

School Council Handbook

October
2009



Pearson Teachers Union
17035 Brunswick Blvd.
Kirkland, Qc H9H 5G6

Phone: 514-426-4949 ▪ Fax: 514-426-4952

www.pearsonteachersunion.com

ptusep@bellnet.ca

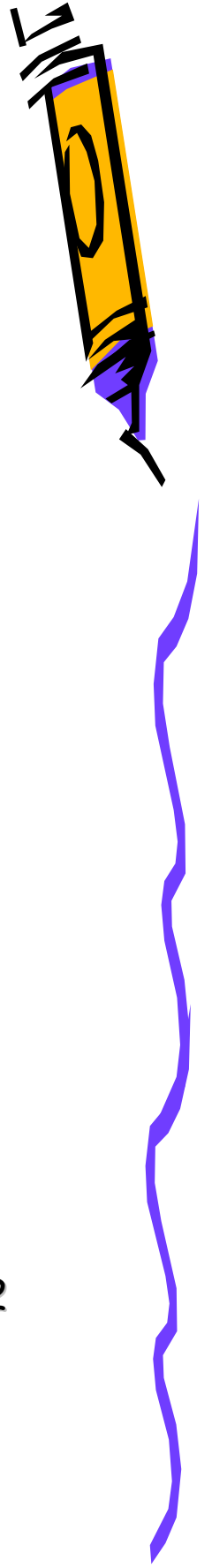
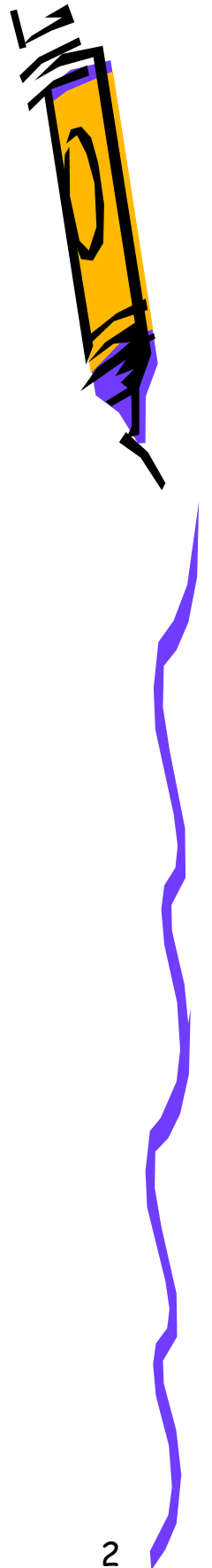


Table of Contents

	Page
Timeline	3
Running Effective Meetings	7
Agenda Setting	9
Solving Small Agenda Items	10
Keeping Proper Minutes	11
Communicating with Constituents	13
Article 4-3 School level participation Clauses 4-3.01/4-3.02/4-3.03 of the Local Agreement	14
Sample Agenda	21



School Council Timeline

*(to be adjusted according to the needs
of the individual school)*

Consultation items should include the following:

August:

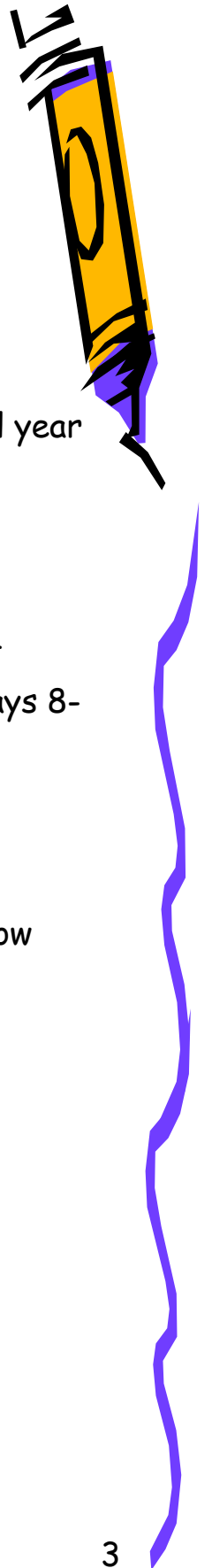
- Ideally school council should be elected and hold its first meeting during the pedagogical days that begin the school year
- The members elected should choose a chairperson and a secretary for the year

