

2016-17

School Advisory Council (SAC) Guide



School Advisory Council (SAC) Guide

Orange County Public Schools Strategic Planning and Improvement Department

Jennifer Sasser, Director
407.317.3200, ext. 200-2044

Marcie Mathews, Senior Administrator
407.317.3200 ext. 200-2729

Vision

To be the top producer of successful students in the nation

Mission

To lead our students to success with the support and involvement of families and the community

Goals

- Intense Focus on Student Achievement
- High-Performing and Dedicated Team
- Safe Learning and Working Environment
- Efficient Operations
- Sustained Community Engagement

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
SAC Bylaws	2
Election and Appointment of SAC Members	3
Meetings and Agendas	4
SAC Minutes	9
District and Learning Community/Area Office Functions	10
Services and Resources	10
Appendices	12
Appendix A: Florida Statutes - District and School Advisory Councils	13
Appendix B: Involvement of the School Advisory Council in the School Budgeting Process.....	15
Appendix C: Bureau of School Improvement - School Advisory Council FAQs.....	16
Appendix D: Template - School Advisory Council Minutes	22
Appendix E: Template - School Advisory Council Bylaws	23
Appendix F: School Improvement: Year at a Glance	27
Appendix G: Florida Statutes - State Education Goals and Florida Education Priorities	28
Appendix H: School Recognition Awards	31

Introduction

The Florida state legislature developed a system of accountability to improve student performance. This created opportunities for educators to shape the educational futures of students in very positive ways. It is imperative that the following actions take place to ensure the best possible educational outcomes for all students:

- School and district staff, students, parents and community members must work together as a community to create and maintain learning environments that meet the changing needs of students.
- School-based leaders must think strategically and manage change constructively as they plan for the future.
- Available resources must be used efficiently, while new resources are constantly sought.
- Commitments to action and accountability must become a central part of the school improvement plan.
- Success for all students must always be the focus of a school's improvement plan.

The key to effective decision-making in Florida's accountability system is that those closest to the classroom and the students make most of the important decisions affecting education. The law requires that each school establish a School Advisory Council (SAC) so that parents and community members can work with school staff and administrators to ensure the success of students enrolled in local schools. Our district implements a school-based budgeting system: schools can designate dollars and other resources where they best meet student and school community needs. Adding business and community leaders to the SAC can also strengthen community support for public education and provide a broader perspective when planning for the future.

While the local school community plays a more active role, the state and district play supportive roles in helping schools accomplish their goals. With the responsibility for progress monitoring and accountability, the district and state continue to encourage maximum decision-making at school sites. In accordance with state law, the district school board is required to review the membership composition of each advisory council (Fla.Stat. § 1001.452(1)(a), 2016), review all proposed bylaws, and maintain a record of minutes of council meetings (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(1)(d), 2016) (see Appendix A for Florida Statutes - District and School Advisory Councils).

All of the entities of the school community have significant roles in the educational futures of young people. Therefore, it is vital that the collective school community becomes actively involved as it plans and works together for the success of students. Teamwork and an attitude of mutual respect are characteristics that make a SAC shine. The support given by the SAC will encourage confidence in the entire school staff as all entities of the school community work together for a better school.

Since the SAC represents the school community as the voice for improving the school, it is important to establish the SAC membership early in the school year. Teachers, school support staff, students, and parents are elected to the SAC. Business and community leaders are appointed by the principal.

The SAC's primary role is to assist the principal in the preparation and evaluation of the school improvement plan for the current year (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(2), 2016). The SAC also gives assistance to the principal in the planning of the upcoming year's budget (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(2), 2016) (see Appendix B for Involvement of the School Advisory Council in the School Budgeting Process).

A successful SAC maintains a spirit of enthusiasm and cooperation. A concise set of bylaws and a clear understanding of district and state compliance issues are critical for a successful SAC. Being informed about and taking advantage of district and community resources will keep SAC members aware of the progress and challenges of our large school district and help them make informed decisions that will improve student achievement at their school. Staying on track in each phase of school improvement planning is key to the success of the SAC. An effective SAC becomes knowledgeable, remains diligent, and provides collaborative support that strengthens and improves its school (see Appendix C for Bureau of School Improvement - School Advisory Council FAQs).

SAC Bylaws

Bylaws are the ground rules that SAC members agree to follow. They give structure to the meeting process, which should be focused on the school improvement plan and student achievement. Section 1001.452(1)(d) of Florida Statutes (2016) states each school advisory council shall adopt bylaws establishing procedures for:

1. Requiring a quorum to be present before a vote may be taken by the school advisory council. A majority of membership of the council constitutes a quorum.
2. Requiring at least 3 days' advance notice in writing to all members of the school advisory council of any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote.
3. Scheduling meetings when parents, students, teachers, businesspersons, and members of the community can attend.
4. Replacing any member who has two unexcused consecutive absences from a school advisory council meeting that is noticed according to the procedures in the bylaws.
5. Recording minutes of meetings (see Appendix D for Template - School Advisory Council Minutes).

Schools that have turnover of members and difficulty in getting every member to attend may have trouble reaching a quorum. If this is the case, it is important to take actions to encourage sufficient attendance to reach a quorum. It is important to implement procedures to replace members who have two consecutive unexcused absences.

SAC bylaws should be brief, complete, simple, and understandable to all. They should clearly distinguish who is responsible for designated roles. The bylaws should give enough authority to the SAC chairperson so he or she can act. Additionally, they should comply with Florida Statutes and be made available to all SAC members.

The school district is required to review and maintain copies of all SAC bylaws (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(1)(d), 2016). Email your revised SAC bylaws to sac@ocps.net (see Appendix E for Template - School Advisory Council Bylaws).

Election and Appointment of SAC Members

People usually respond positively when they are asked to do meaningful work. An effective recruiting method for finding candidates for the SAC is to ask people to put themselves up for election. In addition, the school may want to set up a recruiting committee to find the members needed for the SAC and assist the principal with organizing and coordinating the required elections. Other recruitment methods include making announcements at Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings or other school gatherings, speaking at meetings of civic and service groups, inviting community organizations to send representatives, sending personal letters, making phone calls or adding information to the school website. Elections should always be conducted in cooperation with the appropriate constituent organizations at the school, such as the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), Parent Leadership Council (PLC), PTA, or other parent/community groups.

Do not underestimate the importance of simply telling people why they are needed – make sure people understand that the need is not just to fill a slot, but to bring a valuable perspective to the SAC that might not be represented without them. Be sure to look at solving any problems that may deter involvement in the SAC (e.g., consider providing child care and/or transportation for meetings).

When seeking representation within the school, special areas such as, Exceptional Student Education (ESE), Title I, English Language Learners (ELL), and other audiences should be considered. Keep in mind that the composition and demographics of the SAC must mirror the school's population.

The SAC should meet early in the school year to get established. Any vacant positions must be filled. Many schools elect the chairperson at this time, but schools may specify that the chairperson be elected at another time in accordance with its SAC bylaws.

The school is responsible for setting up election and appointment procedures, which should be accurately reflected in the school's SAC bylaws. The school should give reasonable written notice (at least three days) for the election of SAC members. Information about the SAC and any identified vacancies should be shared with all parents, school employees, and Partners in Education. Any candidates interested in serving on SAC should notify the principal or previous year's SAC chair and may be asked to prepare a brief information statement.

