

WHAREORINO SCHOOL



SCHOOL PROCEDURE 62: Staff Board Representative Roles and Responsibilities

DESCRIPTION

The staff representative is elected to bring a staff perspective to the board in the same way that parent representative brings a parent view. First and foremost, the staff representative is a member on the board and like all board members, must act in the best interests of the students and staff at the school. The staff representative is bound by the same roles and responsibilities, code of conduct and policies and procedures as other board members and must look to form part of the board team, rather than holding a single representational focus. The staff representative is not there to necessarily vote the way that the staff would want them to vote. They are privy to much more information than the staff and understand both the strategic direction and the financial position of the board. It is therefore important all school staff are aware of the role of the roles and responsibilities of the position of the staff representative.

This also means that the staff representative is not akin to a union rep or employment advocate. The staff representatives do not take staff issues to the board table. Staff representatives, like parent board members, should take part in discussion and decision-making based on personal views, but always with the best interests of the students in mind. Bringing governance issues to the attention of the board must be within the board's set processes and must not undermine the role of the principal. The principal, as day-to-day manager, and professional leader of the school, deals with day-to-day matters, issues, and concerns.

The staff representative fulfils legislative requirements relating to board composition. The role of the staff representative is to bring a staff perspective to board decision making. As a board member, the staff representative has an obligation to serve the broader interests of the school and its students, and has equal voice, vote, standing, and accountabilities, as all other members of the board.

TASKS, ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES:

Staff representative accountability measure	Standard
1. To work within the board's charter/strategic plan.	1.1 The charter/strategic plan is obviously considered in board decisions.
2. To abide by the board's governance and operational policies.	2.1 The staff/student representative has a copy of the governance manual and is familiar with all board policies.
3. The staff/student representative is first and foremost a board member and must act in the best interests of the students at the school at all times.	3.1 The staff/student representative is not a staff/student advocate. 3.2 The staff/student representative does not bring staff/student concerns to the board.
4. The staff/student representative is bound by the board code of conduct.	4.1 The staff/student representative acts within the code of conduct.
5. It is not necessary for the staff/student representative to prepare a verbal or written report for the board unless specifically requested to by the board.	5.1 No regular reports are received unless a request has been made by the board on a specific topic.

The staff representative is not expected to report to the board on any matter in the school unless specifically requested to do so by the board. Parent board members do not report on the day-to-day happenings of the parent body / community or the issues that parents may have with the school, and this is no different for the staff representative with regards to staffing or school matters. Any governance information that the board needs regarding the staff and, or students, should come from the principal, as the day-to-day manager, after he/she has had an opportunity to deal with whatever the issue may be. The board needs to respect the principal's role of day-to-day manager of the school.

The relationship between the principal and the staff representative is slightly unusual. As a board member, the staff representative is a member of the employing body. However, on a day-to-day basis, he/she is still a staff member working under the principal's management. This can cause tensions and has on occasion led to boards inappropriately excluding these board members from in-committee or sensitive discussions. The staff representative has just as much right, as any other board member, to engage in board matters and deliberations, unless they have a conflict of interest.

The role of the staff representative at board meetings is to participate in the same way as any other members of the board, on all issues before the board.

The board should work under a no surprises rule, whereby there are no surprises for either the principal, or board members, in terms of topics for discussion.

Being a staff representative does not mean that the concerns/complaints process for staff can be bypassed. In the same way parent members of the board cannot bring a specific complaint from a member of the community to the board, neither should the staff representative. Staff must work through the internal staff conflict management, concerns, and complaints processes.

ANNUAL TIMETABLE

- ◆ To attend all meetings of the board and training opportunities agreed to by the board.

C. Stevenson
PRINCIPAL

Dated: March 2022

