



Antigonish Education Centre

“Growing and Learning Together”

School Advisory Council Agreement

The purpose of this school advisory council agreement is to establish the terms and conditions of the agreement between the Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council, the Strait Regional Centre for Education (SRCE) and the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) to operate an advisory council at the school level.

The parties agree to the following:

Duration of the Agreement

The agreement begins when signed by all parties. The agreement shall be reviewed annually by the SAC before June 30 of each year. Any agreed-upon revisions can be made at that time and submitted to the SRCE and the EECD for consideration, to become effective upon approval of all partners.

Structure of Council

The membership of the advisory council shall include:

- The Principal, who is a non-voting member,
- three (3) parents/guardians,
- three school staff: (two teachers and one support staff)
- three community members which will include one African Nova Scotian member.

Names of the members of the Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council and their respective years of service are detailed in Appendix A attached to the bylaws. The bylaws are attached in a separate document.

Decision-Making Process

Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council will make decisions in the following ways:

- all decisions will be made by consensus where possible;
- if a consensus cannot be reached, the decision will be delayed until the next meeting, which will occur within thirty days;
- if at that meeting a consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote is required of the quorum present for the proposal to be approved;
- if there is a timeline within which a decision must be reached, an emergency meeting may be called by the chair of the SAC prior to the deadline;
- a quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of five (5) members, preferably with representation from parents/guardians, staff, and community members and;
- in addition, the principal or designate must be present. The Vice-Principal is the designate as the non-voting member.

School Advisory Council Commitments

Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council will be responsible for:

- providing all SAC members with a voice in decision-making;
- working in collaboration with the principal and participating in efforts to improve student achievement and student and community well-being by receiving information on the school improvement plan and monitoring progress and improvements under the plan
- advising the principal and the regional centre on: developing policies that promote student achievement and safe and inclusive schools; school practices and initiatives; communication among the school, parents and community; any matters that are referred to the school advisory council by the principal, the regional centre or the Minister
- developing strategies to improve and support the extracurricular programs and special projects of the school
- maintaining effective communication with parents/guardians by holding regular public meetings and making copies of agendas and minutes available upon request
- advising the principal and staff on any matters that are referred to the school advisory council by the principal, the regional centre or the Minister
- in accordance with the terms of the school advisory council agreement, determining priorities for spending the funds allocated to support the mandate of the school advisory council
- advising the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development or the Provincial Advisory Council on policy and other educational matters; and
- preparing an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister.

Strait Regional Centre for Education Centre Commitments

Strait Regional Centre for Education will make a commitment to support the Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council by providing:

- orientation and in-service sessions for council members, and workshops on special topics upon request;
- a facilitator to assist the school council as required;
- feedback to the council on the school improvement plan and the annual report;
- opportunities to give input on regional centre for education policies and procedures, initiatives, and communication;
- meetings between the Regional Executive Director of Education or designate and the school advisory council upon request;
- make available copies of policies via the SRCE's website;
- responding to advice/questions from the school advisory council and
- mediation services when there is unresolved conflict between the school advisory council and the principal.

Department of Education Commitments

The Department of Education will support the Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council by:

- developing educational materials to assist School Advisory Councils in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities;
- providing opportunities to give input on provincial policies and any other matters referred to the SAC by the Minister;
- organizing and/or supporting professional development opportunities for council members;
- providing funds to support the mandate of the school advisory council and;
- providing mediation when there is unresolved conflict between the school advisory council and the Regional Centre for Education.

Parties to the Agreement

We, the undersigned, understand and agree to follow through on the commitments made in this school advisory council agreement.



Antigonish Education Centre, SAC Chair



Date



SRCE, Regional Executive Director



Date



Department of Education & Early Childhood Development



Date



Antigonish Education Centre

"Growing and Learning Together"

School Advisory Council Bylaws

Membership

The Antigonish Education Centre School Advisory Council will have nine voting members which shall include:

- three parents/guardians;
- two teachers and one support staff member
- three community members
- and the Principal

The Principal is a permanent, non-voting member.

Eligibility for Membership

Parents/guardians

- must have a child at Antigonish Education Centre and cannot be a Strait Regional Centre for Education (SRCE) employee on staff at Antigonish Education Centre

Teacher

- must be a teacher on staff at Antigonish Education Centre

Support staff

- must be on the support staff at Antigonish Education Centre (e.g., secretary, teacher assistants, janitorial staff, bus drivers, etc.)

Community member

- must not be employees of the Antigonish Education Centre
- must not have children registered at the Antigonish Education Centre
- must reside in the geographical area served by Antigonish Education Centre or provide a service to or within the geographical area served by Antigonish Education Centre
- The African Nova Scotian community member will represent the African Nova Scotian community of the Antigonish Education Centre

Elections and Appointments

Elections will be held in September and are usually by secret ballot. Appointments of the community member will occur prior to the October meeting.

Parents/guardians

- A call for nominations may be made during the first two weeks of September through the school website and/or newsletters sent home with children. Nominations will close one week prior to a duly advertised voting meeting. Nominations will be received by the school Principal and forwarded to the school advisory council chair with a day designated for voting in late September. Election will be by a simple majority vote of eligible parents/guardians on a designated voting day. Those unable to vote on that day can contact the school to make arrangements to vote prior to the voting day. The principal and chair will appoint three individuals to act as scrutineers to count the vote. Eligible parents/guardians are those who have children enrolled in Antigonish Education Centre. In the event of a tie, a run-off election will be organized.

Teacher and support staff

- Teachers and support staff will elect/choose their own representatives in September by the method of their choice.

