in Subsection 53G-7-1202(5).

(b) If allowed, the school or school district shall clearly explain on its website the opportunity to vote by electronic means.

(4) In the event of a change in statute or rule affecting the composition of a school community council, a council member who is elected or appointed before the change may complete the term for which the member was elected.

R277-491-4. School Community Council Exemptions.

(1) An LEA governing board may grant a full council exemption or a partial council exemption to a school, enabling the school to receive School LAND Trust program funds consistent with Subsection 53G-7-1202(e) if the requirements of Subsections (2) through (4) are met, and the school faces participation barriers due to:

- (a) low enrollment;
- (b) local board-approved consolidation with another school;
- (c) challenges with ongoing parent involvement; or
- (d) the school's status as a:
 - (i) secure facility;
 - (ii) juvenile detention facility;
 - (iii) hospital program school; or
 - (iv) other special program school.

(2) Before requesting a full council exemption or partial council exemption, the principal and existing council members shall:

- (a) provide notice of the council election to all eligible parents consistent with Section 53G-7-1202;
 - (b) provide information to eligible parents of the important responsibilities of a school community council;
 - (c) encourage eligible parents to file for election to the school community council in the upcoming election consistent with this rule;
 - (d) identify the current school community council meeting time and, if necessary, reschedule the meeting to facilitate attendance by parents;
 - (e) offer an electronic meeting option in accordance with Section 53G-7-1203;
- and
- (f) provide support for parents needing translation services.

(3) Following an election, the principal and council members shall encourage eligible parents to accept appointment to fill vacant seats on the school community council consistent with this rule and Section 53G-7-1202.

(4) If the school has met the requirements of Subsections (2) and (3) and the school has not filled its school community council consistent with Section 53G-7-1202, the principal and school community council members shall encourage the following

individuals to fill parent positions as part of a request for a full council exemption or partial council exemption:

(a) grandparents or step parents who live in the same household as a student in the school; and

(b) a parent who teaches at the school and has a student attending the school.

(5) A school may request a council exemption by submitting a form prepared by the Superintendent to the local governing board that includes:

(a) the name of the LEA;

(b) the name of the school;

(c) whether the school seeks a full council exemption or a partial council exemption; and

(d) the rationale for the exemption.

(6) A local school board may grant a full council exemption or a partial council exemption.

(7) A school granted a full council exemption by its local governing board is not required to hold school community council meetings in public.

(8) A school granted a full council exemption by its local governing board shall:

(a) include the principal on the school community council; and

(b) comply with all other requirements in rule and code, except:

(i) the following website posting requirements of this rule:

(A) means for contacting council members;

(B) proposed council meeting schedule for the coming year;

(C) one year of approved meeting minutes;

(D) notice of the council's next meeting;

(E) notice of the council's next meeting agenda; and

(F) draft minutes of the council's prior meeting; and

(ii) council signature form requirements.

(9) A school granted a partial council exemption by its local governing board shall:

(a) include, at a minimum, one parent member and the school principal;

(b) continue to include stakeholder input in decision-making related to the School LAND Trust plan through accessible means; and

(c) meet all other requirements of code and rule.

(10)(a) An exemption granted under this section is valid for one school year.

(b) An LEA governing board may renew an exemption following the procedures outlined in the section each year.

(11) For each exemption granted, an LEA governing board shall provide to the Superintendent:

(a) the form submitted under Subsection (5); and

(b) the board meeting minutes for the meeting where the local governing board approved the exemption.

R277-491-5. School Community Council Principal Responsibilities.

(1) Following an election, the principal shall enter and electronically sign on the School LAND Trust Program website a principal's assurance affirming:

(a) the school community council's election;

(b) that unfilled positions were filled by appointment as necessary, consistent with Subsection 53G-7-1202(5); and

(c) that the school community council's bylaws, rules of order, and procedures comply with Sections 53G-7-1202, 53G-7-1203, and this rule.

(2) To encourage parental involvement in a school, the principal shall post the following information on a single publicly accessible page of the school's website on or before October 20 annually:

(a) an invitation to a parent to serve on the school community council;

(b) a proposed council meeting schedule for the year;

(c) a means to contact the members of the school's community council directly;

(d) a copy of or link to the following information:

(i) the dollar amount the school receives each year from the School LAND Trust Program;

(ii) the school's plan or final report for the most recent two years, consistent with Section 53G-7-1206;

- (iii) the school's current year plan;
- (iv) the school's current Teacher and Student Success Plan; and
- (v) approved minutes of the school's council meetings for at least a year;

R277-491-6. School Community Council Chair Responsibilities.

(1) After the school community council election, the school community council shall annually elect at the council's first meeting a chair and vice chair in accordance with Subsection 53G-7-1202(5)(j).

(2) The school community council chair shall:

- (a) set the agenda for every meeting;
- (b) conduct every meeting;
- (c) keep written minutes of every meeting, consistent with Section 53G-7-1203;
- (d) inform council members about resources available on the School LAND Trust

Program website; and

(e) welcome and encourage public participation in school community council meetings.

(3) The chair may delegate the responsibilities established in this section as appropriate at the chair's discretion.

R277-491-7. School Community Council Business.

(1)(a) The school community council shall adopt rules of order and procedure to govern a council meeting in accordance with Subsection 53G-7-1203(9).

(b) The rules of order and procedure shall outline the process for:

(i) electing the school community council, including:

(A) the number of parent members and school employee members on the council; and

(B) member positions beginning in odd years or even years to ensure half of the council members positions are open for election each year;

(ii) electing a chair and vice chair;

(iii) removing from office a member who moves away or fails to attend meetings regularly; and

(iv) a member to declare a conflict of interest if required by the local school board's policy.

(2) The school community council shall:

(a) report on a plan, including programs, practices, and expenditures at least annually to the local school board; and

(b) encourage participation on the school community council by members of the school community and recruit a potential candidate to run for an open position on the council.

(3)(a) The principal shall provide an annual report to the school community council that summarizes current safety principles and practices used by the school district and school to facilitate the school community council's responsibilities under Subsection 53G-7-1202(3).

(b) The report described in Subsection (3)(a) shall include:

(i) information concerning internet filtering protocols for school and district devices that access the internet;

(ii) local instructional practices, monitoring, and reporting procedures; and

(iii) internet safety training provided to a student and parent by the school or district.

(4) A school community council shall comply with the requirements of Section 53G-7-1206.

(5) A school community council may advise and inform the local school board and other members of the school community regarding the uses of School LAND Trust Program funds.

(6) A school community council may hold electronic meetings consistent with:

(a) the policies of the local school board; and

(b) the requirements of Section 53G-7-1203.

KEY: school community councils

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Authorizing, and Implemented or Interpreted Law: Art X Sec 3; 53E-3-401(4); Title 53G, Chapter 7, Part 12