The school board must review the final composition and racial balance of all SACs in the district in order to comply with state law (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(1)(a), 2016). Balance in the SAC's composition is critical and cannot be overemphasized. Section 1001.452(1)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016) outlines the following key elements:

- The SAC membership must be representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school.
- The majority (at least 51 percent) of SAC members must be non-school district employees.
- Each advisory council is required to be composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students (only required for career centers and high schools), parents, and other business and community citizens.

According to section 1001.452(1)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016), council members representing teachers, education support employees, students, and parents shall be elected by their respective peer groups in a fair and equitable manner as follows:

1. Teachers shall be elected by teachers.
2. Education support employees shall be elected by education support employees.
3. Students shall be elected by students (career centers and high school SACs shall have student members; middle school SACs may have student members).
4. Parents shall be elected by parents (school advisory councils of career centers and adult education centers are not required to include parents as members).
5. Business and community leaders shall be appointed by the principal. (Business leaders are valuable assets for SACs. They bring community perspectives from places where students may eventually go for employment and often have access to tangible resources for schools.)

Restrictions on SAC Membership

Recently the Florida Department of Education has interpreted SAC membership more strictly. Deans or assistant principals **cannot** be voting members of SACs, since they are in administrative roles. Only the school principal is authorized to be a voting member as an administrator.

Again, it is imperative that the majority of the SAC be non-school district employees pursuant to section 1001.452(1)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016). According to section 24.121(5)(d) of the Florida Statutes (2016), no funds shall be released for any purpose from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund to any school district in which one or more schools do not have an approved school improvement plan or do not comply with school advisory council membership composition requirements.

If, after elections of SAC members, it is determined that either a majority of members are school employees or that the membership is not racially or ethnically balanced, the school board has allowed the school principal to make appointments to bring the membership into compliance (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(1)(a), 2016).

Once elections have taken place, schools should make updates to the SAC membership roster as appropriate.

Meetings and Agendas

Plan ahead. Always have an agenda for meetings and plan with the element of time in mind. Keep the focus on improving the school and do not allow time for complaining and negative input. Make your meetings productive.

Try to hold SAC meetings at times of the day that facilitate parent, student, and community member participation. Schools may decide to rotate meeting times and places to make it convenient for all members to participate.

It is recommended that SACs meet at least four times per year and should review the school improvement plan (SIP) for the school year, conduct a mid-year review of progress, and conduct a final assessment of progress.

To meet Five Star School requirements, SACs should meet a minimum of eight times per year and have membership attendance averages of at least 80 percent. Meetings should include a discussion of the progress made towards school goals outlined in the school improvement plan and the connection to the district's Strategic Plan, including the vision, mission, and goals. For additional information, please contact Pamela Carson, Senior Manager, Community Resources, 407-317-3200, extension 200-2990.

Keeping accurate minutes of SAC meetings is very important, not simply because they are required according to section 1001.452(1)(d) of the Florida Statutes (2016), but also because previous meeting minutes give continuity to upcoming business, as well as record the history of the work of the SAC (see Appendix D for Template - School Advisory Council Minutes).

Reasonable Notice of Meetings

Section 286.011(1) of the Florida Statutes (2016) indicates that there must be a reasonable notice of meetings. The statute has not exactly defined reasonable notice, but a seven-day notice is generally considered reasonable. The district recommends that a seven-day notice be given before meetings. Ways in which you can give notice include (a) sending home a schedule of meetings for the year, (b) posting the next meeting on the school's marquee, (c) using a bulletin board (located either in the administration office or the media center) and/or a stand dedicated to SAC business in a visible place in the school, or (d) advertising the meeting on the school's website.

In addition to the requirements of reasonable notice outlined in section 286.011(1) of Florida Statutes (2016), Section 1001.452(1)(d)2 of Florida Statutes (2016) requires at least three days' advance notice in writing to all members of the advisory council of any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote. This requirement can be met by publishing the agenda at least three days prior to the meeting. Publishing the agenda may include (a) posting the agenda on the SAC bulletin board, (b) publishing the agenda on the school's website, or (c) distributing the agenda to SAC members three days prior to the meeting.

Emergency and Cancellation of Meetings

Emergency meetings shall be called only if jointly agreed upon by the SAC chair and the principal, and shall abide by all the guidelines of a regular meeting.

These meetings shall be afforded the most appropriate and effective notice under the circumstances and shall have at least 24 hours reasonable notice to the public.

Subcommittee Meetings

When concerns arise in SAC meetings, they should be addressed. Subcommittees should be formed and chaired by SAC members. Non-members with particular interest or expertise may serve on subcommittees. Subcommittee meetings must also meet the requirements of section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes (2016). Notice should be given in the same manner as indicated above for meetings of the entire SAC.

Any subgroup of the SAC that meets to plan the agenda for a SAC meeting would be considered a subcommittee meeting and also must be advertised.

Discussion of SAC Business among SAC Members

According to the Government in the Sunshine Law, issues that will come before the SAC should not be discussed by members of the SAC outside of a meeting (Fla. Stat. § 286.011, 2016). The purpose of this provision is to keep officials from meeting privately behind closed doors, agreeing to a decision, and then formally making the decision in a meeting. All members of the SAC, including parents and school employees, should be encouraged not to discuss SAC business with other SAC members outside of a meeting.

This can become a difficult distinction to make when faculty members who are SAC members have discussions in meetings. Principals then have to decide if a topic in a faculty meeting or team meeting is something that will be discussed at an upcoming SAC meeting. In theory, anything regarding school improvement could possibly come before the SAC. If it is anticipated that this will present a problem, some actions that can be taken include:

- State in a SAC meeting and record in the meeting minutes that members should not discuss SAC issues with other SAC members outside of the meeting.
- At a faculty meeting, distinguish between school business and pending SAC issues.
- When issues that will come before the SAC are discussed, excuse faculty who are members of the SAC from the meeting.
- If SAC issues will be discussed at a faculty or team meeting, post a notice of the faculty meeting regarding SAC matters. The notice should apply only to the SAC topics on the agenda. The rest of the meeting that does not apply to SAC does not need to be posted. Post a notice of this meeting according to the reasonable notice guidelines.

Meetings Open to the Public

Section 286.011(1) of the Florida Statutes (2016) requires that all meetings of any board or commission of any state agency should be open to the public at all times and no resolution, rule, or formal action shall be considered binding except as taken or made at such meeting. In a school situation, this usually means open to parents and school staff members. However, meetings are open to any member of the public.

The right of attendance does not take away from the responsibility of the SAC chairperson to conduct an orderly meeting. Members of the public can attend, but not disrupt, a meeting. Discussion of SAC business can be appropriately limited to present members of the SAC. A simple way of maintaining an orderly meeting and allowing for input from anyone who attends the meeting is to have schedule time on the agenda where those who are not SAC members can address their issues and express concerns to the SAC. Time limits may be set on any presentations to the SAC.

Meeting Access for the Handicapped

In the spirit of public access and involvement, meetings must be held where there is access for the handicapped. Most school facilities are handicapped-accessible. Ensure the meeting is held in a location where everyone can attend.

