



Parent Involvement Committees

Supporting Parent Engagement in Ontario School Boards and Schools

All boards in Ontario are required to have a Parent Involvement Committee by February 2011. This fact sheet answers commonly asked questions about Parent Involvement Committees in Ontario.

Parent Involvement Committees:

- enhance parent involvement to support student achievement and well-being at the regional level
- provide a direct link between parents and the director of education and trustees.

What is a Parent Involvement Committee?

A Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) is an important advisory body to school boards. A PIC is a formal structure and a key vehicle at the board level that enhances parent involvement and supports student achievement and well-being.

What do Parent Involvement Committees do?

The purpose of Parent Involvement Committees is to support, encourage and enhance meaningful parent involvement at the board level to improve student achievement and well-being. The Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) acts as an advisory body to the local school board, and provides an important link between parents and the board's director of education and trustees. Parent Involvement Committees build parent engagement by:

- providing information and advice to the district school board on parent engagement and communicating with parents
- developing strategies and initiatives the board could use to engage more parents to support their children's learning at home and at school
- sharing information with, and supporting the work of, school councils.

Each PIC decides how best to achieve these goals depending on the unique needs of its board and community, its organization, and the members of the committee. Funding of \$5,000 plus \$0.17 per student is provided to each school board to support its collaborative work with its Parent Involvement Committee. This allocation is intended to fund activities undertaken by the PIC to support parent engagement at home, at school and through the PIC's work with school councils.

Who can sit on a Parent Involvement Committee?

The PIC is a parent-led committee. The chair and co-chair(s) are parents and the majority of members are parents. The director and a trustee are also members of the PIC to provide a direct link to the board. The PIC may appoint up to three community members. PICs decide whether to include other members, such as principals, teachers and support staff to suit local needs. Parent members serve for a term of one or two years and must be the

parent or guardian of a pupil enrolled in a school of the board that established the PIC.

May I attend meetings?

PICs meet at least four times a year. Meetings are open to the public, and are held in a location accessible to the public. Those who wish to observe, and learn first-hand about the operation of the PIC are welcome to attend meetings. Notices of when and where meetings are to be held, as well as minutes of past meetings are posted on the board's website.

How do PICs differ from school councils?

School councils are school-based structures. PICs focus on things that affect more than one school and link parents with the school board's director of education and trustees. The PIC provides advice to the board on parent engagement, communicates with and supports school councils, and undertakes activities to help parents in the board support their children's learning at home and at school.

PICs actively support school councils by enhancing their role in fostering parent engagement, building capacity and sharing information.

Is the work of PICs guided by education policy?

Yes. Like all education partners, PICs play an important role in fulfilling the vision and goals of Ontario's parent engagement policy to support student achievement. *Parents in Partnership: A Parent Engagement Policy for Ontario Schools*, can be found on the ministry website. PICs are also guided by Ontario Regulation 612/00, as amended.

How do PICs help the education system?

The positive results of a genuine partnership between parents and schools include improved student achievement, reduced absenteeism, better behaviour and increased confidence among parents in their children's schooling. The Ministry of Education, district school boards and schools benefit not only from the important work parents do to support their children's learning, but also by seeking and considering parent perspectives at the provincial, regional and local levels.

Where can I learn more?

Visit the ministry website to learn more about Parent Involvement Committees and parent engagement in Ontario schools and school boards.