September:

- Status of workload distribution, 8-12.00 Local Agreement
- Parent/teacher meetings and interviews/compensatory days 8-8.05, Section C
- Review of reporting schedule and procedures
- Procedures re teacher absence and substitution 8-8.05, Section B
- Staff phone chain for emergencies i.e. school closings, snow days, etc.
- Orientation of teachers new to the school, including substitutes (PTU booklet)
- Supervision schedule (interim schedule) 8-11.07
- Use of Directors' Days

October:

- Review of final workload distribution
- Budget status
- PIC recommendations - update
- Student teacher funds - update



November:

- Budget: School Councils should request that they be given their school's budget, according to the local agreement which stipulates:

Clause 4-3.01 c)

'The information necessary for the effective management of the school/centre, available to the school/centre administration, shall be equally available to the school council and / or whole staff.'

Clause 4-3.03 2) j) The school/centre budget

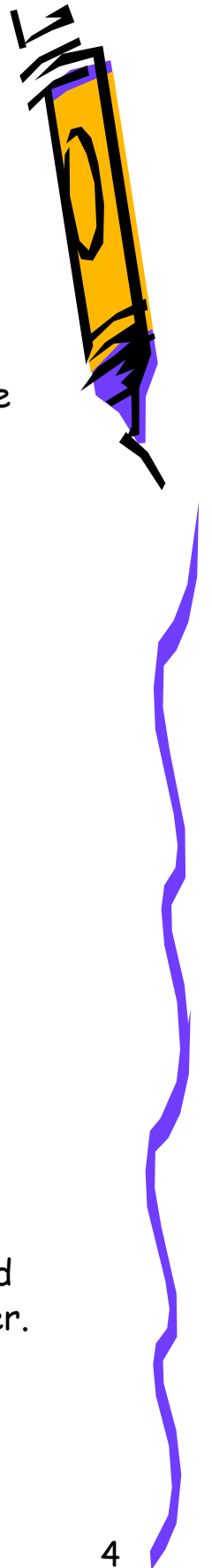
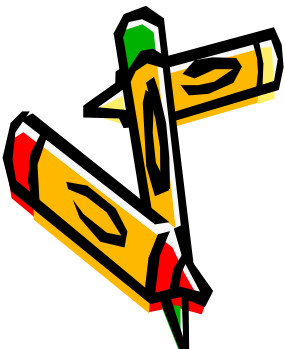
- This entitles you to be given a copy of the operating budget of your school/centre. A copy of the budget should be forwarded to PTU so that we may make a comparative analysis of the way funds are allocated.
- Review school calendar of special events (including exam schedule & supervision)
- Consider special planning for the days preceding the holidays.

December:

- Begin study of objectives, curriculum offerings and organization for the following year.

January:

- Continue study of objectives, curriculum offerings and organization for the following year, begun in December.



February:

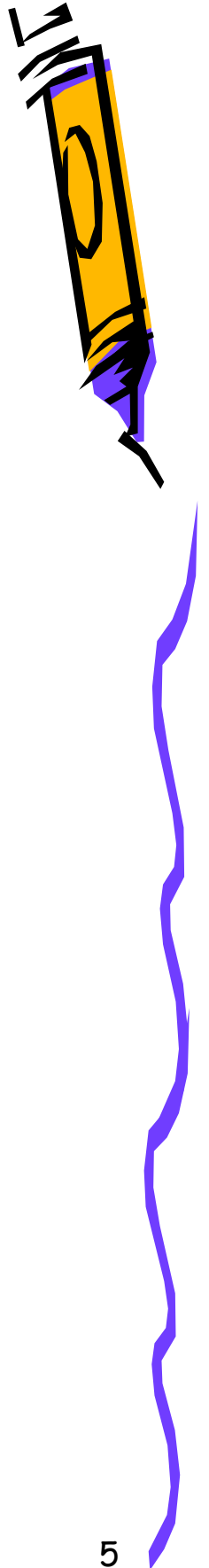
- Plan major renovation requests to Equipment Services for summer scheduling.
- Examine pupil population forecasts for the next school year.
- Formulate programme and organizational recommendations based on work done in December and January.
- Examine results of budget distribution for current year and begin planning for next year

March:

- Establish budget distribution for following year.
- Address staffing organization plans.
- Begin provisional staffing needs.

