



# SCHOOL COUNCIL TIPS:

HOW CAN OUR SCHOOL COUNCIL SURVEY OUR SCHOOL COMMUNITY TO GATHER INPUT ON PRIORITIES AND OTHER ISSUES?

Surveys can be used by your school council as a valuable tool to gather input from parents/guardians and your greater school community. Some ideas include:

## Volunteer Survey

**Purpose:** To find volunteers for your school/school council events and activities  
To find out what strengths and skills your potential volunteers can contribute to your council and your school

**Sample 1:** Jockvale Elementary School Council has a short 2 page survey that asks potential volunteers for their name, contact information, to check off their interests from a list of ongoing activities, and provides space to write down special talents and skills. *Thank you to JESC member T. Weiner for sharing this survey with school councils across the district. To see a copy, please e-mail me at schoolcouncilinfo@ocdsb.ca.*

**Sample 2:** The Ministry of Education's website offers some ideas about surveys on this link: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/involvement/gettingstarted.html>

## Goals and Priorities Survey

**Purpose:** To ask for input and engage your school community  
To help plan for short, medium, and long-term goals for your school council

**Sample:** The Ministry of Education's School Councils: A Guide for Members (rev. 2002) outlines a process to help your school council to assess your current situation, identify your issues, identify your goals, and develop your action plan. Here is a short summary of the 4 key exercises. For more information see page 6.2-6.3 on this link <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/council/council02.pdf>

### Exercise 1: Assessing the current situation

*This exercise may help your school council identify issues - an important step in the planning process.*

- ✓ Who are our students?
- ✓ How have they performed on province-wide tests?
- ✓ What is our community like and what are the school's relations with the community?
- ✓ What are the emerging trends?

### Exercise 2: Identifying the issues

*This exercise may help your school council identify specific issues and prioritize them for discussion at a later meeting. Then your council can begin to establish its long-term priorities.*

- ✓ List, in order, the top educational issues in Ontario today and the top issues for your school and school council.
- ✓ Do you think the list of issues noted above or their order will change over the longer term? If so, what order will it change to?
- ✓ Compare lists created individually. What common issues have been identified?
- ✓ Discuss one or more of the common issues.
- ✓ Identify your goals based on the priorities that have now been established.

### Exercise 3: Identifying goals

*This exercise is a good way of involving more parents when establishing the school's long-term goals.*

- ✓ Have each person write 5-6 phrases that identify a goal, purpose, or direction.
- ✓ Discuss the common goals and develop a goal statement for each.
- ✓ Based on consensus, prioritize goals.
- ✓ Seek creative ways and alternative solutions to achieve your goals

### Exercise 4: Developing an action plan

*This exercise can help you focus on the goals you have identified and provide you with concrete and creative ways of achieving them.*

- ✓ For each goal identified, brainstorm a number of ways to achieve it.
- ✓ Determine the most promising strategies and develop your action plan.

***To see a copy of JESC's Annual Council Plan, please e-mail me at schoolcouncilinfo@ocdsb.ca and I will send you a copy.***