

# School Community Councils - GE

## **Formation of Community Councils**

Each school within the District shall, in consultation with the Board of Education, establish a school community council at the school building level.

A school or District administrator may not prohibit or discourage a community council from discussing issues, or offering advice or recommendations, regarding the school and its programs, school district programs, the curriculum, or the community environment for students.

The Board may ask school community councils for information to inform Board decisions and may also ask school community councils to address local issues at the school community council level before bringing those issues to the Board.

The Board shall report approval dates of required plans (listed below) to the State Board of Education.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(1\)\(d\), \(2\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Purposes of Community Councils**

The purposes of school community councils are to involve parents or guardians of students in decision making at the school level, improve the quality of education of students, prudently expend School LAND Trust Program money, and increase public awareness of school trust lands and related land policies, management of the State School Fund, and educational excellence.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202 \(2\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Composition of Councils**

Each school community council shall consist of school employees (including the school's principal) and parents or guardians of students who are attending the school.

The recommended composition of school community councils for high schools is six (6) parent members and four (4) school employee members (including the principal). The recommended composition of school community councils for other schools is four (4) parent members and two (2) employee members (including the principal). The school community council is not required to have the recommended composition and can by majority vote of a quorum of the council determine how many members the council will have, provided that there are at least two (2) school employee members and there are at least two (2) more parent members than school employee members.

The number of parent members of a school community council who are not educators employed by the school district shall exceed the number of parent or guardian members who are educators employed by the school district. If, after an election, the number of parent members who are not educators employed by the school district does not exceed the number of parent members who are educators employed by the school district, the parent members of the school community council shall appoint one or more parent members to

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

the school community council so that the number of parent or guardian members who are not educators employed by the school district exceeds the number of parent members who are educators employed by the school district.

Each council shall elect a chair from its parent members; and a vice chair from its parent members or school employee members other than the principal.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(4\), \(5\)\(j\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Notice of Available Community Council Positions**

At least 10 days before the date of a community council election the principal of the school, or the principal's designee, shall provide notice to each school employee, or parent of the opportunity to vote in, and run as a candidate in the election. The notice shall include:

1. The dates and times of the election;
2. A list of council positions that are up for election; and
3. Instructions for becoming a candidate for a community council position;
4. The location where a ballot may be cast; and
5. The means by which a ballot may be cast, whether in person, by mail, or by electronic means.

At least once per year, on or before October 20, the principal shall post on the school website an invitation to parents to serve on the school community council the dollar amount the school receives each year from that program, a copy or link to the school's current Teacher and Student Success Plan, approved minutes of the school's council meetings for at least a year, a proposed council meeting schedule for the year; a means to directly contact the members of the school community council; a copy of or a link to the school's plan or final report for the most recent two years, consistent with [Utah Code § 53G-7-1206](#); and a copy of or link to the school's current year plan.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(5\)\(c\) \(2024\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-3\(1\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-4\(2\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

## **Selection of School Employee Members**

The principal shall serve as an ex officio member with full voting privileges. A school administrator may not serve as chair or co-chair of the school community council

Employee members shall be elected by secret ballot by a majority vote of the school employees. The employee member election shall be held in the same season as the election for parent or guardian members. The principal, or the principal's designee, shall oversee the elections. Results of the election shall be made available to the public upon request.

If the number of employee candidates is less than or equal to the number of open employee positions, no election is required.

# School Community Councils - GE

If an employee position on the council remains unfilled following an election or after appointment when no election is required, the other employee members of the council shall appoint an employee to fill the position.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(5\)\(a\), \(d\), \(e\)\(ii\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Selection of Parent Members**

Parent members shall be elected by secret ballot by a majority vote of those voting in an election held at the school. Only parents of students attending the school are eligible to vote in this election. However, when elections are held in the spring, parents of students who will be attending the school in the fall are eligible to vote and be candidates. Ballots cast in this election shall be deposited in a secure ballot box.

If the number of parent candidates is less than or equal to the number of open parent positions, no election is required.

School community councils may establish procedures that allow for ballots to be clearly marked and mailed to the school in the case of geography or school distances that would otherwise discourage parent participation. Hand-delivered or mailed ballots shall meet the same timelines for voters voting in person. Schools may allow parents to vote by electronic ballot through a District-approved election process consistent with this policy. If a school allows voting by electronic means, the opportunity shall be clearly explained on the school website including:

1. Directions for electronic voting;
2. Security provisions for electronic voting;
3. Statement to parents and community members that violation of a school's voting procedures may disqualify a parent's vote or invalidate an election, or both.