Documents Open for Public Inspection

Any reports, minutes, plans, or any other records created by or presented to the SAC must be available for public inspection (Fla. Stat. §119.01(1), 2016). It is a good idea to maintain these records electronically, as well as in a designated place such as the media center or the administration office. Examples of materials that must be made available for public inspection include the bylaws, school improvement plan (SIP), the school advisory council (SAC) membership roster, reports to the SAC, and meeting minutes. All SAC agendas, sign-in sheets, minutes, and bylaws should be emailed to sac@ocps.net after they have been approved at the next SAC meeting. The files should be sent with the complete name of the school followed by the date of the meeting in the subject line.

Records should be maintained at the school for at least the school year for which they apply. Thereafter (i.e., after one year), they should be shipped to the OCPS Records Management for archival (see the District Records Archival Handbook for information regarding the labeling and barcode process). For more information, contact the OCPS Records Management department at (407) 317-3961.

Guidelines for SAC Meeting Procedures

School advisory councils fall under the requirements of section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes (2016). The SAC may adopt reasonable rules and policies which ensure the orderly conduct of a meeting and require orderly behavior on the part of those attending. The public has the right to attend and use non-disruptive recording devices at SAC meetings, including video recordings.

Robert's Rules of Order also grants the authority and responsibility of running an orderly meeting to the chairperson (<http://www.rulesonline.com/>). The Florida Department of Education and the district recommend that SACs use *Robert's Rules of Order* as a resource in establishing procedures for conducting meetings. A SAC may adopt additional rules of procedure for conducting an orderly meeting.

The following two sections list suggested language that a SAC may use, modify, or incorporate into its procedures.

Recording of Meetings

- The video or audio recorder will be placed in an unobtrusive part of the meeting room.
- Recording devices will be set up to record meeting actions without focusing on any single individual or group.
- Recording devices may not be moved during a meeting.
- Recording devices may not be operated in a manner that is disruptive to a meeting.

Participation in Public Meetings

Full and open participation by SAC members is critical for meeting school improvement goals and accomplishing the purpose of SACs. Participation by SAC non-members can also be a valuable resource for a SAC in making its decisions. Procedural rules are primarily designed to allow for maximum participation of SAC members and non-members while ensuring a meeting is conducted in an orderly and business-like manner to accomplish the meeting's objectives. Procedural rules can include the following:

- Set aside a specific time on the agenda for input by non-members on any topic of concern.
- Allow a time for input on specific agenda items under consideration by the SAC.
- Set a time limit for input by SAC members and non-members for discussion of SAC agenda items or presentations. Setting time limits for non-members does not imply that the same time limits must be set for members, nor that time limits for member discussions need to be set. However, any rules should be applied consistently to avoid any possible charges of favoritism or arbitrariness.
- It is the role of the chairperson to conduct the meeting according to the procedural rules adopted by the SAC. Sometimes it is helpful to have a person serve as a time-keeper and inform the speaker and the chairperson when the time allowed is up.
- It is the responsibility of the chairperson, members, and participants to adhere to the procedural rules of the meeting. Participation in a meeting is subject to understanding and following the rules of participation.
- In the event that a participant violates meeting procedural rules, the chairperson has the authority and responsibility to maintain order and keep the meeting running smoothly according to the procedures.

Voting Procedures at SAC Meetings

- The agenda should include items scheduled to come before the SAC for a vote. The agenda should be posted no less than three days prior to the scheduled SAC meeting.
- Votes may only be taken if a quorum is present. A quorum requires at least 51 percent of the total SAC membership.
- There shall be no voting by proxy.
- There shall be no secret ballots.
- All voting shall take place at an open meeting (not by phone, email, or any other non-public way) in compliance with section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes (2016).

SAC Minutes

Minutes are the written record of a meeting and the actions taken by the SAC.

The SAC is required to keep minutes of all meetings (Fla. Stat. § 1001.452(1)(d), 2016). Minutes should be a concise reporting of what took place in each meeting. It is not necessary to record every detail of the meeting or the discussion about an item under consideration. It is only necessary to record actions taken and specifics about the date, time, and location of the meeting. Be sure to include in the minutes the name of your school, that it is a SAC meeting, and state that it is a document of the minutes.

Section 1001.452(1)(d) of the Florida Statutes (2016) requires the district office to maintain a record of SAC minutes. The meeting agenda, sign-in sheet, and minutes should be sent to sac@ocps.net after they have been approved at the next scheduled SAC meeting. The files should be sent with the complete name of the school followed by the date of the meeting in the subject line.

A person should be designated as responsible for recording minutes (e.g., the secretary of the SAC). Duties of officers, including the secretary, should also be stated in the bylaws.

For consistency and in the event of a records request, please use the SAC template (see Appendix D for Template - School Advisory Council Minutes).

Below are the sections included on the template:

- School name, date, time, and location
- Attendance
- Call to order
- Approval of previous minutes
- Principal's report
- School Improvement Plan Goals
- Old business
- New business
- Topics of concern (Non-members)
- Meeting adjournment
- Next meeting date, time, and location
- Submitted by (name and position)

District and Learning Community/Area Office Functions

District Office Functions and Responsibilities

1. Provide overall direction to schools regarding the SAC process.
2. Maintain all SAC resources located on the OCPS Internet and Intranet websites.
3. Collect, review and maintain copies of all SAC bylaws.
4. Collect, review, and maintain SAC minutes.
5. Coordinate the approval of SAC membership rosters and school improvement plans (SIP) by the School Board.
6. Maintain a district copy of SAC membership rosters, summaries of representation, and school improvement plans.
7. Maintain direct contact with the FDOE to facilitate communication between the FDOE and the district.
8. Transmit information received from the FDOE to schools and learning communities/area offices.
9. Give general guidance to learning communities/area offices and schools in all aspects of the school improvement plan process.

Learning Community Functions and Responsibilities

1. Maintain access to SAC membership rosters and summaries of representation.
2. Review and approve SAC membership rosters for representation of all school populations.
3. Review and provide feedback to school principals and leadership teams regarding the school improvement plan.

Services and Resources

Strategic Planning and Improvement

The Strategic Planning and Improvement department offers many services that will be helpful as you plan your school improvement efforts and includes school improvement planning and accreditation. Staff are available, upon request, to visit schools and meet with SACs. To communicate with a representative, contact them through email or phone listed below.

Strategic Planning and Improvement – (407) 317-3200

Director – Jennifer Sasser, jennifer.sasser@ocps.net, ext. 200-2044

Senior Administrator – Marcie Mathews, marcie.mathews@ocps.net, ext. 200-2729

Senior Administrator – Suzette Steffer, suzette.steffer@ocps.net, ext. 200-2765

Administrative Secretary – Michelle Harris, michelle.harris@ocps.net, ext. 200-2041

School Improvement

A comprehensive training session is offered to prepare principals and SAC chairpersons to participate in the school improvement process. Other types of assistance sessions are provided throughout the year, including clarification of state laws and how to meet compliance requirements.

Surveys

To conduct a needs assessment for the school improvement process, it is critical to use feedback from teachers, parents, students and community members. In order to ensure that quality data are obtained, all schools will be required to use the district accreditation surveys for their school improvement processes.

These surveys will be available in multiple languages. All schools will be required to administer a parent, student and teacher survey to meet the requirements for school improvement and district accreditation.

These required district surveys do not limit the ability of the SAC to construct and administer other surveys during the school year that may align with specific school priorities and that are not addressed by the AdvancED survey. If the SAC wishes to conduct another survey, please contact the Strategic Planning and Improvement department. Upon approval, the local survey can be administered at the school site to the appropriate population.

