

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the Principal?

Principals are a valuable resource, guiding SAC members to appropriate information. SACs can provide advice to support the decision-making role of Principals.

Are the decisions of the SAC final?

No, the decisions of the School Advisory Council are not final. The SAC is an advisory body, and its purpose is to give advice to the school Principal and to the Regional Centre for Education from the point of view of the school community, on behalf of those affected by school decisions.

Do SACs have disciplinary power over Principals, teachers, and support staff?

No, the School Advisory Council does not have directive, supervisory or disciplinary power over the school's Principal, teachers, and support staff. These powers rest with the Regional Executive Director of Education of CCRCE. The SAC is not part of the day-to-day operations of the school.

How does an SAC communicate with the school community?

Communication is very important to effective SAC operations. This includes SAC communication with the school community, the regional centre for education, and EECD. Communication can take the form of meeting summaries on the school website, a synopsis of activities in the school newsletter, or updates through the local media. SAC meetings are open to members of the public, and the bylaws should provide guidelines for public participation. The Principal is the spokesperson for the SAC when communicating messages from the SAC with the regional centre for education, EECD, or the media.



Tips for an Effective SAC

Effective SACs act in the best interest of the students by:

- Being open with intentions, opinions, and ideas;
- Striving to provide accurate information;
- Upholding a high level of integrity and courtesy at meetings;
- Adhering to democratic principles;
- Declaring any possible conflicts of interest;
- Demonstrating trust and respect for one another; and
- Creating a positive atmosphere in the meetings, the school, and the school community.

For more information on School Advisory Councils contact your school principal or visit ccrce.ca/school_information/school_advisory_council



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Chignecto Central
Regional Centre for Education

**SCHOOL ADVISORY
COUNCILS**

Engaging partnerships in education.



What is a School Advisory Council?

The purpose of a School Advisory Council (SAC) is to act as an advisory body to the school Principal and to Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education on a wide range of topics, including policies, curriculum and programs, school practices, student support services, parent-school communication and other duties outlined by the Education Act. Most importantly, an SAC participates in the ongoing efforts of the school to continuously promote student achievement and safe, equitable and inclusive schools.

School Advisory Councils are volunteer organizations that were established by the [Nova Scotia Education Act](#), and are made up of parents, community members, the school Principal, teachers and school support staff. Each school within CCRCE has a School Advisory Council.

SAC Guiding Principles

- Education is a shared responsibility.
- Students must be the first consideration for all decisions.
- People at the local school level have important perspectives to advise on and

contribute to decisions that will meet the needs of all students.

- School improvement leads to increased student achievement.
- Change must take into account the unique characteristics of each community.
- Partners need to use teamwork skills and strategies to effectively manage change.
- Involving the community in school improvement planning will enhance the learning for all students.

SAC Membership:

- Minimum of five, maximum of 18 members total
- Must include parents/guardians with children enrolled in the school, staff (teachers and support staff), community members, the principal (or their designate)
- A minimum of two students are required on SACs for schools with grades 7-12
- No individual group can make up more than 1/3 of the SAC membership (unless otherwise specified in the SAC Agreement)
- School staff are not eligible to serve on their school's SAC as parents/guardians or community members.
- Membership should reflect the diversity of

the community served by the school. This includes, but is not limited to, African Nova Scotians, First Nations persons, other racially visible persons, and persons with disabilities. The SAC may choose to designate a seat in one or more of their membership groups to represent the community's diversity through the SAC Agreement and bylaws.

Membership Guidelines

SAC members - with the exception of the principal - may be elected or appointed for a term normally not exceeding three years. Members are usually elected by their representative groups: teachers elect teachers, support staff elect support staff, parents/guardians elect parents/guardians, and students elect students. Community members are appointed by the SAC. The principal is a permanent, non-voting member of the SAC and may not serve as the Chair.

SAC Responsibilities

Staff, parents/guardians, students, and community members work as a team to:

- Provide advice to the Principal on school programs and policies;
- Communicate with the groups they represent in order to articulate the diverse views that exist within their school community;
- Represent the best interests of students;
- Participate in the writing and review of the SAC Agreement, bylaws, and annual reports;
- Work in collaboration with the Principal and participate 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; and
- Ensure that the SAC Agreement and bylaws are followed