The principal, or the principal's designee, shall oversee the elections. Results of the election shall be made available to the public upon request. Following the election, the principal shall enter and electronically sign a Principal's Assurance on the School Land Trust website, affirming the school community council's election, that unfilled positions were filled by appointment as necessary (consistent with [Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(5\)](#)), and that the council's bylaws or procedures comply with law.

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-4\(1\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-3\(3\)\(a\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

Any parent who qualifies to be a candidate may file or declare himself or herself as a candidate for election to the council. An individual qualifies to be a candidate if she or he is the parent of a student who will be enrolled at the school during the parent term of office; however, if the parent is also an educator employed at the school, the parent is not eligible to be a "parent" candidate or member of the council.

The election for the parent members shall be held in the spring or in the fall, as determined by each school's principal. However, once the election has been determined, it must remain the same for at least four years before it can be changed.

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

Spring elections for parent members shall be scheduled by the principal on a date or dates such that the election is completed before the last week of school. For spring elections, the school community council shall attempt to notify the parents of incoming students of the opportunity to run for the council and shall provide parents with the opportunity to vote in the election.

Fall elections for parent members shall be scheduled by the principal on a date or dates near the beginning of the school year.

If a parent position on the council remains unfilled following an election or after appointment when no election is required, the other parent members of the council shall appoint a parent who meets the above qualifications to fill the position.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202 \(2024\)](#)

## **Term of Office**

Elected or appointed members of the council shall serve a two (2) year term beginning either the first day of the school year (for spring elections) or on November 1 (for fall elections). However, terms shall be staggered so that no more than approximately half of council members stand for election in any one year. A member's term shall be extended as needed until his or her replacement's term begins (for example, to avoid a gap that would result from a shift from one election season to the other). A school community council member may serve successive terms so long as the member continues to meet the eligibility requirements to be a parent member or an employee member. If a change to a statute or regulation affects the composition of the council member who was elected or appointed before the change may complete the term to which she or he was elected.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202 \(2024\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-3\(4\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

## **Updating Council Membership**

By or before October 20 of each year, the principal shall enter the names of the council members on the state School LAND Trust Program website.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(5\)\(g\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Duties of Councils**

Each school community council shall advise and make recommendations to the school, school district administrators, and the local school board regarding the school and its programs, school district programs, and other issues relating to the community environment for students. School community councils shall report on a plan at least annually to the Board and shall cooperate with the Utah State Board of Education monitoring and audits. Councils may also advise and inform the Board and other members of the school community regarding the uses of School LAND Trust Program funds. They shall also encourage participation on the council and may recruit potential applicants to apply for open council positions. Councils are also encouraged to establish clear written procedures, which govern removal from office of members who move away or who

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

consistently do not attend meetings, as well as additional clarifications to assist in the efficient operation of the council consistent with the law and with Board rule.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(2\) \(2024\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-6\(1\)\(b\)\(iii\), \(2\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

Each school community council shall also:

1. Create a School LAND Trust program and LAND Trust plan for the school in accordance with [§ 53G-7-1206](#); and
2. Advise and make recommendations to school and district administrators and the school board regarding the school and its programs, school district programs, a child access routing plan in accordance with §53-G-4-402, safe technology use and digital citizenship, the school's positive behavior plan, and other issues relating to the community environment for students.

[Utah Code §53G-7-1202\(3\) \(2024\)](#)

Each school community shall also provide for education and awareness on safe technology use and digital citizenship that empowers students to make smart media and online choices and students' parents or guardians to know how to discuss safe technology use with their students. ("Digital citizenship" means the norms of appropriate, responsible, and healthy behavior related to technology use, including digital literacy, ethics, etiquette, and security.) Each school community council shall also partner with the school's principal or other administrators to ensure that adequate on- and off-campus internet filtering is installed and consistently configured to prevent viewing of harmful content by students and school personnel. Each school community council shall also work with students, families, and educators to incorporate safety principles at the school and hold at least an annual discussion with the school's principal and District administrators regarding safety principles at the school and District level in order to coordinate the school community council's effort to develop and incorporate safety principles at the school. ("Safety principles" means safety principles that, when incorporated into programs and resources, impact academic achievement by strengthening a safe and wholesome learning environment, including continual efforts for safe technology utilization and digital citizenship.) To fulfill these duties, a school community council may create a subcommittee and may also partner with one or more non-profit organizations.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(1\)\(a\), \(e\) \(3\)\(a\)\(iii\), \(iv\), \(v\), \(b\) \(2024\)](#)