April:

- Staff Assistant job description, qualifications and criteria for selection
- School Calendar for the following year including:
 - Board wide pedagogical days, in-school pedagogical days
 - evening parent meetings
 - scheduling of staff meetings

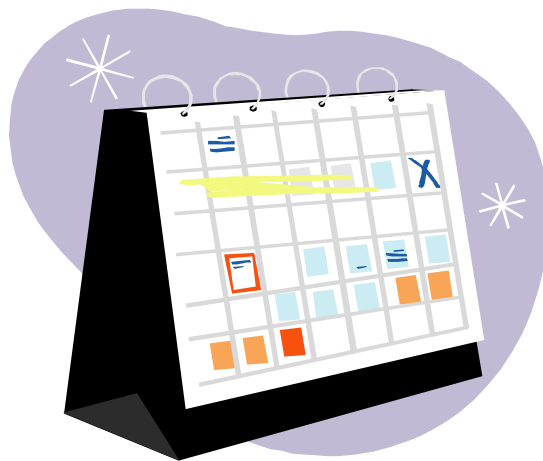
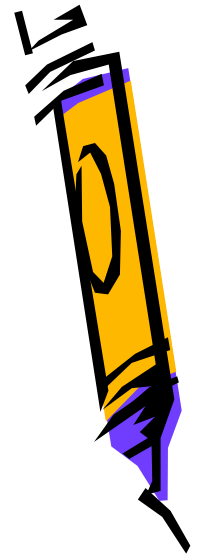


May:

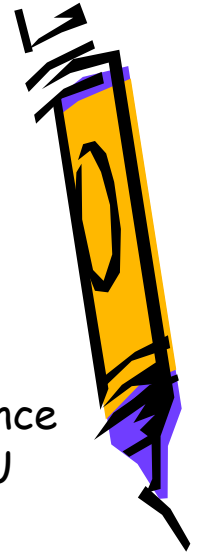
- Redistribution of workload due to invigilation of June exams
- Planning for new programmes
- Review rules of conduct & safety plans
- Review emergency preparedness plans

June:

- Review status of staffing plan
- Election of school level special needs committee
- Review transportation plan for any start prior to 8:00 am.



Running Effective Meetings



1. Role of the Chairperson

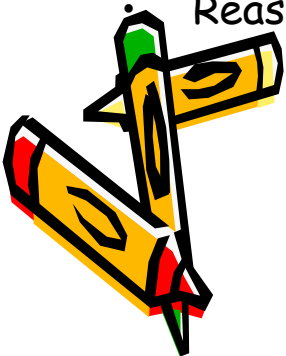
- The chairperson should discuss the agenda in advance with administration and, if necessary, with the PTU Rep
- The chairperson should be able to recall previous decisions
- Time limits should be placed on discussion items
- Agenda order should be followed - keep on topic

2. Establish a routine

- Meeting dates
- Agenda setting
- Starting and ending on time
- Having appropriate information available, e.g. staffing allocation, monthly budget and printout

3. Meet in an appropriate setting

- Area conducive to meeting
- Tables to write on
- Reasonably formal seating



4. Representative council make-up

- By team, cycle, department, etc.
- Consider broad aspects of issues - effect on school as a whole
- Council members should support the chairperson's endeavours to run efficient meetings by following the procedures

