Division Council of School Councils Operating Procedures

1. DEFINITIONS

In these Operating Procedures:

A. "School" means any school or school program administered by Medicine Hat Public School Division (MHPSD);

B. "Division Council of School Councils" (DCSC) means the body endorsed by the Board of Trustees to strengthen ongoing dialogue on Division matters and to increase the involvement of parents;

C. "Parents" means parent, guardian or primary caregiver of any child enrolled in an educational program at any MHPSD school;

D. "Policy" means MHPSD Policy 212-Division Council of School Councils (Section 200 - Board Governance);

E. "Operating Procedures" means this governing document.

2. AUTHORITY

The Division Council of School Councils (DCSC) derives its authority to operate through Medicine Hat Public School Division (MHPSD) Policy 212-Division Council of School Councils, revised September 20, 2016.

3. MISSION STATEMENT/PHILOSOPHY

Medicine Hat Public School Division Mission -*To provide an inclusive, progressive learning community through trust, courage and collaboration*.

The Division Council of School Councils supports this mission by undertaking discussions and activities that will enhance student learning and foster the well-being and effectiveness of the MHPSD community. The DCSC is a means to share information; provide input on Board policies, plans, and programs; and to enhance communication among the school councils, the Board, School-based Administrators, the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA), Administration, and the community.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Division Council of School Councils, in keeping with the Policy, are to:

A. Represent the parent perspective by providing advice and consultation on matters relating to MHPSD such as: the Division's philosophy, mission, vision, policies, improvement plans, programs, directions, and budget;

B. Foster a positive, collaborative environment so that School Councils are able to share ideas and engage meaningfully on matters of mutual concern;

C. Support events that will enhance School Council effectiveness and parent engagement in public education;

D. Provide a forum for enhanced communication between the School Councils, the Board and the MHPSD;

E. Consult with and advise the School Board, Alberta School Councils Association (ASCA), Alberta Education or other provincial organizations on broader educational issues;

F. Provide the resources for recruitment of appropriate parent volunteers/liaisons to serve on Division and Provincial committees as required by the Division.

5. GOVERNANCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Division Council of School Councils uses a **Representative** Operating Style and/or Model of Governance.

A. The membership of the DCSC shall consist of, but be restricted to:
   1) School Council representatives from each school;
   2) School Board Trustee representative;
   3) Superintendent of Schools for the MHPSD or a designate;
   4) Teacher selected by Local No. 1 of the ATA; and
   5) School-based administrator selected by the School Administrators' Committee.

B. The voting Members of the DCSC shall consist of: Those noted by A. 1).

C. The non-voting Members of the DCSC shall consist of: All others in attendance.

6. DECISION MAKING

Decisions at DCSC meetings will be made by consensus as much as possible.

A. A decision made by consensus must be stated clearly and recorded as such in the minutes of the meeting.

B. If a decision is made by a vote, the motion must be moved, seconded and passed by the majority of DCSC voting Members present at the meeting at which the vote was taken.

7. QUORUM

A. Quorum will be attained when the majority of voting Members present at any DCSC meeting are those representatives from a school, as defined in 5.A.1) above (as of 2020/21 that number is 8 of the 16 Schools in the Division), and two members from categories 5.A.2-5) are present.

B. In the absence of a quorum:
   1) If those Members present agree to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the DCSC may continue for the purposes of discussion of issues.
   2) No motions shall be considered or approved.
   3) No decisions by consensus shall be reached.

8. EXECUTIVE AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The positions of the Executive shall consist of: Chair, Vice Chair (or Co-Chair), and Secretary, with the option of including the Past Chair.

A. Executive positions must be filled by Representatives as defined in 5.A.1) above.

B. Every Representative is eligible to be elected to an Executive position on the DCSC.

C. The terms of office are from the opening to the closing of the School year.

D. The Executive of the DCSC will be elected by Representatives attending the annual organizational meeting or in the event of vacancies, elected by the voting Members present at a subsequent DCSC meeting.

E. Any Executive member may resign his/her position by providing written notice to the Chair and Superintendent.

F. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the DCSC will be served.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of the DCSC will:

1) Chair all meetings of the DCSC;
2) Coordinate with the Superintendent to establish meeting agendas;
3) Communicate with the Superintendent on a regular basis;
4) Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
5) Ensure that DCSC Operating Procedures are current and followed;
6) Be the official spokesperson of the DCSC;
7) Ensure that there is regular communication with Division School Councils;
8) Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Councils; and
9) Have general responsibility for all activities of the DCSC.

B. Vice Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the DCSC will:

1) In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities;
2) In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the DCSC;
3) Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
4) Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;
5) Keep informed of relevant MHPSD policies;
6) Prepare to assume the position of Chair in the future; and
7) Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

C. Secretary

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the DCSC will, in conjunction with MHPSD Central Office staff:

1) Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
2) Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other DCSC documents, and ensure that all relevant documents are available to the public in an accessible location at Central Office, for a period of 7 years;
3) Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the DCSC who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA); and
4) Distribute, as determined by the DCSC, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events.

In the absence of the Secretary, the DCSC Chair shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

D. Past Chair (Optional)

The Past Chair of the DCSC will:

1) Serve in an advisory capacity to the new DCSC.

E. Coordinating Committee Parent Representative

1) Attend meetings for the Coordinating Committee;
2) Serve by providing a parent perspective reviewing agenda items and provide input.