In the beginning of each year, the survey administration windows will be provided to schools. Participation is critical and failing to meet sample requirements will impact school improvement processes along with school and district accreditation.

Websites

The OCPS Internet and intranet websites, <http://www.ocps.net> and <http://intranet.ocps.net>, respectively, are critical for keeping informed about the progress of Orange County Public Schools. Additionally, the SAC intranet houses communication, resources, and roster deadlines at <http://ims.ocps.net/RAG/SPI/Pages/SAC.aspx>.

The FDOE website offers information pertinent to school improvement and other helpful data at <http://www.fldoe.org>.

Government in the Sunshine Law information may be found at <http://myfloridalegal.com/sunshine>.

Consult <http://www.robertsrules.com> for information on parliamentary procedure publications that will help in conducting successful SAC meetings.

Details regarding records management can be found on the OCPS Records Archiving website at <https://www.ocps.net/intranet/op/mmb/DM/RM/Pages/RecordsArchiving.aspx>.

Florida Statutes and Government in the Sunshine Laws

SACs are governed by Florida Statutes. These links will take you to the necessary websites:

Search Florida Statutes at: <http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes>

Download a (PDF) version of the 2016 Government in the Sunshine Manual at: <http://www.myfloridalegal.com/sun.nsf/sunmanual>

Appendices

- Appendix A Florida Statutes - District and School Advisory Councils
- Appendix B Involvement of the School Advisory Council in the School Budgeting Process
- Appendix C Bureau of School Improvement - School Advisory Council FAQs
- Appendix D Template - School Advisory Council Minutes
- Appendix E Template - School Advisory Council Bylaws
- Appendix F School Improvement: Year at a Glance
- Appendix G Florida Statutes - State Education Goals and Florida Education Priorities
- Appendix H School Recognition Awards

Appendix A: Florida Statutes - District and School Advisory Councils

District and School Advisory Councils Section 1001.452 of the Florida Statutes (2016)

1001.452 District and school advisory councils.—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—

- (a) The district school board shall establish an advisory council for each school in the district and shall develop procedures for the election and appointment of advisory council members. Each school advisory council shall include in its name the words “school advisory council.” The school advisory council shall be the sole body responsible for final decision making at the school relating to implementation of ss. [1001.42](#)(18) and [1008.345](#). A majority of the members of each school advisory council must be persons who are not employed by the school district. Each advisory council shall be composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community citizens who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. Career center and high school advisory councils shall include students, and middle and junior high school advisory councils may include students. School advisory councils of career centers and adult education centers are not required to include parents as members. Council members representing teachers, education support employees, students, and parents shall be elected by their respective peer groups at the school in a fair and equitable manner as follows:
1. Teachers shall be elected by teachers.
 2. Education support employees shall be elected by education support employees.
 3. Students shall be elected by students.
 4. Parents shall be elected by parents.

The district school board shall establish procedures to be used by schools in selecting business and community members that include means of ensuring wide notice of vacancies and of taking input on possible members from local business, chambers of commerce, community and civic organizations and groups, and the public at large. The district school board shall review the membership composition of each advisory council. If the district school board determines that the membership elected by the school is not representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school, the district school board shall appoint additional members to achieve proper representation. The commissioner shall determine if schools have maximized their efforts to include on their advisory councils minority persons and persons of lower socioeconomic status. Although schools are strongly encouraged to establish school advisory councils, the district school board of any school district that has a student population of 10,000 or fewer may establish a district advisory council which includes at least one duly elected teacher from each school in the district. For the purposes of school advisory councils and district advisory councils, the term “teacher” includes classroom teachers, certified student services personnel, and media specialists. For purposes of this paragraph, “education support employee” means any person employed by a school who is not defined as instructional or administrative personnel pursuant to s. [1012.01](#) and whose duties require 20 or more hours in each normal working week.

- (b) The district school board may establish a district advisory council representative of the district and composed of teachers, students, parents, and other citizens or a district advisory council that may be comprised of representatives of each school advisory council. Recognized schoolwide support groups that meet all criteria established by law or rule may function as school advisory councils.
- (c) For those schools operating for the purpose of providing educational services to youth in Department of Juvenile Justice programs, district school boards may establish a district advisory council with appropriate representatives for the purpose of developing and monitoring a district school improvement plan that encompasses all such schools in the district, pursuant to s. [1001.42](#)(18)(a).
- (d) Each school advisory council shall adopt bylaws establishing procedures for:
 - 1. Requiring a quorum to be present before a vote may be taken by the school advisory council. A majority of the membership of the council constitutes a quorum.
 - 2. Requiring at least 3 days' advance notice in writing to all members of the advisory council of any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote.
 - 3. Scheduling meetings when parents, students, teachers, businesspersons, and members of the community can attend.
 - 4. Replacing any member who has two unexcused consecutive absences from a school advisory council meeting that is noticed according to the procedures in the bylaws.
 - 5. Recording minutes of meetings.

The district school board may review all proposed bylaws of a school advisory council and shall maintain a record of minutes of council meetings.

(2) DUTIES.—Each advisory council shall perform functions prescribed by regulations of the district school board; however, no advisory council shall have any of the powers and duties now reserved by law to the district school board. Each school advisory council shall assist in the preparation and evaluation of the school improvement plan required pursuant to s. [1001.42](#)(18). With technical assistance from the Department of Education, each school advisory council shall assist in the preparation of the school's annual budget and plan as required by s. [1008.385](#)(1). A portion of funds provided in the annual General Appropriations Act for use by school advisory councils must be used for implementing the school improvement plan.

Appendix B: Involvement of the School Advisory Council in the School Budgeting Process

The purpose of this document is to provide recommendations on the process to involve the SAC in the development of the school's budget. While the law is specific in stating that the SAC needs to be involved in the development of the school budget and the expenditure of School Improvement Funds, it is not specific as to guidelines to be used in that determination.

The following recommendations focus on what principals can do to educate and prepare SAC members to provide effective input into the budget process at SAC meetings. The recommendations are based on the citations in state statute. Any interpretation of these recommendations must be guided by the statute and must be interpreted consistently. Review section 1001.42(18)(a), section 1001.452(2), and section 24.121(5)(c) of the Florida Statutes (2016) that refer to SACs and the school budget.

1. Create a Common Vision

- a) Discuss a shared vision among school leaders and SAC members regarding the relationship between the school's budget and the school improvement goals.

2. Provide Education for SAC Members

- a) Provide an explanation of the statutes that affect the SAC and the school's budget.
- b) Discuss the roles of stakeholders.
- c) Share budget allocations and curriculum needs and plans.
- d) Explain new programs and district initiatives.
- e) Explain budgeting procedures such as:
 - i. Timelines
 - ii. Discretionary and categorical funds
 - iii. School budget and school improvement funds
 - iv. Appropriations
 - v. Significant changes for the year
 - vi. The school-based budget process

3. Provide for the Reporting of Expenditures

- a) Report periodically to the SAC the status of the general budget and school improvement fund.

Appendix C: Bureau of School Improvement - School Advisory Council FAQs

1. What is a School Advisory Council?

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is a school-based group intended to represent the school, the community, and those persons closest to the students that shares responsibility for supporting the school's continuous improvement.

The district school board is responsible, by Florida law, for establishing an advisory council for each school in the district and developing procedures for the election and appointment of advisory council members. Each SAC must include in its name the words "school advisory council." For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(a), F.S.

