



OHPIKINÂHWASO
MASINAHIKAN

PARENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE HANDBOOK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
MESC PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	3
ROLE OF A MESC PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE	4
Purpose of a MESC Parent Advisory Committee	4
A School PAC may offer assistance with the school in planning for;	4
PAC functions include:	5
Roles that are not to be taken on by a PAC include:	5
MESC PAC OPERATIONS	5
Establishment meeting to set up Parent Advisory Committee	5
Notice of establishment meeting	6
Establishment meeting agenda	6
Bylaws of Parent Advisory Committee	7
Suspension of school PAC	7
Remuneration of school PAC members	8
Prohibition against Incorporation	8
Donations	8
Duty to report to the MESC Board of Governors	8
Code of Ethics All PAC members shall:	8
MESC Circle of Parents (COP)	9
RESOURCES AND REFERENCES	11
APPENDICES	12
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	23

1. **INTRODUCTION**

Maskwacis Education Schools Commission (MESC) and Parent Advisory Committees (PAC) recognizes parents as the first teachers and prime source of inspiration in the lives of their children.

The MASKWACIS CREE DECLARATION ON EDUCATION, MESC affirms that:

“Parents and the community will be involved and engaged in all aspects of learning. Elders will be involved in the daily lives of students, through sharing our oral history, ceremonies, and storytelling. We affirm that it takes strong parental, elder and community leadership to ensure the success of our children's education”*

It is essential that teachers, school principals, administrators, Board of Governors, and the community, in general, form a working partnership with the parents to provide a positive, protected, enriched environment in which children will be inspired to learn.

Consistent with the tradition of Wahkohtowin, MESC recognizes the importance of a formal organization to enhance communication among the school, the parents, the community, and the Board.

MESC, as outlined in section 11 of the MASKWACIS EDUCATION LAW, will establish a Parent Advisory Committee at each of its schools. (see appendix a)

**Language in section I comes from approved MESC documents*

2. **MESC PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Parent Advisory Committees (PAC) are collective associations of volunteers composed of parents, teachers, principals, staff, and Maskwacis representatives.

For clarification, “parent” as used in this document is intended to encompass the people in the child’s life that are the caregivers of the child.

The intent of the PAC is to be inclusive for caregivers and not exclusive to only legal parents and guardians.

2.1. Membership in a MESC PAC must include the following;

- 2.1.1. the principal of the school;
- 2.1.2. at least one person who is a teacher at the school, elected or appointed by the teachers at the school; and
- 2.1.3. parents of students enrolled in the school;
- 2.1.4. The principal of a MESC PAC may establish a process to appoint members of the PAC; one or more persons who are not parents of students enrolled in the school, but who have an interest in the school. A school elder would be one example.

3. ROLE OF A MESC PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The actions of the school PAC must reflect the expectations, foundational values and beliefs of MESC.

3.1. Purpose of a MESC Parent Advisory Committee

- 3.1.1. Parent Advisory Committees (PAC) perform an important advisory role at schools. They help ensure the parent and Maskwacis perspective is represented in school decision-making to ensure a positive, protected, enriched environment in which children will be inspired to learn.
- 3.1.2. PAC's share approved information about the school with the Maskwacis community.

3.2. A School PAC may offer assistance with the school in planning for;

- 3.2.1. strategies for shaping the culture and climate of the school
- 3.2.2. language and traditional teachings offered in the school
- 3.2.3. the school's handbook
- 3.2.4. recommendations for use of school facilities by the larger community; and
- 3.2.5. extracurricular activities offered in the school.

3.3. PAC functions include:

- 3.3.1. performing any duty or function delegated by the MESC Board of Governors within the scope of their duties outlined in section 3.2;
- 3.3.2. sharing ideas and approved information with other school PACs and education organizations, and
- 3.3.3. creating procedures that relate to the operations of the PAC as outlined in section 8.

3.4. Roles that are not to be taken on by a PAC include:

- 3.4.1. school governance;
- 3.4.2. employment issues;
- 3.4.3. School management;
- 3.4.4. Transportation;
- 3.4.5. an individual student or parent concerns/appeals; and
- 3.4.6. A school PAC may not receive donations on behalf of the school and no school PAC shall raise funds or otherwise solicit donations in any manner.