Coordinating Committee was created within the collective agreement between the ATA Local and the Board for the purpose of communicating the views of teachers on matters of school affairs to the Board of Trustees. The committee is comprised of a trustee, the Superintendent, an elementary administrator and teacher, and secondary administrator and teacher, a CUPE member, the ATA President, the chair of the ATA local's Teacher Welfare Committee and a parent selected from the Council of School Councils.

10. MEETINGS

A. General Meetings

General Meetings of the DCSC will take place at least four (4) times each School year. The timing and frequency of future meetings will be determined at the annual organizational meeting.

1) The annual organizational meeting of the DCSC will be held on or before October 20 or at an appropriate time during the school year as determined by the DCSC Chair.
2) The notice of meetings will be distributed via email to the Representative from each School Council as submitted by the School Principal to the Superintendent, no less than 1 week beforehand. Every effort shall be given to distribute meeting dates far ahead of the actual date.

B. Special Meetings

The DCSC Chair may at any time give notice of a Special Meeting DCSC. Notice will be given via email at least 7 days before the meeting. The notice will state the time, date and place of the meeting, and describe the purpose of the special meeting.

11. MEETING AGENDAS

The Chair will work in partnership with the Superintendent, or designate, to create the agendas for all meetings. Agenda item requests must be made through the Chair, who will, if necessary, consult with the Superintendent as to the appropriateness of the item requested.

12. COMMITTEES

The DCSC Chair may create committees that consist of DCSC Members and/or other MHPSD community members. Committees meet outside of DCSC meetings to complete their assigned tasks as per the direction of the DCSC and will present a report of their activities at DCSC meetings.

13. CODE OF ETHICS

All DCSC Members shall:

A. Abide by the legislation that governs them;

B. Be guided by the mission statement of the Medicine Hat Public School Division;

F. Any Executive member may be removed from the Executive at any time with cause by a majority vote of the Executive whenever, in its judgment, the best interest of the DCSC will be served.

9. DUTIES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

A. Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Chair of the DCSC will:

1) Chair all meetings of the DCSC;
2) Coordinate with the Superintendent to establish meeting agendas;
3) Communicate with the Superintendent on a regular basis;
4) Decide all matters relating to rules of order at the meetings;
5) Ensure that DCSC Operating Procedures are current and followed;
6) Be the official spokesperson of the DCSC;
7) Ensure that there is regular communication with Division School Councils;
8) Stay informed about School Board policy that impacts School Councils; and
9) Have general responsibility for all activities of the DCSC.

B. Vice Chair

Unless otherwise delegated, the Vice-Chair of the DCSC will:

1) In the event of resignation, incapacity or leave of absence of the Chair, fulfill the Chair's responsibilities;
2) In the absence of the Chair, supervise the affairs and preside at any meetings of the DCSC;
3) Work with and support the Chair in agenda preparation;
4) Promote teamwork and assist the Chair in the smooth running of the meetings;
5) Keep informed of relevant MHPSD policies;
6) Prepare to assume the position of Chair in the future; and
7) Assist the Chair and undertake tasks assigned by the Chair.

C. Secretary

Unless otherwise delegated, the Secretary of the DCSC will, in conjunction with MHPSD Central Office staff:

1) Act as a recorder at each meeting and ensure that the minutes are prepared accurately to reflect the directions agreed to at the meeting;
2) Keep minutes, correspondence, records and other DCSC documents, and ensure that all relevant documents are available to the public in an accessible location at Central Office, for a period of 7 years;
3) Maintain a dated record of all the Members of the DCSC who have knowingly provided their contact information, in compliance with the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA); and
4) Distribute, as determined by the DCSC, agendas, minutes, notices of meetings and notices of other events.

In the absence of the Secretary, the DCSC Chair shall choose a recording Secretary for the meeting.

C. Endeavour to be familiar with Medicine Hat Public School Division's policies and operating procedures and act in accordance with them;
D. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity, and truth;
E. Recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the MHPSD community;
F. Declare any conflict of interest;
G. Encourage a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
H. Apply democratic principles;
I. Consider the best interests of all;
J. Respect the confidential nature of some MHPSD business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the Division Council of School Councils;
K. Not disclose confidential information;
L. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
M. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the MHPSD community;
N. Accept accountability for decisions;

14. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

The DCSC shall abide by the Conflict Resolution Procedures outlined in the School Board's policies and regulations.

15. PRIVACY

The Division Council of School Councils shall adhere to the Personal Information Protection Act (PIPA) and shall not use or share personal information for purposes other than those of DCSC business.

16. REVIEWS and AMENDMENTS

Subject to any provincially or School Board-mandated policies and/or regulations, the DCSC may make any changes to these Operating Procedures deemed necessary to carry out its functions.

A. The Operating Procedures will be reviewed for their relevance and effectiveness annually by the DCSC Chair or by a committee established expressly for that purpose.
B. The Operating Procedures of the DCSC may be amended by a majority vote of the voting Members present at any scheduled meeting of the DCSC.
C. Notice of proposed amendments to the Operating Procedures will be provided to the DCSC Members no less than 7 days before a meeting.

These Operating Procedures have been accepted by a majority of the Members entitled to vote at a General meeting of the Division Council of School Councils.

Date Oct 10 / 24

Michelle Millington
Chair

Signature

Gicela Cardona
Vice-Chair (Co-Chair)

Signature

Joni Treen
Secretary

Signature

Tracy Hensel
Superintendent

Signature

REFERENCES

Section 55 Education Act
Ministerial Order #928 (Ministerial Order on Student Learning)
MHPSD Policy 212