

## **School Community Council: Purpose**

School Community Councils were established to provide a mechanism whereby key stakeholders can have a substantially increased voice in the affairs of their local schools. The “spirit” and intent of Act 51 was to:

- Strengthen the ties between school and community;
- Provide a voice for all major stakeholder groups;
- Create opportunities for collaboration and partnership in the educational system; and
- Focus on a shared goal of improving student achievement and system’s accountability.

As the “trustees or facilitators of the school’s vision and mission,” the School Community Council:

- Acts as a caretaker of the school;
- Functions in an advisory role;
- Practices good stewardship and acts as a whole, taking responsibility for communicating with all role groups and for the benefit of all children rather than as individuals representing a role group and specific agendas;
- Approaches issues from a unified perspective;
- Garners community support for major initiatives;
- Focuses decisions based upon what is best for ALL students; and
- Contributes to the share goal of improving student achievement.

The policies developed by the Hawaii State Board of Education and Hawaii State Department of Education to implement School Community Councils are based on three common-sense principles:

- Individuals closest to the students should be more involved in making significant decisions affecting the instructional program of the school.
- A school plan to improve student academic achievement receives more support when people understand and help create that plan.
- When families participate in a variety of ways in their children’s education, including decision-making, their children and the school are more successful.

## **School Community Council: Functions**

Board of Education Policy 2411 describes the major functions of the School Community Councils:

- Review the school Academic Plan and Financial Plan and either recommend revisions of the plans to the principal, or recommend the plans for approval by the complex areas superintendent.

- Review evidence of school progress on the implementation of the Academic Plan.
- Participate in the principal selection and evaluation process.
- Submit requests for waivers to policies, rules, procedures and exceptions to collective bargaining agreements to improve student achievement.
- Provide recommendations for revising or creating new school level policies and procedures;
- Review principal's determination of school's repair and maintenance needs; and
- Provide opportunities for community input and collaboration.

The role of the SCCs is to focus their responsibilities on the goals of the school, and, in an advisory capacity, provide direction, coordination, and communication to improve teaching and learning that results in greater student achievement.

The School Community Council:

- Is not a governing board;
- Does not hire and fire the principal;
- Does not control school finances;
- Does not evaluate teachers or other staff;
- Is not a forum for promoting personal agendas; and
- Is not a body whose members "represent" constituencies.

Excerpted from the Hawaii State DOE Website:

<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/GetInvolved/SCCs/Pages/Functions.aspx>

<http://www.hawaiipublicschools.org/ConnectWithUs/GetInvolved/SCCs/Pages/SCC-History-and-Purpose.aspx>