



School Advisory Councils (SACs)

What does a school advisory council do?

Each public school in Florida is required to establish a school advisory council (SAC).¹ A SAC assists in the preparation and evaluation of the school's improvement plan and in the preparation of the school's annual budget, as well as other functions assigned to it by the district school board.² Monies received by a school for implementation of its school improvement plan may only be spent on programs or projects selected by the school advisory council.³ Additionally, if the school receives a financial award pursuant to the Florida School Recognition Program, then the SAC, jointly with school staff, determine how to distribute the award, within statutory parameters.⁴

Who are the members of a school advisory council?

Each SAC must be composed of the school 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. Council members who represent teachers, education support employees, students, and parents must be elected by their respective peer groups at the school while business and community citizens must be elected according to procedures established by the district school board.⁵ A majority of the members must not be employed by the school district.

High school and career center advisory councils must, and middle and junior high school advisory councils may, include students. Career center and adult education center advisory councils are not required to include parents as members.

¹ Section 1001.452(1)(a), F.S. (requiring a SAC to be established at each public school in the state, unless the district has a student population less than 10,000, in which case the district may instead establish a district advisory council that consists of at least one teacher from each public school in the district).

² Section 1001.452(2), F.S.

³ Neither school district staff nor the principal may override the recommendations of the SAC regarding use of the funds, except that these moneys may not be used for capital improvements or for any project or program that has a duration of more than one year. Section 24.121(5)(c), F.S. Monies for implementation of a school's improvement plan are from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund which receives the proceeds from the sale of Florida Lottery tickets. Section 24.121, F.S.

⁴ Section 1008.36(4), F.S. The Florida School Recognition program is a performance incentive program that provides financial awards to high performing schools or schools that demonstrate exemplary improvement. Section 1008.36, F.S. See School Recognition Fact Sheet for additional information.

⁵ Section 1001.452(1)(a), F.S.

Is the membership of a school advisory council reviewed for compliance with state law?

Yes. District school boards are required to develop policies for periodically monitoring the membership of the SACs.⁶ If a SAC is not representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school, the board must appoint additional members to achieve proper representation.⁷ The Department of Education is also required to review the membership of each SAC.⁸ If a school is not in compliance with membership requirements, funds from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund may not be released to the district until a department-approved corrective action plan has been developed.⁹

Are meetings of a school advisory council subject to the Government-in-the-Sunshine Law?

Yes. SAC meetings are public meetings that are subject to the Government-in-the-Sunshine Law.¹⁰

Where can I get additional information?

Florida Department of Education

Bureau of School Improvement
(850) 245-0426
<http://flbsi.org/>

Florida House of Representatives

Education Committee
(850) 488-7451
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov>

⁶ Section 1001.42(19)(c), F.S.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Section 1008.345(8)(c), F.S.

⁹ Sections 24.121 (5)(d) and 1008.345(6)(c).

¹⁰ See s. 286.011, F.S.; see also Attorney General informal opinion, March 14, 1994, and AGO 2001-84, regarding the applicability of Florida's public meetings law to school advisory councils.