4. MESC PAC OPERATIONS

4.1. Establishment meeting to set up Parent Advisory Committee

- 4.1.1. If a school does not have a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), the school must, within 60 days after the start of the school year, hold a meeting for the purpose of establishing a PAC.
- 4.1.2. If fewer than three (3) parents are in attendance at an establishment meeting or if the meeting is not successful in establishing a PAC, the principal may adjourn the meeting to a later date. The principal may then establish a

committee to carry out one or more duties or functions of a PAC in the interim until a PAC is established.

4.1.2.1. Any committee established under subsection 4.1.2. is dissolved on the establishment of a PAC.

4.1.3. The Term of the PAC will be that MESC school calendar year.

5. Notice of establishment meeting

5.1. The principal must give notice of the establishment meeting to the following persons:

5.1.1. a parent of each student enrolled in the school;

5.1.2. the school staff; and

5.1.3. other members of the school community who, in the principal's opinion, should be given notice.

5.2. A notice under section 5.1 must

5.2.1. describe the purpose of the meeting;

5.2.2. set out the time, date and location of the meeting, and

5.2.3. be given at least 10 school days before the date of the meeting.

5.2.4. be given by any means the principal considers appropriate, including electronic means.

6. Establishment meeting agenda

6.1. The principal must decide who is to act as the Chair and who is to act as the Secretary at an establishment meeting.

6.2. The Chair of the PAC must be a parent of a child enrolled in that school.

- 6.2.1. A member who is not a parent may be elected chair if no such parent is willing to be nominated as chair.
- 6.3. Issues a school PAC should address once it has been established
 - 6.3.1. a mission statement or statement of philosophy;
 - 6.3.2. establish or review by-laws;
 - 6.3.3. identify and define the responsibilities of officers of the PAC;
 - 6.3.4. confidentiality regarding discussions on parents, staff or students; and
 - 6.3.5. training for the Chair and any other in-service required in operating a successful PAC.

7. Bylaws of Parent Advisory Committee

- 7.1. Each school PAC may make bylaws respecting the conduct of its business affairs, including, without limitation bylaws;
 - 7.1.1. respecting a conflict resolution process for internal school PAC disputes. The dispute resolution process will flow from the foundational values that guide MESC. ([Maskwacis Education Law Section 35.2 DISPUTE RESOLUTION](#))
- 7.2. The bylaws continue in force from year to year unless they are amended at a meeting of the school PAC, which is called for that purpose.

8. Suspension of school PAC

- 8.1. If a quorum is not available for a meeting of a school PAC and the meeting has been rescheduled on 2 or more occasions, the MESC Board of Governors may suspend the operation of the school PAC until the following year.
- 8.2. If the operation of a school PAC is suspended, the principal may establish an advisory committee to carry out one or more of the duties or functions of the school PAC until a new school PAC is established.

- 8.3. The Superintendent, on request of the MESC Board of Governors, may dissolve a PAC without notice at any time if the Superintendent is of the opinion that the PAC is not carrying out its responsibilities in accordance with section 3 of this handbook.

9. Remuneration of school PAC members

- 9.1. No MESC employee or PAC members shall receive remuneration for acting as a member of a school PAC.

10. Prohibition against Incorporation

- 10.1. No school PAC shall incorporate under the Societies Act or Part 9 of the Companies Act.

11. Donations

- 11.1. A school PAC may not receive donations on behalf of the school and no school PAC shall raise funds or otherwise solicit donations in any manner.

12. Duty to report to the MESC Board of Governors

- 12.1. The chair of a MESC school PAC must prepare and provide an annual summary report to the MESC Board of Governors
- 12.2. A school PAC must retain at the school a copy of the minutes for each meeting of the school PAC and make them available to the MESC Board of Governors.
- 12.3. A school PAC must retain the minutes for each meeting of the school PAC for at least 7 years.