2. What is the role of the SAC?

The SAC is responsible for final decision-making at the school relating to the annual implementation of a school improvement plan (SIP). The SAC assists in the annual preparation of both the SIP and the school's annual budget, as well as the evaluation of the SIP. For further information, see Section 1001.452 (2), F.S.

3. Who serves on the SAC?

A SAC should be composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community citizens who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. Certain members are elected by their peers, business and community members are appointed by the SAC, and the principal automatically serves. Only students in secondary schools serve on a SAC. It is also a requirement that the majority of the members of the SAC are not employed by the school district. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(a), F.S.

In alignment with Best Practices in Inclusive Education (BPIE), BSI encourages the inclusion of parents of children with disabilities on SACs, as well as teachers or support employees whose primary role involves working with students with disabilities, in an effort to achieve representation of an entire school community.

4. Is a charter school required to have a SAC?

No. Section 1002.33(16)(a), F.S., exempts charter schools from most statutes in chapters 1000-1013, including s. 1001.452, F.S.—establishment of school advisory councils.

5. Are Department of Juvenile Justice programs required to have SACs?

Yes. Pursuant to Section 1001.452(1)(a), F.S., district school boards are required to establish a SAC and annually approve a SIP for each non-charter school in the district, including schools operating for the purpose of providing educational services to students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) programs.

However, Section 1001.452(1)(c), F.S., allows districts the flexibility of establishing a single district school advisory council for the purpose of developing and monitoring a district school improvement plan that encompasses all DJJ programs within the district.

6. Do SAC meetings fall under the Sunshine Law?

Yes. All meetings of any board or commission of any state agency or authority, or of any agency or authority of any county, municipal corporation, or political subdivision, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution, at which official acts are to be taken, are declared to be public meetings open to the public at all times. No resolution, rule, or formal action of a SAC shall be considered binding unless taken or made at meetings that have been made open to the public. The board or commission must provide reasonable notice of all such meetings. For further information, see Section 286.011(1), F.S. and Informal Opinion, February 17, 1995, Attorney General's Office.

7. How much funding is allotted to each SAC?

The annual General Appropriations Act provides funds for the Florida School Recognition program to each SAC with up to \$5.00 per unweighted, full-time enrolled (FTE) student to be used for implementing the school improvement plan. If funds are insufficient to provide \$5.00 per student after the distribution of school recognition funds, the available funds will be prorated. The money is sent by FDOE to each district, which forwards allocations to each local school's SAC. For further information, see Sections 1001.42(18)(d), F.S. and 24.121(5)(c), F.S.

8. Who provides training for new SAC members?

The district office is responsible for training. Some education consortia also provide training. The Bureau of School Improvement provides technical assistance and guidance on statutory requirements pertaining to SACs.

9. What topics are typically covered in SAC trainings?

Topics generally covered in SAC trainings include, but are not limited to

- Structure, purpose, and role
- Family involvement
- Way of work
- Needs assessments
- Data collection and analysis
 - Local demographic data
 - School test scores
 - School grades and AYP
- School climate surveys
- Developing and communicating the SIP to stakeholder
- Evaluation of the SIP

10. Does the law require the composition of SACs to reflect the racial balance of the student population attending the school?

No. An advisory legal opinion from the Florida Attorney General's Office issued on April 8, 2008, indicates that the composition of the SAC must reflect the ethnic, racial, and economic community in the geographic area served by the school—rather than the district at large or the actual student population attending the school. For further information, please see Advisory Legal Opinion AGO 2008-16, Attorney General's Office.

11. Who serves as chair of the SAC?

Any member can be elected to serve as chair. The Bureau of School Improvement recommends that neither a principal (in order to invite greater shareholder involvement) nor a student (due to limited experience and maturity) fills this role. Some schools elect co-chairs so that a parent or community member and a school-based member can lead jointly.

12. Who serves as the SAC secretary?

Any member of a SAC may serve as the council's secretary. Depending on the SAC's bylaws, the secretary may be appointed by the chair or selected by the committee through majority vote.

13. Who serves as the SAC treasurer?

As with the secretary, any SAC member may serve as the council's treasurer. Depending on the SAC's bylaws, the treasurer may be appointed by the chair or selected by the committee through majority vote.

14. How are business and community members selected?

The district school board is responsible for establishing procedures for selecting business and community members. This includes a means of ensuring wide notice of vacancies and seeking input on possible members from local businesses, chambers of commerce, community and civic organizations, and the public at large. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1) (a), F.S.

15. How are elections conducted?

The nomination and election procedures should be fair, equitable, and clearly outlined in the SAC's adopted bylaws. The SAC must represent teachers, education employees, parents, and students who are elected by their respective peer groups at the school as follows:

- Teachers must be elected by teachers
- Education support employees must be elected by education support employees
- Parents must be elected by parents
- Students must be elected by students

Voting can occur at meetings or by mail, using written ballots or a show of hands. Ballots are counted, recorded, and retained. Ballots and voting records should be kept by a SAC officer, and the results are to be reflected in the official SAC minutes. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(a), F.S.

16. Are persons serving as a SAC member required to submit to background checks?

Yes. Districts are required to check volunteers' names with the sexual offender/predator database pursuant to Section 943.04351, F.S. However, districts have the authority to develop additional policies regarding criminal background checks for school-based volunteers. Please contact your local school district office for further information.

17. What are the responsibilities of the SAC chair?

The chair is responsible for notifying members of upcoming meetings and votes. The chair, or designee, will facilitate the SAC meetings and inform the SAC of relevant issues related to school improvement activities. They also ensure that a quorum is present before an action item on the agenda comes to a vote and works in collaboration with the SAC secretary to ensure minutes are recorded and filed promptly.

18. What are the responsibilities of the principal?

The principal ensures the council is comprised of properly elected representatives, provides leadership in the development, revision, and implementation of the school improvement plan, submits the SAC-approved SIP to the district for school board approval, and keeps members informed of relevant policies and activities of the school, district, and state. Principals are required to serve on their school's SAC. For more information, see Section 1001.452 (1)(a), F.S.

19. What are the responsibilities of the secretary?

The secretary is responsible for keeping accurate, complete minutes and ensuring those records are accessible to the public (e.g., posted on school or district website). They also ensure that a copy of the minutes and agenda are kept in an official, designated location in the front office of the school. Additionally, the secretary is responsible for keeping accurate record of the council's membership, attendance, duties, and special assignments.

20. What are the responsibilities of the treasurer?

In general, a treasurer manages an organization's finance and operating budgets. SAC treasurers maintain accurate record of a school's school improvement fund allocations and budget for the year. The treasurer may provide guidance to the council on allowable and unallowable (e.g., capital improvements at the school, programs that extend more than one year) expenditures. See Section 24.121(5) (c), F.S. for more information on allowable expenses.

21. Can members who have been absent be replaced?

Yes. When replacing any member who has two or more consecutive unexcused absences from SAC meetings, the SAC will follow the procedures outlined in its bylaws or in district policies. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(d)4, F.S.

22. How much notice is given to SAC members for agenda items?

Section 1001.452(1)(d)2., F.S., requires SACs to give at least three business days advance notice in writing to all members of the SAC on any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote. This requirement ensures that members are notified of the vote to take place so that the SAC will have the necessary quorum. Meeting dates can be posted on school web sites, marquees or bulletin boards, published in newsletters, announcements or local newspapers, or broadcast on TV. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(d)2, F.S.

