



Becoming involved with your School Council.

School Council is the governing body of the local school and is comprised of representatives from different groups of the school community. Its task is to build partnerships and make decisions in the best interests of the students.

Councils need people who care enough to have a say in what the school is doing for its young people. Are you willing to invest a little time to ensure that this happens?

Why become a school councillor?

- ✓ You gain a greater understanding of educational issues and a real opportunity to have a say in how young people are educated.
- ✓ You become better acquainted with the school and its teachers.
- ✓ Your own children are likely to give more of their best at school because they see it is as something you value
- ✓ There is great satisfaction to be gained from working with a group towards common goals.
- ✓ You will be making important decisions on behalf of the school community.

The more parents and teachers work together the greater the benefit for students.

So what do Councils do?

Councils have the responsibility of School Governance. The focus is on Oversight, Insight and Foresight. Are we doing the right things? How well are we doing them and what do we need to do to remain successful and effective into the future? The focus at Council level is on “ends, outcomes and ownership” not “ways and means”.

Some of the main responsibilities of Councils are to:

- ✓ Determine the educational policy, goals and priorities of the school within the framework of the school strategic plan and state wide guidelines.
- ✓ Approve and monitor the school budget.
- ✓ Make recommendations to the Secretary on the appointment of the school’s Principal.
- ✓ Develop the school’s dress code and student engagement and well-being policy.
- ✓ Monitor the school’s performance over time.
- ✓ Report annually to the school community and to DEECD.

Become a member of a team

As soon as you become a school councillor you become:

- ✓ A member of a team of parents, teachers and community members who work together to make decisions in the best interests of the students.
- ✓ An advocate for the school its policies and programs.

What would I have to do?

Councillors:

- ✓ Attend Council meetings usually held twice per school term or 8 times per year - they usually run from 7.30 - 9.30PM.
- ✓ Join a subcommittee, which focuses on a particular aspect of the work of School Council e.g. Finance, Facilities, Policy etc. These committees also meet on the same basis as School Council.
- ✓ Be an advocate for the School Council in the wider school community.
- ✓ Consider taking a role as an Office Bearer or sub-committee convenor.



What's expected of me?

I would need to:

- ✓ Have a clear understanding of what the Council does and to support the Council team as it carries out its responsibilities.
- ✓ Understand what the school is trying to do and to support it in its efforts to achieve its goals and priorities.
- ✓ Trust and value the contributions that others make to Council.
- ✓ Be open, frank and respectful in my contributions to Council.
- ✓ Have a positive and constructive approach to decision making and problem solving.
- ✓ Feel free to be pro-active and creative on Council.
- ✓ Take pride in working productively on Council and to enjoy participating in the celebration of our achievements.
- ✓ Willingly take on delegated responsibilities and take personal responsibility for my contribution to the full team effort.
- ✓ Support the decisions of Council in the wider school community.

What do I need to know?

The most detailed source of information about School Councils is to be found in the Department of Education, and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) publication 'Making the Partnership Work'. (Available for download on the website below or www.asciv.org.au). A copy is also held by the Principal.

Further detailed information is to be found on the School Governance website of the DEECD.
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/profdev/Pages/schcouncilgovernance.aspx>

Are there simpler ways to get involved?

Not everyone wants the full involvement of being a School Councillor. You can:

- ✓ Join a sub-committee as community member.
- ✓ Visit Council meetings to help learn about the work of Council. The majority of Council meetings are "open" meetings.
- ✓ Talk with the Principal or President about other ways you can assist.

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