13. Code of Ethics All PAC members shall:

- 13.1. Abide by the [MESC Governance Process GP6 and GP9 Code of Conduct](#);

- 13.2. Act in accordance to and endeavour to become familiar with MESC policies, including the school policies and operating practices
- 13.3. Practice the highest standards of honesty, accuracy, integrity, and trust in line with the MESC foundational values; Îyinîw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin as defined in the [Maskwacis Education Law definitions 2.9, 2.15, 2.14 and 2.20](#);
- 13.4. Recognize and respect the personal and professional integrity of each member of the school community;
- 13.5. Declare any conflict of interest;
- 13.6. Promote a positive atmosphere in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued;
- 13.7. Consider the best interests of all students in all discussions and decisions making processes?
- 13.8. Respect the confidential nature of all school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school PAC;
- 13.9. Do not disclose personal and confidential information;
- 13.10. Limit discussions at school PAC meetings to matters of concern to the school culture as a whole;
- 13.11. Use the appropriate communication channels when questions or concerns arise;
- 13.12. Promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community;
- 13.13. Accept accountability for decisions; and
- 13.14. Do not accept remuneration for school PAC activities.

14. MESC Circle of Parents (COP)

- 14.1. The MESC Circle of Parents (COP) is comprised of the Chairperson from each of the MESC schools Parent Advisory Committees;

- 14.2. The members of the COP must have at least one student attending one of the MESC Schools and must be in good standing with that school.
- 14.3. If a parent can no longer serve then a new parent will be chosen per section 14.1 as a replacement.
- 14.4. The COP will select two (2) of its members to sit on the MESC Board of Governors.
 - 14.4.1. The selection of the two to sit on the MESC Board of Governors will be done by a nomination and vote by the members of the COP;
 - 14.4.2. MESC Board of Governors a set term for the COP members;
 - 14.4.3. The two parents from the COP serving on the MESC Board of Governors will continue to serve and report to the COP and their own school PAC; and
 - 14.4.4. The COP members on the MESC Board of Governors will follow the MESC Board of Governors Policy Manual.
- 14.5. If a child ceases to be enrolled in a MESC school, the member is no longer a member of the COP or the MESC Board of Governors.
- 14.6. MESC employees can not be appointed to the Board of Governors.

RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

[Maskwacîs Education Law](#)

[Maskwacîs Board of Governors Policy Manual](#)

[Maskwacîs Cree Declaration on Education](#) (English)

[Maskwacîs Cree Declaration on Education](#) (Cree)

[MESC Community Report 2018 p. 21](#)

[Alberta Education School Act Section 22 School Councils](#)

[Alberta School Council Resource Guide \(2016\)](#)

[Alberta School Councils' Association \(ASCA\) Advocacy Policy Manual 2019](#)

[Edmonton Catholic Schools School Council Handbook 2011](#)

[Calgary Board of Education School Council Handbook 2018](#)

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Maskwacis Education Law Section 11 & 35

APPENDIX B: MESC Community Report 2018 page. 21 Wâhkôhtowin Inspired
Board Governance

