

Independent Public Schools



Queensland school councils

Fact sheet

Under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*, the Chief Executive may establish a school council for a state school.

Composition

The number of members of a school council must be at least six and not more than fifteen.

A school council must include at least:

- one elected parent member
- one elected staff member (the number of elected parent members and elected staff members of a school council must be equal)
- one elected student member (if the state school provides Years 10, 11 or 12).

A school council must include not more than:

- two elected student members
- two appointed members.

The official members of a school council are:

- the school principal
- the president of the Parents & Citizens' (P&C) Association (if one exists).

All members of a school council (except co-opted student members – that is, a Year 6 student from a school that does not offer secondary education) are able to vote at council meetings.

Chairperson

A school council must elect one of the council's members as chairperson of the council. The school's principal may not be elected as chairperson; however, the P&C Association president is eligible.

Role

The council must perform its role in

accordance with legislation in a way that achieves the best learning outcomes for the school's students.

The school council:

- monitors the school's strategic direction
- approves plans and policies and other strategic school documents including the annual estimate of revenue and expenditure
- monitors the implementation of the plans, policies and other strategic documents
- advises the school principal about strategic matters.

Term of office

Each elected member, or appointed member, of a school council holds office for the term, not longer than two years, as stated in the council's constitution.

However, if newly established, the council's constitution may provide for half of the first elected members to hold office for a term of no longer than three years.

Meetings

A school council must meet at least twice in each semester.

The school council's chairperson must preside over all council meetings at which the chairperson is present.

A question at a school council meeting, other than a question about an amendment of the council's constitution, must be decided by a majority of the votes of the council members present.

Legal accountabilities

A member of a school council does not incur civil liability for an act done, or omission made, honestly and without negligence under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*.

School council documents are subject to Right to Information obligations. Further information can be found at <http://deta.qld.gov.au/right-to-information/>.

Role of the P&C Association

School councils will have the responsibility to approve the strategic documents that set the direction, culture and tone of the school. The P&C Association president will be on the school council to represent the views of the P&C Association.

The Independent Public Schools initiative will not have any impact on the functions of P&C Associations.

Responsibilities

Schools are responsible for ensuring that appropriate processes are followed. For more information including links to a range of factsheets and templates, visit the School Council Handbook at: <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/about/school-council-handbook.html>.

Out of scope

A school council cannot:

- interfere with management by the school's principal of day-to-day operations of the school and its curriculum
- make operational decisions about the use of teaching or learning resources at the school
- make decisions about the individual teaching style used, or to be used, at the school
- make a decision that is contrary to law or a written policy of the department
- control funds
- enter into contracts
- acquire, hold, dispose of or deal with property
- sue or be sued
- establish a committee or subcommittee.

Want to know more?

For more information about establishing a school council, refer to the [School Council procedure](#).