



SUB-COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GUIDE

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Why we need sub-committees?

A School Council can set up sub-committees with particular terms of reference when it needs assistance (for example a New Building campaign sub-committee) or when an issue requires more resources and attention (review of effect of budgetary changes on organisational programs). They can be set up for a specific purpose "Finance, Education policy, Facilities/Environment" or to deal with general issues such as 'development'. They can be established on a short-term or temporary basis, or they can be formed as a permanent body for ongoing work.

A School Council can either delegate some of its powers to the committee, enabling it to act directly, or can require the recommendations of the sub-committee to be approved by the School Council. The School Council will normally depend heavily on the findings and recommendations of its sub-committees, although final decisions to accept or reject these recommendations will be made by the School Council. Sub-Committees thus have an important role to play in School Governance.

Sub-Committees should have representation from the staff and community to maintain links to the support base and to provide a 'reality check' as to what is likely to be supported by the general community - or what is feasible in terms of time, money and resources. Sub-committees are also a good way to train potential School Council members.

You don't need to set up a sub-committee to investigate every single issue. Sometimes it is quicker and easier just to seek advice from a local expert (lawyer, accountant, etc), rather than form a committee. You don't want to establish a committee for everything, because then you may just get bogged down in bureaucracy and have a situation where all the effort goes into committees, and little into actually making decisions. Indeed many side issues to Governance may be best handled by an active, efficient and properly constituted Parent Association..

< Insert title> SUB-COMMITTEE

February 2013

Purpose

The role of the <insert name>Sub-Committee is to assist the School Council in fulfilling its responsibilities in relation to:

- identifying, evaluating and recommending <insert>
- Oversight of <insert>
- Development of a plan of action for <insert>
- Performance, evaluation and effective operation of <insert> Sub-Committees.

Membership

The Sub-Committee will consist of at least <insert as determined>members The School Council will appoint the convenor of the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee may elect an acting convenor if required.

A quorum will consist of two members of the sub-committee Any Councillor may attend a meeting of the Sub-Committee.

School Council President and Principal (ex officio members of all sub-committees and are invited to attend all meetings by the convenor

The membership will be reviewed by the School Council from time to time.

Meetings

The Sub-Committee will meet at least <insert> times a year.

The convenor, in conjunction with the President and Executive Officer, shall draw up an agenda which shall be circulated with supporting papers at least one week prior to each meeting to the members of the Sub-Committee.

Terms of Reference:

Responsibilities

The <insert> Sub-Committee will review and make recommendations to the School Council regarding:

- add items here

Authority to act

The Sub-Committee is authorised to:

- Specify activities or operations.
- The Sub-Committee operates under powers delegated to it by the School Council and has no other executive powers.

Reporting

The Sub-Committee will:

- report the findings and recommendations of the Sub-Committee to the School Council after each meeting;
- circulate the minutes of Sub-Committee meetings to the School Council; and
- submit an annual report to the School Council summarising the Sub-Committee's activities during the year.

Performance

The performance of the <insert name> Sub-Committee is to be assessed annually against its terms of reference by the School Council.

Some examples of sub-committees and terms of reference

Sub-Committees are formed for a range of reasons, including:

Ongoing

- Executive Sub-committees (made up of, for instance, President, the Treasurer, and Principal
 - manage the business of the School Council between meetings.
 - set agendas and determine essential business.
- Finance Audit and Risk committee
 - be responsible for financial reporting, organising audits, etc.
 - decide on fundraising strategies.
- Facilities
 - ensure that the built environment is maintained to standard
 - engage in master planning the facilities
 - organise working bees
- Special event committee
 - to be responsible for coordinating a particular event, eg. annual tournaments, fetes, any one-off event
- Marketing and public relations committees
 - to identify new markets, build relationship with media and public, etc.
- Fundraising committees
 - Develop and implement fundraising strategies

- Parent and Friends Sub-committee / Parents Association
 - Foster Community interaction
 - Organise parents helpers program (ASCIV has a Parent Helpers guide book)
- Note: if formed as an Association, Ministerial approval is required. Contact Parents Victoria for assistance with Parent Associations.**

Short term

- Selection committees
 - to select a new principal when determined by DEECD
- Organisational review committees
 - review the functioning of the School Council
- Committees of inquiry
 - inquire into particular questions
- Board of survey
 - determine redundant assets and recommend sale or disposal
- School Council Development
 - to arrange professional development for School Council members and committee members and other executive positions.

Signs a Sub Committee is Functioning Well

- Purpose of the sub-committee is clear to all.
- Careful time control: length of meetings, as well as development of overall committee time path.
- Sensitivity within to each other's needs; good communication among all members.
- An informal relaxed atmosphere.
- Good preparation on part of the convenor and members.
- Interested, committed members.
- Minutes are complete and concise.
- Periodic self-assessment of sub-committee's performance.
- Recognition and appreciation are given to members, so that they feel they are really making a contribution.
- The work of the sub-committee is accepted and makes a valuable contribution to the organization.

Sub-Committee Checklist

- The sub-committee operations and priorities reflect the vision and values of the school.
- The sub-committee has clear stated goals and objectives
- Assignments and terms of reference are discussed (at least) annually
- Each project of the sub-committee is tasked/assigned or delegated with clear guidelines.
- Priority issues, actions, or projects are identified by exact name and agreed upon a time schedule
- Time schedules are adhered to.
- Progress on each assignment is reported in a timely manner.
- Members of the sub-committee identify with and commit to the priorities.
- A schedule of meetings is provided at the commencement of the term of office.
- Each meeting has a strong purpose.
- Meetings start and finish on time.

- Agenda is available prior to meeting.
- A record of the committee's action or recommendations is maintained.
- I know my job/function as a member of the committee.
- Group participation is encouraged through robust discussion, as to what may be probable solutions or what additional information is needed.
- All the information needed for decision making is provided in a timely manner.
- Adequate resources are available to the sub-committee to complete its work.
- Minutes available for all School Councillors
- Minutes of sub-committees published on SC noticeboard for community members to read

For further assistance
Contact School Governance Australia

Training@sgal.com.au