Community members

- The community members will be appointed to the school advisory council by the SAC prior to the October meeting so that the executive can be selected. The position will be advertised on the school website and may be advertised in the local newspaper. All applicants may be asked to submit, in writing, a brief resume and a letter which explains why the applicant is interested in being on the school advisory council.
- In an effort to ensure diverse representation of membership from the African Nova Scotian community, self-identified individuals will be considered as long as they meet the requirements outlined for Community Membership. If the SAC is unable to fill the position(s), a self-identified parent/guardian may be selected to fill the position.

Terms of Service

Terms of service for each representative group are the following:

- Parents/guardians are elected for a term of three years. Parents/guardians elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.
- Teachers and support staff are elected/chosen from their respective group for a term of three years. Teachers and support staff elected or appointed to fill a vacancy are elected or appointed for the remainder of the term.

- Community members are appointed for a term of two years. Community members appointed to fill a vacancy are appointed for the remainder of the term.
- All members can re-offer for election or appointment to the SAC at the end of their term, to a maximum of three consecutive terms.
- A council member elected to an executive position may serve in that position for a maximum of two consecutive one-year terms.
- The Principal position is permanent.

Vacancies

Should a vacancy arise, it will be addressed as follows:

- Vacancies on the SAC will be filled from the relevant membership group.
- Vacancies of less than six months may be filled by school advisory council appointment.
- Vacancies of longer than six months will be filled according to the bylaws governing elections or appointment of the appropriate membership groups to fill the remainder of the vacated term.

Executive

The executive will consist of a chair, vice-chair, secretary, and Principal. The selection of the chair, vice-chair, and secretary will be done annually at the October meeting. The chair, vice-chair and secretary will be selected from those school advisory council members other than the Principal and will serve no more than two consecutive years as chair, vice-chair or secretary.

Agenda and meeting summary

The chair will draw up the meeting agenda in consultation with the Principal five days prior to each meeting. Copies of the agenda will be distributed to each member by email, along with any other information that is relevant to the agenda items. Agendas from each meeting will be kept in Antigonish Education Centre's records, in either print or electronic format. Agendas will be made available to the public upon request and posted on the school website.

The secretary will prepare a meeting summary for each school advisory council meeting which will include highlights of key decisions and actions. Once approved at the subsequent meeting, the meeting summaries will be given to the Principal of Antigonish Education Centre School to be included in the school record in either print or electronic format. Meeting summaries will be made available to the public upon request and posted on the school website.

Meetings

Meetings will be conducted according to the following guidelines:

- A regular meeting schedule will be determined at the initial meeting of the school year with a minimum of six meetings annually. Additional meetings may be scheduled as determined by the Antigonish Education Centre SAC. Meetings will be a maximum of 90 minutes in length unless the SAC agrees by consensus to go longer.
- All meetings are open to the public. Members of the public who wish to address the school advisory council are asked to inform the SAC through the chair or the school Principal in writing at least one week prior to the school advisory council meeting. They may address the meeting at the discretion of the chair.
- Agendas will allow for a ten-minute period for input on the agenda items from the public in attendance at the council meeting.
- Members who are not able to attend a meeting will notify the school advisory council secretary or the school advisory council chair by noon of the meeting date.
- Any member absent without cause for three consecutive meetings will be considered to have vacated their position. Vacancies will be filled as per these bylaws.

Quorum

A quorum will be established when the meeting is called to order. A quorum will consist of five (5) members preferably with representation from parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

In addition, the Principal or designate must be present and are non-voting.

Decision-making process

The following principles and procedures will be used in making decisions.

Principles

- All council members are responsible for making decisions that ensure the best education possible for our students.
- All council members will have the opportunity to participate in decision-making.
- Council decisions will be by consensus whenever possible.

Procedures

- Agenda items will be discussed in a structured way prior to a decision.
- When background information is needed on an agenda item, the Principal will provide council members with that information and the time required to review it in advance of a decision.
- Whenever possible, decisions will be made by consensus.

- If consensus cannot be reached, the decision can be delayed until the following meeting, which must occur within 30 days. If at that time consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote is required of the quorum present for the proposal to be approved.
- Decisions and recommendations will be recorded in the minutes of meetings.

School Improvement Plan and Annual Report

The school improvement plan for Antigonish Education Centre will be developed by the Principal and staff of the school and shared with the SAC. The SAC will work in collaboration with the Principal and participate in efforts to improve student achievement and student and community well-being by regularly receiving information on the school improvement plan and monitoring progress and improvements under the plan.

In addition, in accordance with the terms of the school advisory council agreement, the SAC will determine priorities for spending the funds allocated to support the mandate of the school advisory council including student achievement and report annually on the expenditures of funds to the Minister.

The SAC will prepare an annual report in the form and containing the information determined by the Minister. The report will be presented at the June SAC meeting and then submitted to the Strait Regional Centre for Education by the end of June.

Adopting and Amending Bylaws

A notice of motion, given one meeting in advance, is required to amend the bylaws. Bylaws will be amended following the established decision-making process. The amended bylaws will be forwarded to the regional executive director for approval, and the bylaws or amendments become effective upon receipt of this approval.

Parties to the agreement

We, the undersigned, understand and agree to follow these Bylaws.

Catherine MacPherson
 Antigonish Education Centre
 School Advisory Council Chair

Nov 22, 2020
 Date

Paul [Signature]
 SRCE Regional Executive Director of Education

Dec. 2, 2020
 Date

Appendix A
SAC Membership