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## School Council Orientation

October 15th, 2020

ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS

# Agenda



- Welcome & Introduction
- Who's Who In RVS
- Role of School Council
- School Councils & Raising Funds
- Connecting with ASCA
- School Council Best Practices
- Meeting Best Practices
- Celebrating Accomplishments
- Joint Board School Council Meetings
- Resources
- Q&A

# Who's Who In RVS



## Board of Trustees



**Shali  
Baziuk**



**Patty  
Sproule**



**Jim  
Forrest**



**Melyssa  
Bowen**



**Todd  
Brand**



**Norma  
Lang**



**Judi  
Hunter**



**Fiona  
Gilbert**

Provides overall direction and leadership to the Division and is charged providing an education system that is operated in the best interests of the students it serves.

# Who's Who In RVS



## Superintendent of Schools



**Greg  
Luterbach**

The Superintendent is the Chief Executive Officer of the Board and the Chief Education Officer of the Division.

The Superintendent reports directly to the corporate Board and is accountable to the Board of Trustees for the conduct and operation of the Division.

# Who's Who In RVS



## Senior Executive



**Larry Paul**  
Associate Superintendent  
Business and Operations,  
Secretary Treasurer



**Dave Morris**  
Associate Superintendent  
Learning



**Murray Besenski**  
Associate Superintendent  
Schools



**Laurie Copeland**  
Associate Superintendent  
Human Resources

# Role of School Council



- The Provincial (and RVS) Context
  - School councils are government legislated advisory groups that seek to enhance student learning by engaging and working collaboratively with parents, staff and community to support learning by:
    - helping develop and support various school activities
    - creating a liaison between the school and wider school community
    - providing advice on the development of the school's foundation statements, policies, school playbooks and budget and school fees
  - Provincial legislation pertaining to school councils in Alberta can be found in Section 55 of the [Alberta Education Act](#) and the [Rocky View School Resource Guide](#), p. 4/12

# Role of School Council



- Roles **not** to be taken on by school council include:
  - discussions about individual student behaviour
  - involvement in employment and staff issues
  - direction of school operations/management
  - the resolution of individual parent complaints

# Role of School Council



- The **school council chair**, the official spokesperson of school council, is key to council's success. Responsibilities include:
  - leading all school council meetings
  - ensuring that all council members participate and share their voice
  - working collaboratively with the school's principal to set meeting and plan meeting agendas
  - maintaining frequent communication with the school community

# Role of School Council



- The chair also has the responsibility to prepare and provide to the Superintendent (board designate) by July 15th of each year an annual report that:
  - summarizes the activities of the school council in the previous school year
  - details the receipt, handling and use of any money by the school council in the previous school year
- An annual report template, and others, can be found [here](#).

# Role of School Council



- As a **school council member**, it is important to:
  - attend school council meetings regularly and help create an inviting, collaborative environment
  - share professional knowledge, expertise and life experience
  - encourage feedback/participation from community and individuals
  - have a clear understanding of school council objectives
  - identify possible topics for agendas
  - recommend possible training sessions and professional learning

# Role of School Council



- The **principal** is the instructional leader who manages the day-to-day operations of the school and is a key member on school council.

Responsibilities include:

- enabling the school council to provide input in the school's education plan and playbook, school fees and budget
- seeking input from the school council on major decisions that affect the school
- encouraging and supporting the formation and continuous improvement of school council

# Role of School Council



- **RVS School Board Trustees** are invited guests of school council meetings who:
  - attend meetings to share important information and receive feedback on educational matters at a divisional level
  - bring the board's perspective and information to members of School Council
  - act as a source of information for:
    - procedural matters and system navigation
    - provincial and local educational initiatives

# School Council & Raising Funds



Some school councils take an active role in raising money for their school.