23. How and when should a SAC notice an upcoming meeting to the public?

Because SACs fall under the purview of open government laws, reasonable notice of all meetings must be provided to the public. More information can be found in the Government in the Sunshine Manual, which is provided by the Attorney General's Office. Though "reasonable notice" is not defined in law, the following notice guidelines are suggested:

- The notice should contain the time and place of the meeting, and if available, an agenda, or if no agenda is available, a statement of the general subject matter to be considered.
- The notice should be prominently displayed in the school front office and accessible upon request.
- The notice should be made to the public at least 10 days in advance, as many stakeholders in education are parents who may need ample notice to make childcare arrangements or request time off from their employers.

24. Can SAC meetings be held virtually?

No, SAC meetings cannot be held virtually. According to the Attorney General's Office, the authorization in s. 120.54(5)(b)2., F.S., meetings conducted entirely through the use of communications media technology are only permitted for state agencies. A quorum of any other public board must be physically present at a meeting – (e.g., school advisory councils, school boards, etc.).

However, if a quorum of a local board is physically present, "the participation of an absent member by telephone conference or other interactive electronic technology is permissible when such absence is due to extraordinary circumstances such as illness... whether the absence of a member due to a scheduling conflict constitutes such a circumstance is a determination that must be made in the good judgment of the board" (AGO 03-41).

25. When should SAC meetings generally be scheduled?

SAC meetings are to be scheduled when parents, students, teachers, businesspersons, and members of the community are able to attend. Location and time of day are important considerations for promoting attendance and participation. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(d)3, F.S.

26. What is a quorum?

A majority of the membership of the council, i.e., more than half, constitutes a quorum. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(d)1, F.S.

27. Are meeting minutes required?

Yes. Minutes should include the name of the school, a list of those in attendance, the date and location of the meeting, an official call to order, old and new business, the date and location of the next meeting (if known), and the time the meeting adjourned. Any actions items voted on by the SAC should also be reflected in the minutes.

28. Who develops the SAC bylaws?

Each School Advisory Council adopts its own bylaws. The district may require procedures, policies, sample by-laws or a uniform template for all SACs in their district. For further information, see Section 1001.452(1)(d), F.S. or contact your district SAC liaison.

Appendix D: Template - School Advisory Council Minutes

**«School Name»
School Advisory Council (SAC) Meeting Minutes
«Date and Time» «Location»**

Attendance:

Call to Order:

Approval of Previous Minutes:

Principal's Report (Announcements/HR & Budget Updates):

School Improvement Plan Goals:

Old Business:

New Business:

Topics of Concern (Non-Members):

Meeting Adjournment:

Next Meeting Date, Time, and Location:

Submitted by: «Name & Position»

Email approved minutes and agenda to sac@ocps.net.

Duties of SAC members shall include:
Section 1001.452(2) of the Florida Statutes (2016)

- Assist in the preparation and evaluation of the school improvement plan
- Identify the appropriate use of school improvement dollars for implementing the approved school improvement plan, if funds are available from the Florida Department of Education
- Operate in compliance with Florida Law
- Assist in the preparation of the school's annual budget

Appendix E: Template - School Advisory Council Bylaws

«School Name» School Advisory Council Bylaws

These bylaws were ratified by the «School Name» School Advisory Council on «Date».

Article I: «School Name»

The name of the organization shall be the «School Name» School Advisory Council, hereinafter referred to as the “SAC.”

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of the SAC is to assist in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the school improvement plan required pursuant to section 1001.452 of the Florida Statutes (2016). It shall perform such functions as are prescribed by the regulations of the school board; however, it shall not have any of the powers and duties reserved by law to the school board.

Article III: Duties

According to section 1001.452(2) of the Florida Statutes (2016),

Each advisory council shall perform functions prescribed by regulations of the district school board; however, no advisory council shall have any of the powers and duties now reserved by law to the district school board. Each school advisory council shall assist in the preparation and evaluation of the school improvement plan required pursuant to section 1001.42(18) of the Florida Statutes (2016). With technical assistance from the Department of Education, each school advisory council shall assist in the preparation of the school’s annual budget and plan as required by section 1008.385(1) of the Florida Statutes (2016). A portion of funds provided in the annual General Appropriations Act for use by school advisory councils must be used for implementing the school improvement plan.

Article IV: Representation and Elections

Representation:

1. Each SAC shall be composed of the principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community citizens who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school.
2. There shall be members elected to the council from each of the following constituent groups. A majority (51%) of the members of this school advisory council must be persons who are not employees of the school district.
 - a. Teachers shall be elected by teachers.
 - b. Education support employees shall be elected by education support employees.
 - c. Students shall be elected by students (Career center and high school advisory councils shall include students, and middle and junior high school advisory councils may include students).
 - d. Parents shall be elected by parents.
 - e. Business and community leaders shall be appointed by the principal.

Elections:

Elections of members shall take place after the school year begins in August and prior to the September SAC meeting. SAC members representing teachers, education support employees, and parents shall be elected by their representative peer groups. Proper notice of the election of council members shall be given according to section 1001.452(1)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016).

Election of Members:

1. Information about SAC and identified vacancies are sent to all parents, school-based employees, and Partners in Education.
2. Candidates notify the principal or previous year's SAC chair of their interest in serving on SAC and complete a brief information statement.
3. Statements are compiled and sent to all respective groups with ballots. Ballots for parent members shall be distributed one ballot per family.
4. Ballots are returned to the school office or other designated location.
5. The SAC chair, principal, and other SAC members shall open and count ballots at an advertised place and time.

Article V: Voting Procedures

1. A quorum shall be 51% of the total SAC membership. Votes may only be taken if a quorum is present.
2. Decisions shall be made by consensus whenever possible. In the event a vote is taken, passage will require a simple majority (51%) of quorum.
3. There shall be no voting by proxy.
4. There shall be no secret ballots.
5. All voting shall take place at an open meeting (not by phone, email, or any other non-public way) in compliance with the section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes (2016).

Article VI: Tenure

1. Elected SAC members may assume their duties upon election.
2. Appointed SAC members shall serve for a period of one year or until the next election, whichever comes first.
3. There shall be no limit on the number of terms a member may serve. SAC members may serve until they choose to resign, their children no longer attend «School Name», or they are removed due to absences.
4. SAC membership is limited to one member per family.
5. Absences may be excused by a majority vote of the quorum.
6. Members who have two consecutive unexcused absences, or any three unexcused absences from regularly scheduled meetings, will be removed from the council with a majority vote from the quorum and replaced according to the election procedures stated in these bylaws.
7. Parent members must have a child enrolled at «School Name». If the child leaves «School Name» during the parent's term of office, then the parent shall vacate his or her seat and a vacancy shall exist.
8. Vacancies of members shall be filled from those who unsuccessfully ran for office, meet the composition requirements of the vacancy, and had the highest number of votes. If there are no candidates who meet these criteria, the SAC shall fill the vacancy by simple majority vote.