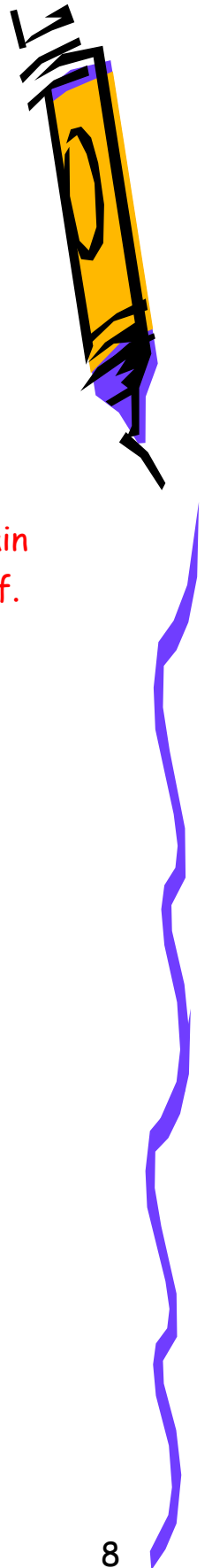
Any decision affecting the entire teaching staff should be presented to the teachers for approval (85% consensus). Certain decisions could require a meeting with the entire teaching staff.

5. Invitation to school community for specific items

- PTU, LBPSB, parents, support staff, etc.
- Consider including parent groups. Informed parents are allies.

6. Develop a constitution

- This allows for continuity of school policy re council
- Can be a good reference guide for the chairperson
- Number of teacher representatives (minimum of 3):
 - Secondary reps: 1 per department is recommended
 - Elementary reps: 1 per cycle is recommended
 - Other teachers and staff members may attend but only elected members may vote



Agenda Setting

1. Agenda items to be added by staff

- Staff should be provided with opportunity for input to agenda
- Post agenda in obvious area, or
- Post agenda in day book, or
- Circulate agenda among staff
- Person adding item to agenda should sign their name so that chairperson may have prior information re item
- There should be a deadline re agenda additions in order to allow chairperson to prepare

2. Dealing with agenda in council

- Chairperson prioritizes items
- Items left from previous meeting should be dealt with on a priority basis at the next meeting
- Chairperson may decide some items are information only and can be dealt with via memo
- When appropriate, chairperson may ask teams or departments to pre-discuss items



Solving Small Agenda Problems

1. Agenda items should be screened by Chairperson and administrator. Council should spend the majority of its time on the major issues that affect school life.
2. Define whether or not an issue is appropriate for council.

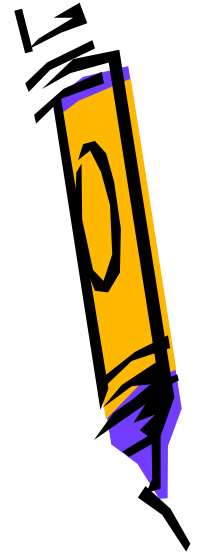
If yes, proceed with item.

If no, redirect in one of the following ways:

- delegate to a committee
 - send to team or department
 - send out response sheet to staff allowing them to make suggestions
 - use day-book to exchange information items
 - deal with items at a staff meeting
3. Use an information sheet attached to minutes when items are for information only.
 4. Remember: Council is not a complaints department!



Keeping Proper Minutes



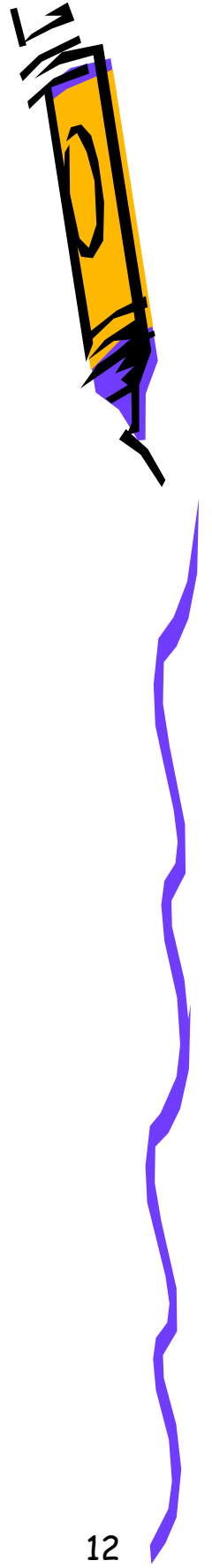
Establish at the first council meeting what the council's expectations are regarding minutes.

1. Use a standard form, listing the following:
 - items to be discussed
 - decisions taken
 - action to be followed
 - date by which action should occur
2. Submit motions in writing.
3. Be succinct: minute main points and conclusions.
4. Chairperson should keep mini notes.
5. Chair and secretary should compare notes.



