



SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTIONS – INFORMATION FOR FAMILIES

WHAT IS A SCHOOL COUNCIL AND WHAT DOES IT DO?

All government schools in Victoria have a school council. They are legally constituted bodies that are given powers to set the key directions of a school within statewide 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?

For most primary school councils, 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 engaged in work 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
- An optional **Community member category** – members are co-opted by a decision of the council because of their special skills, interests or experiences. DET employees are not eligible to be Community members.

Generally, the term of office for all members is two years. The term of office of half the members expires each year, creating vacancies for the annual school council elections.

WHY IS PARENT MEMBERSHIP SO IMPORTANT?

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

DO I NEED SPECIAL EXPERIENCE TO BE ON SCHOOL COUNCIL?

Each member brings their own valuable life skills and knowledge to the role, councillors may need to develop skills and acquire knowledge in areas that are unfamiliar to them. 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... and a bit of spare time!

HOW CAN YOU BECOME INVOLVED?

The most obvious way is to vote in the school council 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.

If you are interested in hearing more details about what is involved in being a member of school council, current members are available to provide insight on our processes, directions and the level of involvement required.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO TO STAND FOR ELECTION?

All school council elections must follow the timeline that has been set by the Minister. 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 engaged in work, are eligible to nominate for parent membership of the school council at that school.

Once the nomination form is completed, return it to the principal within the time stated on the Notice of Election. You will receive a Nomination Form Receipt via email following the receipt of your completed nomination.

Generally, 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.



SCHOOL COUNCIL ELECTION PROCESS AND TIMETABLE
Brunswick North West Primary School

Please Note: The timeline of school council elections is directed by legislation and as a result, exceptions and late admissions cannot be accepted.

	EVENT	DATE
a)	Notice of election and call for nominations	Friday, 1 March 2019
b)	Closing date for nominations	Friday, 8 March 2019
c)	Date by which the list of candidates and nominators will be posted	Wednesday, 13 March 2019*
d)	Date by which ballot papers will be prepared and distributed	On or before Monday, 18 March 2019*
e)	Close of ballot	Monday, 25 March 2019*
f)	Vote count	Tuesday, 26 March 2019*
g)	First council meeting to elect office bearers (the principal will preside)	Thursday, 4 April 2019
h)	Declaration of poll/membership	Friday, 5 April 2019

**These tasks will only be required if the number of nominations exceeds the number of available positions.*

REMEMBER:

- Ask Hannah for help if you would like to stand for election and are not sure what to do;
- All timelines and processes are part of legislation and cannot be altered by the school;
- School council is essential to the continued improvement direction of the school;
- Current school council members are available for insights and advice;
- Contact Hannah for further information.