Article VII: Meetings

1. Meetings shall be held beginning in «Date». Dates and meeting times shall be determined at the September meeting. All meetings will be scheduled when parents, students, teachers, business and community members can attend.
2. Emergency meetings shall only be called if jointly agreed upon by the SAC chair and the principal, and shall abide by all the guidelines of a regular meeting.
3. Meetings of the SAC or its subcommittees shall be held in accordance with section 286.011 of the Florida Statutes (2016).
4. Meetings shall be open to the public, accessible to the handicapped, and scheduled so that all members can attend.
 - a. A specific time will be set aside on the agenda for input by non-members.
 - b. Time limits will be set on any presentation to the SAC.
5. Meetings shall be noticed as follows:
 - a. Requiring at least three days' advance notice in writing to all members of the SAC of any matter that is scheduled to come before the council for a vote.
 - b. The notice shall contain the time and place of the meeting and an agenda. The agenda will include items scheduled to come before the SAC for a vote. The agenda will be sent no less than three days prior to the scheduled SAC meeting.
 - c. The notice and agenda shall be prominently displayed in the area of the school set aside for that purpose.
 - d. Emergency and cancellation of meetings shall be afforded the most appropriate and effective notice under the circumstances and shall have at least 24 hours reasonable notice to the public.

Article VIII: Duties of Officers

1. The SAC shall have three officers: the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the Secretary. They shall be elected at the September meeting by simple majority vote. At least one of the officers shall be a non-school employee.
2. The duties of the Chair shall include:
 - a. Preside at meetings
 - b. Develop last-minute or emergency agenda items with the principal
 - c. Appoint subcommittee chairs
 - d. Notify all members of upcoming meeting dates
 - e. Inform SAC of relevant training
 - f. Assist principal with presentation of school improvement plan to the community
3. The duties of Vice-Chair shall include:
 - a. Assumes the duties of the Chair if the Chair is absent or vacates the position
 - b. Assist principal with annual surveys
4. The duties of Secretary shall include:
 - a. Record minutes of meetings
 - b. Keep annual attendance records
 - c. Track expenditures from school improvement funds and maintain SAC financial records
 - d. SAC correspondence
 - e. Send minutes to members with the next month's agenda
 - f. Provide public notice of all SAC meetings
5. If a vacancy occurs in the office of Vice-Chair or Secretary, the SAC shall fill the vacancy by simple majority vote.
6. An officer may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of the full SAC.

Article IX: Parliamentary Procedures

The SAC Chair will refer to “Robert’s Rules of Order Revised” when conducting the SAC meetings (<http://www.rulesonline.com/>).

Article X: Amendments

1. The bylaws shall be reviewed at the April and September meetings.
2. Amendment recommendations shall be advertised for 30 calendar days.
3. Approval of bylaw amendments shall require a two-thirds vote of quorum.

Email revised bylaws to sac@ocps.net annually.

Appendix F: School Improvement: Year at a Glance

Task or Activity	Timeframe
1. Organize and conduct elections of new SAC members	May – September
2. Principal appoints business and community leaders to the SAC	May – September
3. Vote on the disbursement of school recognition funds	May – January
4. Share AdvancED survey results with stakeholders	May – September
5. Prepare to complete a draft of next year's SIP with the SAC	May – July
6. Use FSA results, EWS data, AdvancED survey data, and other school-based data in developing SIP	June – October
7. Complete final SIP according to the timeline designated by your learning community/area office	August – October
8. Review new SAC membership for balance and representation	September – October
9. Enter membership names on the SAC Entry Roster tool and balance membership and representation sac.ocps.net	September – October
10. Review mid-year data	November – January
11. Complete SIP mid-year reflection	January – February
12. Involve SAC in the preparation of the upcoming school budget	January – March
13. Hold a planning and reflection session to review year-end results for the current year and identify potential SIP focus areas for upcoming school year	May – June

Appendix G: Florida Statutes - State Education Goals and Florida Education Priorities**State Education Goals**

Section 1008.31(2)(c) of the Florida Statutes (2016)

1008.31 Florida's K-20 education performance accountability system; legislative intent; mission, goals, and system wide measures; data quality improvements.—

(2) The Board of Governors of the State University System establish performance measures and set performance standards for individual state universities, including actual completion rates.

(c) The Department of Education shall maintain an accountability system that measures student progress toward the following goals:

1. Highest student achievement, as indicated by evidence of student learning gains at all levels.
2. Seamless articulation and maximum access, as measured by evidence of progression, readiness, and access by targeted groups of students identified by the Commissioner of Education.
3. Skilled workforce and economic development, as measured by evidence of employment and earnings.
4. Quality efficient services, as measured by evidence of return on investment.
5. Other goals as identified by law or rule.

Florida Education Priorities

School improvement plans shall be designed to achieve the State education priorities pursuant to section 1000.03(5) of the Florida Statutes (2016) and student performance in section 1001.42(18)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016).

Section 1000.03(5) of the Florida Statutes (2016)

1000.03 Function, mission, and goals of the Florida K-20 education system.—

(5) The priorities of Florida's K-20 education system include:

- (a) Learning and completion at all levels, including increased high school graduation rate and readiness for postsecondary education without remediation.—All students demonstrate increased learning and completion at all levels, graduate from high school, and are prepared to enter postsecondary education without remediation.
- (b) Student performance.—Students demonstrate that they meet the expected academic standards consistently at all levels of their education.
- (c) Alignment of standards and resources.—Academic standards for every level of the K-20 education system are aligned, and education financial resources are aligned with student performance expectations at each level of the K-20 education system.
- (d) Educational leadership.—The quality of educational leadership at all levels of K-20 education is improved.
- (e) Workforce education.—Workforce education is appropriately aligned with the skills required by the new global economy.

-
- (f) Parental, student, family, educational institution, and community involvement.—Parents, students, families, educational institutions, and communities are collaborative partners in education, and each plays an important role in the success of individual students. Therefore, the State of Florida cannot be the guarantor of each individual student's success. The goals of Florida's K-20 education system are not guarantees that each individual student will succeed or that each individual school will perform at the level indicated in the goals.
- (g) Comprehensive K-20 career and education planning.—It is essential that Florida's K-20 education system better prepare all students at every level for the transition from school to postsecondary education or work by providing information regarding:
1. Career opportunities, educational requirements associated with each career, educational institutions that prepare students to enter each career, and student financial aid available to pursue postsecondary instruction required to enter each career.
 2. How to make informed decisions about the program of study that best addresses the students' interests and abilities while preparing them to enter postsecondary education or the workforce.
 3. Recommended coursework and programs that prepare students for success in their areas of interest and ability.

Section 1001.42(18)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016)

1001.42 Powers and duties of district school board.—

(18) IMPLEMENT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY. —Maintain a system of school improvement and education accountability as provided by statute and State Board of Education rule. This system of school improvement and education accountability shall be consistent with, and implemented through, the district's continuing system of planning and budgeting required by this section and ss. [1008.385](#), [1010.01](#), and [1011.01](#). This system of school improvement and education accountability shall comply with the provisions of ss. [1008.33](#), [1008.34](#), [1008.345](#), and [1008.385](#) and include the following:

(a) *School improvement plans.—*

1. The district school board shall annually approve and require implementation of a new, amended, or continuation school improvement plan for each school in the district. If a school has a significant gap in achievement on statewide, standardized assessments administered pursuant to s. [1008.22](#) by one or more student subgroups, as defined in the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), 20 U.S.C. s. 6311(b)(2)(C)(v)(II); has not significantly increased the percentage of students passing statewide, standardized assessments; has not significantly increased the percentage of students demonstrating Learning Gains, as defined in s. [1008.34](#) and as calculated under s. [1008.34](#)(3)(b), who passed statewide, standardized assessments; or has significantly lower graduation rates for a subgroup when compared to the state's graduation rate, that school's improvement plan shall include strategies for improving these results. The state board shall adopt rules establishing thresholds and for determining compliance with this subparagraph.