APPENDIX C: School Councils in Alberta

APPENDIX D: Sample School PAC By-Laws

APPENDIX E: School PAC Membership Samples

APPENDIX F: School PAC Certification of Establishment

APPENDIX G: School PAC Constitution Sample

APPENDIX H: School PAC Meeting minutes Sample

APPENDIX I: School PAC Annual Report Sample

APPENDIX A

MASKWACIS EDUCATION LAW SECTION 11 & 35

11. PARENT ADVISORY CIRCLE

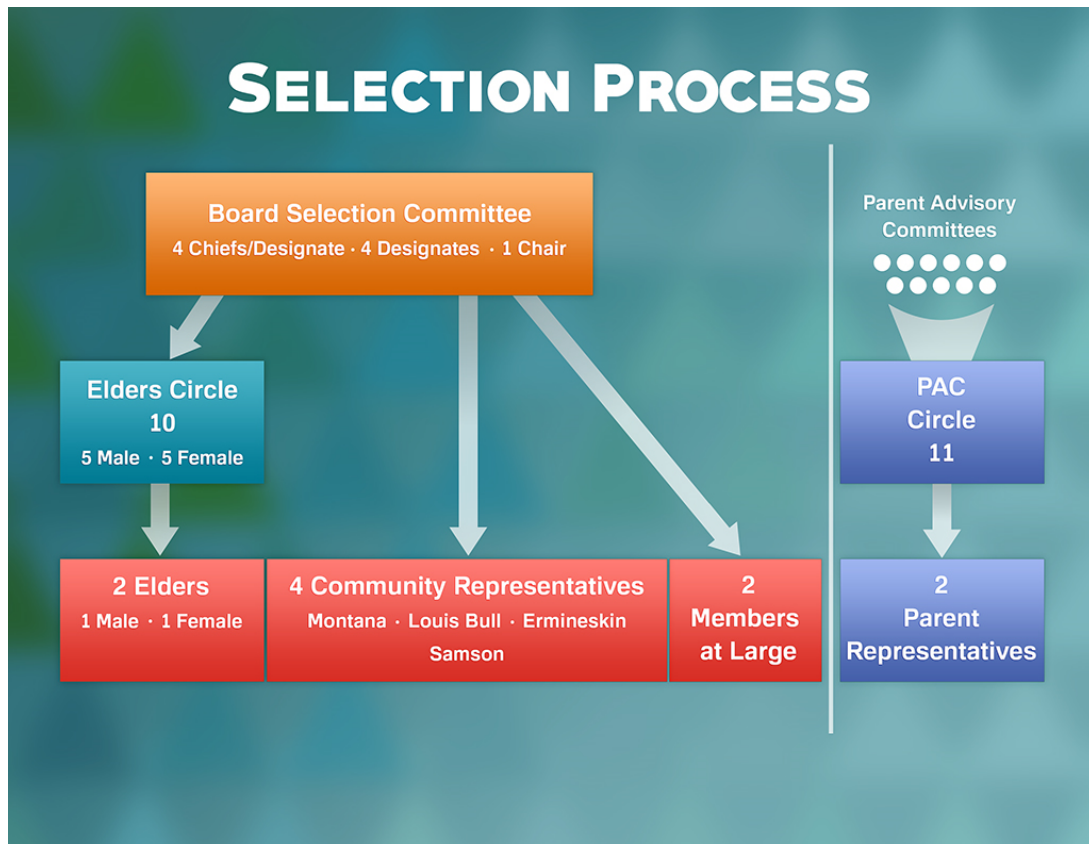
- 11.1. Each School within the Authority will have a Parent Advisory Committee with its own terms of reference. The chair of each Parent Advisory Committee will represent that school at the Parent Advisory Circle.
- 11.2. A Parent Advisory Circle will be established with the assistance of the Education Authority.
- 11.3. A Parent Advisory Circle Terms of Reference will be created.
- 11.4. The Parent Advisory Circle will appoint two (2) members of the Circle to the Board of Governors.
- 11.5. The members of the Parent Advisory Circle must have at least one student attending one of the Education Authority Schools and must be in good standing with that school.
- 11.6. If a child ceases to be enrolled in the school, the member is no longer a member of the Parent Advisory Circle or the Board of Governors
- 11.7. Parent Advisory Circle Members on the Board of Governors will have a three (3) year term notwithstanding section (11.5)

35. DISPUTE RESOLUTION

- 35.2. The dispute resolution process will flow from the foundational values that guide MESC.

APPENDIX B

Wâhkôhtowin Inspired Board Governance



APPENDIX C

SCHOOL COUNCILS IN ALBERTA

More information about School Councils in Alberta can be found at

<http://education.alberta.ca/parents/role/schoolcouncils.aspx>

Alberta School Council Resource Manual (revised 2007)

The Alberta School Council Resource Manual provides information on the operation of school councils and on key topics of importance to school councils and other education stakeholders. This manual reflects the revisions to the School Councils Regulation (113/2007). This manual can be found at

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/464094/scm.pdf>

Alberta School Council Effectiveness: Summary and Findings of the Provincial Consultation (2004). This review provides direction for an ongoing review process on the role and the effectiveness of school councils in Alberta. For more information:

<http://education.alberta.ca/media/1112924/alberta%20school%20council%20effectiveness%202004.pdf>

APPENDIX D
MESC
Sample School PAC By-Laws

1. Name

The name of the school PAC shall be _____ School Parent Advisory Committee.