6. Minutes should be proofread.
7. Send a copy of minutes to all staff.
8. Send a copy of minutes to PTU, to the appropriate sector director and to the Director of Human Resources.

Be sure to include the name of your school at the top of the page - it is helpful to people outside the school. We really do read them!



Communicating With Constituents (Colleagues)

1. Each council member must be assigned a specific group of constituents.
2. Constituents must know who their council representative is.
3. Each council representative should have a reasonable degree of proximity to their constituents.
4. Representatives should communicate with their constituents via:
 - a bulletin, or
 - a poll, using a tear-off sheet or Portal e-mail
5. Teachers must take ownership of items they ask their representative to bring to council.
6. All teachers must have access to school council minutes which should be clear and in a standardized form.

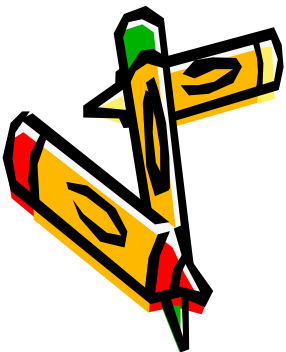


Local Agreement

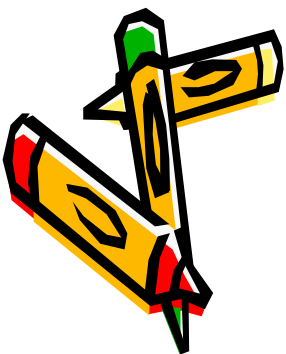
4-3.00 School Level Participation

4-3.01 General Principles: The union and board believe in the importance of the school level consultation process in the effective operation of a school/centre and they are committed to implementing and supporting meaningful and efficient consultation in each of the board's schools/centres. To this end, the union and the board agree to work cooperatively on the basis of the following principles:

- a. All policies, regulations and practices which have an effect on the operation of the school/centre shall be subject to consultation prior to implementation. (This shall be in accordance with the LBPSB/PTU School Level Participation Guide. See Appendix A.)
- b. The responsibility for setting an appropriate consultation timeline and ensuring that school council, or whole staff, agendas reflect the principle of consultation prior to implementation shall be shared by the school/centre administration and the school council chairperson. Should there be a failure to agree on a consultation timeline, such dispute shall be referred to the procedure outlined in (e) below.



- c. The information necessary for the effective management of the school/centre, available to the school/centre administration, shall be equally available to the school council and/or whole staff.
- d. Should the school administration make a decision that is contrary to the recommendation of the School Council or whole staff, a written explanation shall be provided prior to the implementation of the decision.
- e. The President of the union and the Sector Director of Schools and Centres shall be available to assist the school council or whole staff, and school administration in overcoming any concerns with the operation of the consultation process.



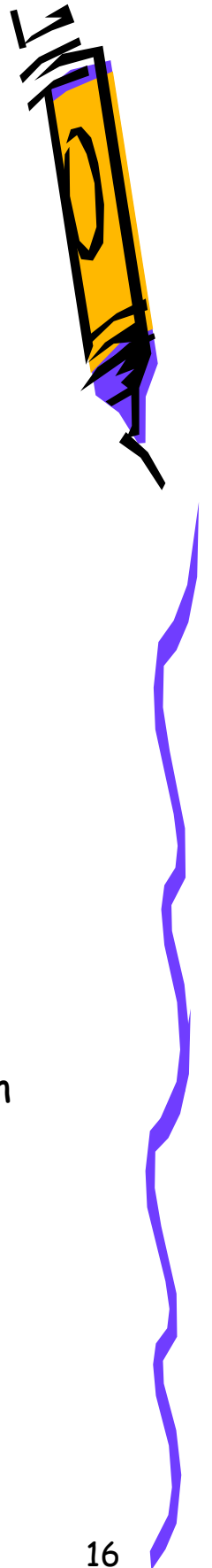
Local Agreement

4-3.02 School Council

- a. There shall be a school council of at least three teachers in each school/centre, elected by the teachers via secret ballot. The school council shall ensure teacher involvement in the development and implementation of pedagogical policies and practices, as well as rules of conduct and safety measures and practices at the school and will ensure teacher liaison with the governing board/school/centre (see current "LBPSB/PTU school level participation guide").

