

'Appendix A'

Information for Parents 2019 School Council Elections

What is a school council and what does it do?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally formed bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within centrally provided guidelines. In doing this, a school council is able to directly influence the quality of education that the school provides for its students.

Who is on the school council?

There are three possible categories of membership:

- **A Mandated Elected Parent Category.** More than one third of the total members must be from this category. Department of Education and Training (DET) employees can be Parent members at their child's school as long as they are not employed at the school.
- **A Mandated Elected DET Employee Category.** Members of this category may make up no more than one third of the total membership of school council. The principal of the school is automatically one of these members.
- **A Mandated Student Member Category.** All schools with Year 7 students and above have a mandated student member category. All students enrolled at the school are eligible to nominate for membership.
- **An Optional Community Member Category.** Its members are appointed by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DET employees are not eligible to be Community members.

The term of office for all members is two years.

Why is Parent membership so important?

Parents on school councils provide important viewpoints and have valuable skills that can help shape the direction of the school. Those parents who become active on a school council find their involvement satisfying in itself and may also find that their children feel a greater sense of belonging.

How can you become involved?

The most obvious way is to vote in the elections, which are held in Term 1 each year. However, ballots are only held if more people nominate as candidates than there are positions vacant. In view of this, you might seriously consider standing for election as a member of the school council or encouraging another person to stand for election.

Do I need special experience to be on school council?

No. What you do need is an interest in your child's school and the desire to work in partnership with others to help shape the school's future.

What do you need to do to stand for election?

The Principal will issue a notice and call for nominations following the commencement of Term 1 each year. All school council elections must be completed by the end of March.

If you decide to stand for election, you can arrange for someone to nominate you as a candidate or you can nominate yourself in the Parent Category.

DET employees whose child is enrolled in a school in which they are not employed are eligible to nominate as parents for the school council where their child is enrolled.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the Principal within the time stated on the notice of election.

If there are more nominations received than there are vacancies on council, a ballot will be conducted during the two weeks after the call for nominations has closed.

Remember

- Ask at the school for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do
- Consider standing for election to council this year
- Contact the Principal for further information.