- hot lunch programs
- selling school swag
- walk-a-thons
- hot dog day
- cookie dough sales
- a multitude of other activities and goods

# School Council & Raising Funds



## The School Councils Regulation

*A school council may receive donations on behalf of a board but no school council shall raise funds or otherwise solicit donations in any manner that would require a gaming license under the Gaming, Liquor and Cannabis Act.*

*A school council must handle and report all money it receives, if any, in accordance with applicable policies and procedures of the board.*

(School Council Regulation, Sec. 13)

# School Councils & Raising Funds



## RVS Requirements for School Council Fundraising

- AP110 – School Councils
- AP5119 – School Generated Funds

# School Councils & Raising Funds



## **Funds Raised by School Council**

- must be held in an RVS bank account
- are considered School Generated Funds (SGF)

## **Spending Council Raised Funds**

- School councils can advise the Principal on how to spend these funds; final decision rests with Principal
- Principal will provide the school council financial transaction reports

# School Councils & Raising Funds



## Fundraising Societies

RVS rules do not apply to separate fundraising societies that are:

- incorporated under the Societies Act
- eligible to apply for gaming licenses
- are separate legal entities from the school council and the school division.

Many RVS schools have a fundraising society. More information regarding fundraising societies can be found [here](#).

# School Councils & Raising Funds



## Cashless Schools

RVS is moving towards “cashless schools” to:

- provide a safer more secure environment for staff and students
- improve record keeping and reporting
- minimize additional work for teachers and staff

# School Councils and Raising Funds



## School Cash

School Councils must use School Cash for the collection of money. This includes hot lunches.

- is easy and familiar for parents
- safe for students and staff
- reduces the workload of teachers and staff
- allows for the accurate and efficient accounting of all funds raised.

It's a win all around!

- [ASCA](#) is your association
  - all RVS schools are members; fees covered by RVS
- Significant source of resources:
  - workshops & speakers (e.g. purpose, policies and practices, operating procedures)
  - regulations & other resources
  - templates (e.g. agenda, minutes, bylaws)
  - [Alberta School Councils Resource Guide](#)
- Advocacy on education matters:
  - ASCA has a voice in our province; advocates for education issues
  - school councils can contribute to set policy; submit your policy ideas

# ASCA Annual Conference & AGM



- Hosted annually each April in Edmonton
- RVS Board of Trustees sponsors a certain number of school council members to attend
  - annual application process is made available
- Conference provides excellent training and networking opportunity
  - workshops, exhibits & general sessions
- AGM (following the conference)
  - elect your association officers
  - set ASCA governance and advocacy

# School Council Best Practices



- Communicate well on school website
  - minutes, meetings, dates, etc.
- Communicate with principal
  - consider regular meeting pattern between chair and principal
- Network with other councils
  - feeder schools & other similar schools
- Review [School Councils Best Practice Guide](#) on RVS website
- Try new things; be creative
  - Consider Zoom and live meetings combined going forward?

# Meeting Best Practices



- Agenda tips
  - consider time allotments
- Minutes
  - record of what was done, not what was said
  - record your decisions
- Robust discussion
  - okay to politely disagree
  - encourage participation
  - fairness so that all viewpoints may be shared

# Meeting Best Practices



- Rules
  - meetings are informal but have structure
  - start a motion with the words “I move...”
  - vote on decisions
  - know and follow your bylaws
- Keep meetings moving
- Chair sets pace and tone for meeting

# Celebrating Accomplishments



- Through regular communication and celebration, school councils can recognize and celebrate members' efforts and:
  - help parents see school council as representing all parents and understand and value the work that is done by school council
  - help the parent community understand the value of fund-raised monies to the school
  - use opportunities at school events to remind stakeholders of initiatives, accomplishments and potential involvement in school council

# Joint Board School Council Meetings



Twice a year, the Board hosts a Joint Board School Council meeting as a way of:

- sharing information
- soliciting input
- garnering feedback on various matters impacting students, schools and learning in RVS

# Joint Board School Council Meetings



For the 2020/2021 school year, these meetings have been set for the evenings of:

- Thursday November 12, 2020
- Thursday March 25, 2021

Meetings are typically held from 5:30-7:30pm at the RVS Education Centre in Airdrie and include a light meal.

Agendas are set by the Board and if you have a suggestion for a future meeting, please share with your local trustee.

# Resources Used for this Presentation



- [Education Act](#)
- [School Councils Regulation](#)
- [Alberta School Councils Association](#)
- [ASCA School Council Resource Guide](#)
- [RVS School Council Resource Manual](#)
- [RVS Administrative Procedure 110 – School Councils](#)
- [RVS Administrative Procedure 5119 – School Generated Funds](#)

Q&A

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Thank You and Goodnight!

ROCKY VIEW SCHOOLS