This teacher involvement can be ensured by meeting with the entire teaching staff instead of, or in addition to, the school council.

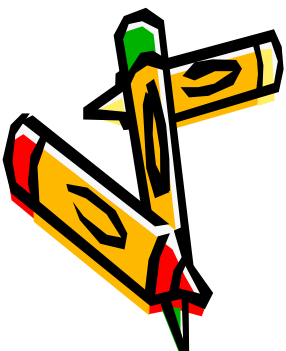
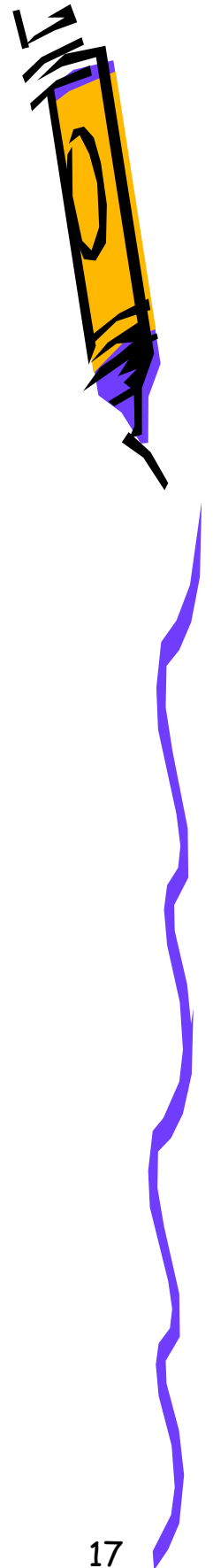
In order to avoid the unnecessary duplication of meetings, when legislation requires other staff to also be involved in the development or implementation of an issue, and where the majority of teachers agree, other staff may be invited to participate in school council and/or whole teaching staff meetings.



4-3.02 School Council (cont'd)

- b. The school council must inform all teachers of the school/centre of its resolutions by distributing minutes of its meetings to each teacher within seven (7) working days from the date of the meeting and may report to them on its deliberations at staff meetings or at meetings called for this purpose. To this end, the school/centre administration will provide secretarial assistance in the typing and distribution of minutes. A copy of the school council minutes shall be sent to the union President, Director of Human Resources and the appropriate Director of Schools.

- c. School council meetings may be held during the school day provided that these meetings do not interrupt the continuity of the pupils' courses.



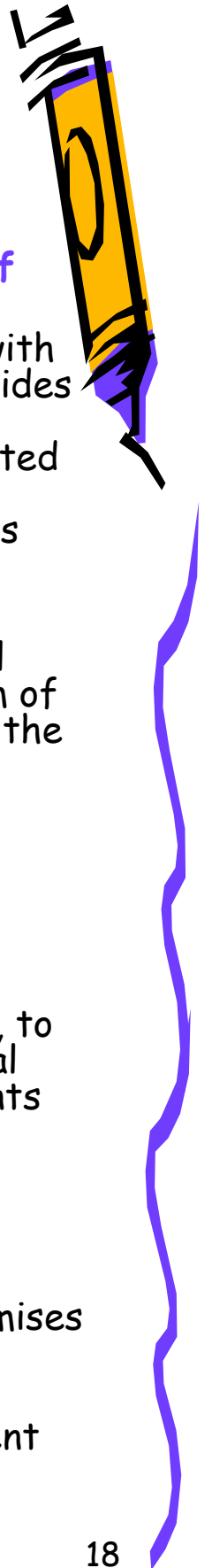
Local Agreement

4-3.03 Issues for Consultation or Collaboration

1. Collaboration items requiring the approval of the Principal:

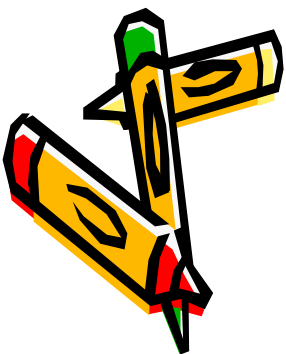
Teachers develop proposals (often together with the Principal), submit to the principal who decides on final action plan. In items (a) to (i) the Principal decides on final version to be submitted to the Governing Board for approval. If the Governing Board does not approve, the process restarts.