2. Mission

The mission of our school PAC is to foster the well-being and effectiveness of our school community and to enhance student learning. We will accomplish this by supporting the MESC mission to govern an outstanding Maskwacîs education system that ensures students attend respectful and inspiring schools.

3. Vision

The vision of our school PAC is to support the MESC vision to imagine a future with Cree speaking students who: are academically successful; live a healthy lifestyle; and are confident, resilient, and know their history and culture.

4. Guiding Principles

Understanding and respect for the Maskwacîs foundational values of Îyiniw Mâmitonehicikan, Nehiyaw Pimâtisiwin, Nehiyawewin, and Wâhkôhtowin.

5. Objectives

- 5.1. provide advice (i.e., input) to the staff and principal on issues of importance, such as the school philosophy, mission and vision, school discipline policies, programs and directions.
- 5.2. stimulate continuous improvement in meaningful involvement by all members of the school community
- 5.3. facilitate collaboration among concerned participants of the school community
- 5.4. support an approach to schooling in which decisions are made collaboratively and, wherever possible, at the school and classroom level
- 5.5. facilitate the development of a common vision for our school
- 5.6. facilitate a formal performance evaluation of our school PAC and to communicate the results of this evaluation to the school board and the school community
- 5.7. keep the school board informed—in cooperation with the principal—of the needs of the school
- 5.8. facilitate communication with educational stakeholders and the community.

APPENDIX E

School PAC Membership Samples

MEMBERSHIP - Representative Model

1. The membership of the _____ school PAC shall consist of:
 - a. _____parents of students enrolled in _____ School, elected by parents at a meeting called for this purpose
 - b. the principal of the school
 - c. one or more teachers from the school, elected by school staff
 - d. a community member, selected by the PAC. (Optional)
2. For the purpose of voting at the general meeting, the majority of voting members must be parents of students enrolled in the school.

OFFICERS - Representative Model

1. The officers of the school PAC consist of a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary and a treasurer.
 - a. The Chair is empowered to chair meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.
 - b. The Vice-Chair will assume Chair duties if required.
 - c. The Secretary will record minutes of meetings.
 - d. The Treasurer accounts for PAC expenses such as in-services and meeting expenses and not for school fundraising
2. Every member of the school PAC is eligible to be elected as an officer of the school PAC.
3. The officers will be elected for a one-year term at the first regular meeting of the school PAC in the school year.
 - a. The terms of office run from annual meeting to annual meeting.

APPENDIX F
**Certification of Establishment of Parent Advisory
Committee (PAC)**

School:_____

Establishment Date:_____

Name of School PAC:_____

The principal and chair or secretary, by their signatures, certify the establishment of a school PAC, formed by way of a properly constituted establishment meeting held on the establishment date at which:

1. a chair and recording secretary were selected
2. Three (3) or more parents were in attendance and a majority of parents voting:
 - a. decided upon the size of our school PAC
 - b. decided upon an annual term of office for each member of the school PAC;

DATED as of the establishment date and certified to be true and correct by our signatures.

Principal

Recording Secretary or Chair

Print Name

Print Name

APPENDIX G
School Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Constitution Sample

ORGANIZATIONAL DOCUMENTS

The following organizational documents collectively make up the sample school PAC constitution.

- I. Certificate of Establishment
- II. Statement of Philosophy
 - A. Our Mission
 - B. Our Vision
 - C. Our Guiding Principles
 - D. Our Objectives
- III. By-laws with governance model (Representative)

APPENDIX H

School Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting minutes Sample

Date _____ Time _____

Location _____

MINUTES

Present:

Chair Person _____

Principal _____

Members _____

Opening Prayer

1. Call to Order

The regular meeting was called to order by _____ at _____ p.m. and a quorum was present.