2. A school that includes any of grades 6, 7, or 8 shall include annually in its school improvement plan information and data on the school's early warning system required under paragraph (b), including a list of the early warning indicators used in the system, the number of students identified by the system as exhibiting two or more early warning indicators, the number of students by grade level that exhibit each early warning indicator, and a description of all intervention strategies employed by the school to improve the academic performance of students identified by the early warning system. In addition, a school that includes any of grades 6, 7, or 8 shall describe in its school improvement plan the strategies used by the school to implement the instructional practices for middle grades emphasized by the district's professional development system pursuant to s. [1012.98](#)(4)(b)9.

Appendix H: School Recognition Awards

Schools that receive an “A” grade, making excellent progress, or demonstrate exemplary improvement due to innovation and effort by improving at least one letter grade or by improving more than one letter grade and sustaining the improvement the following school year are eligible for School Recognition funds. Each year the legislature allocates funds for this program. The allocation is up to \$100 per full-time equivalent (FTE) student for each qualifying school. The statute (Fla. Stat. § 1008.36(5), 2016) requires that the school staff and SAC jointly decide how to use the financial award. If school staff and the SAC cannot reach agreement by February 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching at the school. These legal requirements are also affected by the Government in the Sunshine Law and have a serious impact for schools, such as when a faculty meeting or faculty committee will be discussing the award money. If more than one SAC member is on the committee or in the faculty meeting, notice of the meeting must be given. The meeting is then a public meeting, and the public can attend. Some things to consider if you receive the recognition money include the following:

- If a teacher is on the SAC, it would be better not to have that teacher be on a faculty committee to discuss the award.
- If performance awards are discussed at a faculty meeting, faculty SAC members can be excused from the meeting.

As specified in section 1008.36(5) of the Florida Statutes (2016), schools must use their awards for one or any combination of the following:

- (a) Nonrecurring bonuses to the faculty and staff;
- (b) Nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials to assist in maintaining and improving student performance; or
- (c) Temporary personnel for the school to assist in maintaining and improving student performance.

The purpose of this document is to provide recommendations on the process to use in deciding how school recognition funds should be distributed. While the law is specific in stating that distribution must be determined jointly by the school’s staff and school advisory council, it is not specific as to guidelines to be used in that determination. Several schools have had conflicts with the process in previous years.

The recommendations below are based on the School Recognition Program state statute. Any interpretation of these recommendations must be guided by the statute and must be interpreted consistently.

Issues were identified and used to develop a survey, which was sent to each school in the district.

The results of the survey were used to develop the following recommendations for each question listed below.

1. At what time of the year are decisions made?

Consider developing a plan during the previous spring before the grades are released to determine who is to be included in the awards. This way decisions can be considered before stakeholders have a personal stake in the decisions. This timeline will make it easier to finalize the plan before the February 1 deadline. If school staff and the school advisory council cannot reach agreement by February 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all classroom teachers currently teaching in the school.

Section 1008.36(4) of the Florida Statutes (2016) refers to classroom teachers. In section 1012.01(2)(a) of the Florida Statutes (2016), classroom teachers are defined as follows:

(2)(a) Classroom teachers.—Classroom teachers are staff members assigned the professional activity of instructing students in courses in classroom situations, including basic instruction, exceptional student education, career education, and adult education, including substitute teachers.

2. What needs to be done to lay the groundwork or build awareness of the School Recognition Program?

- Review section 1008.36 of the Florida Statutes (2016) regarding the Florida School Recognition Program.
- Provide an organized set of materials as a resource for SACs and school staff.
- Consult the district website for information about recommended best practices.
- Clarify roles prior to the beginning of the process so that both the staff and SAC know and understand their roles in the process.
- Provide specific timelines for the process and amount of money available to all who will be involved.

3. How are committees formed to make the decisions?

- Consider forming one committee of SAC, faculty, and other school staff. Consideration should be given to include representatives of all staff groups. It is important that the committee represent all groups and solicit and include feedback from all groups in the school.
- Once the committee has been formed, they should be empowered by the principal to make recommendations.
- The principal should decide on his or her role in advance. He or she should consider not being a member of the committee.
- The committee needs to be oriented at the beginning of the process about the requirements and expectations, including all statutory requirements. Reviewing section 1008.36 of the Florida Statutes (2016) is a good place to begin.
- The committee should bring back recommendations to the staff and the SAC for approval by both groups.
- The committee should strive for consensus, if at all possible.
- The principal should share with the committee any relevant information needed in making recommendations.

-
4. About what percent of funds has your school allocated to staff bonuses compared to school program funds?

The survey data reflected that funds are generally divided between bonuses for staff and funds to improve the school. The majority of schools reported that bonuses ranged between 70-100% of funds. Specifically, 31% of schools surveyed reported bonuses of 91-100%; 51% of schools reported bonuses of 71-90%; and 17% reported bonuses of 70% or less. The average bonus reported was 80%.

5. Who are included in bonuses?

Everyone surveyed thought all staff should be included in bonuses. Some principals who receive bonuses may opt out or contribute their bonuses to the benefit of the school.

6. How does the size of bonus vary by category of staff?

Schools handle this issue in various ways. To avoid divisiveness, schools may consider an equal way to allocate funds, either by dollar amount or percent of salary. If bonuses are not allocated equally, the committee needs to be prepared to justify any decisions for non-equal distribution. Committees involved in the process need to be sure the justification is valid and will be acceptable to the different categories of staff.

7. How are new and previous staff included?

- According to the survey, returning staff are always included.
- Schools may consider giving new staff partial bonuses. Survey results showed some schools do give partial bonuses.
- Schools may consider new staff that come from a school that also received an award. Consider whether such staff should receive two bonuses or be given the opportunity to choose which bonus they prefer.
- Most schools do not include previous staff who have left.
- Schools may consider faculty and other staff who have been involuntarily transferred. Those who voluntarily transfer should likewise be mindful that they might miss receiving a bonus in the coming year.

8. How does the principal participate in the process?

Most principals reported that they do not try to influence the allocations of funds. The principal may organize and delegate to others the decision-making roles and/or may facilitate the process as a non-influential party.

The school budget committee, charged with the task of overseeing the budget, should work closely with the SAC or perhaps be a subcommittee of the SAC in order to ensure that school funds and other resources have a close relationship to the highest priorities of the school listed in the school improvement plan. Review Appendix B (Involvement of the School Advisory Council in the School Budgeting Process) for recommendations regarding the budget process and the SAC.

If you have questions related to recognition funds, call your school's budget contact at the district office or your learning community/area office supervisor.

The SAC Guide may be printed from the OCPS website.
<http://ims.ocps.net/RAG/SPI/Pages/SAC.aspx>

The School Board of Orange County, Florida, does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities, on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, national origin, marital status, disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other reason prohibited by law. The following individuals at the Ronald Blocker Educational Leadership Center, 445 W. Amelia Street, Orlando, Florida 32801, attend to compliance matters: ADA Coordinator & Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Officer: Carianne Reggio; Section 504 Coordinator: Latonia Green; Title IX Coordinator: Doug Patterson. (407.317.3200)