- a. The establishment for the following school year of the supervision needs and a system of rotation among the teachers to implement the supervision duties required.
- b. Rules of conduct and safety
- c. Approach for implementation of the Basic School Regulations (BSR)
- d. Approach to develop enrichment programs, to adapt existing programs, or to develop local programs to meet specific needs of students
- e. Time allocation per subject
- f. Educational activities involving changes in student arrival or departure times - or requiring students to leave the school premises (i.e. interscholastic sports)
- g. Approach for the implementation of Student Services, Special Educational Services



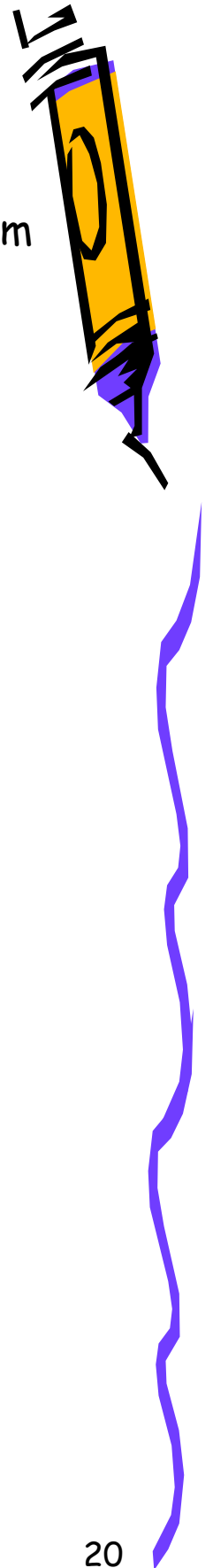
4-3.03 Issues for Consultation or Collaboration (cont'd)

- h. Approach for the implementation of popular education (Vocational Education)
- i. Implementation of program of studies
- j. Specific local programs of study to meet the special needs of students
- k. Criteria for the introduction of new instructional methods
- l. Textbooks and instructional materials
- m. Standards and procedures for the evaluation of student achievement
- n. Rules governing the placement of students and their promotion from one cycle to another at the elementary level
- o. The system of reporting late arrivals and absences of the students
- p. The implementation of the Guidelines for Student Teacher Funds (refer to the Appendix C)
- q. The in-school Professional Improvement Committee (refer to 4-3.04 h).



2. Consultation items: In addition to items as per 4-3.01(a) - the Principal seeks advice from the staff and then decides on final proposal on the following:

- a. Needs of the school in each staff category for the following year
- b. Professional improvement needs of the staff
- c. Educational services to be provided by each school or centre
- d. Educational project of the school
- e. Use of Directors' Days
- f. The establishment each September of a system of emergency substitution in accordance with clause 8-8.05
- g. The homeroom system
- h. The placement in the school calendar of moveable Ped. Days and the program for non-board-wide P.Days
- i. The establishment and application of a system of invigilation for each examination period
- j. The school/centre budget



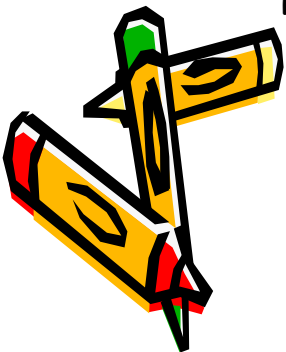
Sample Agenda/Minutes

Name of School
School Council Minutes
Date of Meeting

Names of those present:

(please use first & last names)

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Approval of previous School Council minutes
3. Correspondence/Comments/Acknowledgements
4. Reports:
 - a. Administration
 - b. Student Council
 - c. PTU/QPAT
 - d. Professional Improvement Committee
 - e. Governing Board
 - f. Home & School
 - g. Resource/Ad hoc Committee
 - h. New Special Needs Committee (4-3.05)
 - i. Other committees



5. Business Arising

- a.
- b.
- c.

6. New Business

- a.
- b.
- c.

7. Date of Next Meeting:

8. Adjournment

cc: PTU
Sector Director
Director of Human Resources