2. Welcome and Introductions

_____, Chair, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions made and a special welcome given to any guest _____

3. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented, or, as amended.

4. Approval of the Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on _____ were approved as presented. (The minutes should be copied and distributed before the meeting. They can then be approved as circulated and you don't have to spend time reading them aloud at the meeting. If there were errors indicate the minutes were approved with corrections.)

5. Business Arising from Minutes

5.1 In follow-up to item # ____ in minutes of _____

5.2 insert update _____

6. New Business (Examples)

6.1 School Fees – This item was discussed at length. The following suggestions were provided to the school principal regarding options for collecting fees:

- 6.2 Teacher Appreciation Luncheon – _____ volunteered to head the appreciation committee. It was decided that a continental breakfast for school staff would be provided instead of a luncheon
- 6.3 Motion: That the School PAC asks the School Fundraising Association to report on any fundraising activities that exist. Moved by _____. Seconded by _____ CARRIED.

7. Reports (examples)

- 7.1 Principal's Report – _____ reported that the school has welcomed 250 students this year as well as five new teachers. Upcoming events for the next month include parent/teacher interviews, a pizza lunch for students and a special presentation to students by the _____ on safety.
- 7.2 Communication Committee Report – _____ reported that the school newsletter will include information about the school PAC. In addition, the local community newsletter will contain information about upcoming school events.
- 7.3 Community Member Report – No report at this time.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Date, at Time. The location will be

9. Adjourned

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Notes prepared by : _____ (Signature)

Approved by , Chair: _____ (Signature)

APPENDIX I
School Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) Annual Report Sample

SCHOOL PAC ANNUAL REPORT

Name of School: _____

Submitted for the school year: _____

Submitted by:

(School PAC Member - Please Print)

Section One – Please list the names and position held of the School PAC

Section Two – Please list highlights of the school PAC activities during the school year (Please attach additional information if you desire).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

John Nepoose	MESC Board Governor
Helen Bull	MESC Board Governor
Chief Irvin Bull	MESC Board Governor
Chief Craig Makinaw	MESC Board Governor
Chief Vernon Saddleback	MESC Board Governor
Chief Leonard Standingontheroad	MESC Board Governor
Councillor Mario Swampy	MESC Board Governor
Dr. Shauna Bruno	MESC Board Governor
Allison Adams-Bull	MESC Board Governor
Tamara Wildcat	MESC Board Governor
Jerry Saddleback Jr.	MESC Board Governor
Randal Potts	MESC Board Governor
Grand Chief Wilton Littlechild	MESC Board Governor
Brian Wildcat	MESC Superintendent
Tracy Sylvester	Associate Superintendent: Learning and Student Services
Randy Risto	Associate Superintendent: Corporate Services
Sanila Mehal	Associate Superintendent: People Services
Trina Vy	Associate Superintendent: Business Services
Kevin Wells	Executive Director of Administrative & Branch Projects
Bruce Cutknife	Indigenous Knowledge Coordinator
Tom Crier	Coordinator of Creative Technology
Ashley Dennehy	Coordinator of Communications
Eileen Marthiensen	Executive Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Jennifer Nepoose	Executive Coordinator, Superintendent's Office
Andrew Fulks	Ehpewapahk Alternate
Debbie Michael	Ermineskin Elementary
Joline Wood	Ermineskin Jr/Sr High
Michael Currie	Ermineskin Kindergarten
Deanna Morin	Grace Marie Swampy Primary
Patricia Johnson	Kisipatnahk
Sharon Seright	Maskwacis Outreach
Roxanne Harasymchuk-Bantick	Meskanahk Ka Nipa Wit
Jennifer Conroy	Mimihw Sakahikan
Gregory Koett	Nipisihkopahk Elementary
Keith Macquarrie	Nipisihkopahk Secondary
Lawrence Standingontheroad	Circle of Elders member
Bruce Littlechild	Circle of Elders member
Henry Rain	Circle of Elders member
Kathleen Ward	Circle of Elders member
Larry Cutarm	Circle of Elders member
Esther mackinaw	Circle of Elders member