To assist the community council in fulfilling these responsibilities, the principal shall annually provide the council with a report which summarizes the current safe technology and digital citizenship, including (1) information on internet filtering protocols for school and District devices which access the internet, (2) instructional practices, monitoring, and reporting procedures, and (3) and required internet safety training provided to a student and parent by the school or the District.

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-6\(3\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

## Duties of Council Chair

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

With respect to meetings, the school community council chair (or designee) shall:

1. Set each meeting's agenda;
2. Conduct each meeting according to the council's rules;
3. Keep written minutes which meet the requirements of this policy and law; and
4. Welcome and encourage public participation.

The chair shall also, inform council members about resources available on the School LAND Trust website.

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-6\(3\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

## **Community Council Meeting Procedures**

Each community council shall adopt rules of order and procedure to govern its meetings, which prescribe parliamentary procedure, ethical behavior, and civil discourse. The council's meetings will be conducted in accordance with these rules. These rules shall also outline the process for (1) electing the school community council (including the number of parent members and school employee members and beginning dates for the term of each member's position, (2) selecting a chair and vice chair (3) removing from office a member who moves away or fails to attend meetings regularly, and (4) for a member to declare a conflict of interest. Copies of these rules shall be made available at each meeting of the council and shall be posted on the school's website.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1203\(9\) \(2021\)](#)

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-491-6\(1\) \(July 22, 2022\)](#)

## **Community Council Training**

The superintendent or designee shall provide annual training to the community councils of the District. This training shall include education of the chair and vice chair regarding their responsibilities, informing council members about the resources available on the state School LAND Trust website, and educating the members about the following statutes which govern school community councils: [Utah Code § 53G-7-1202](#) (relating to the establishment, composition, and duties of community councils); [Utah Code § 53G-7-1203](#) (regarding open meeting requirements applicable to community councils); ~~and [Utah Code § 53G-7-1203](#)~~  
~~(regarding the School LAND Trust program)~~

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(8\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Community Councils Open Meetings Requirements**

School community councils are not a "public body" subject to the requirement of and are exempt from the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act. However, a school community council shall conduct their business in an open and transparent manner according to the following requirements:

1. A meeting of a school community council is open to the public.
2. A school community council may not close any portion of a meeting.

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

3. A school community council shall, at least one week prior to a meeting, post the following information on the school's website:
  - a. A notice of the meeting, time, and place;
  - b. An agenda for the meeting; and
  - c. The minutes of the previous meeting.
    - i. An agenda required under Subsection (4)(ii) shall provide reasonable specificity to notify the public as to the topics to be considered at the meeting. Each topic shall be listed under an agenda item on the meeting agenda.
4. The notice requirement of Subsection (4) may be disregarded and an emergency meeting held if:
  - a. Because of unforeseen circumstances it is necessary for a school community council to hold an emergency meeting to consider matters of an emergency or urgent nature; and
  - b. The school community council gives the best notice practicable of:
    - i. The time and place of the emergency meeting; and
    - ii. The topics to be considered at the emergency meeting.
5. An emergency meeting of a school community council may not be held unless:
  - a. An attempt has been made to notify all the members of the school community council; and
  - b. A majority of the members of the school community council approve the meeting.
6. A school community council may not take final action on a topic in a meeting unless the topic is:
  - a. Listed under an agenda item as required by Subsection (4) (a); and
  - b. Included with the advance public notice required by Subsection (4).
7. Written minutes shall be kept of a school community council meeting.
8. Written minutes of a school community council meeting shall include:
  - a. The date, time, and place of the meeting;
  - b. The names of members present and absent;
  - c. A brief statement of the matters proposed, discussed, or decided;
  - d. A record, by individual member, of each vote taken;
  - e. The name of each person who:
    - i. Is not a member of the school community council; and
    - ii. After being recognized by the chair, provided testimony or comments to the school community council;
    - iii. The substance, in brief, of the testimony or comments provided and
    - iv. Any other information that is a record of the proceedings of the meeting that any member requests be entered in the minutes.
9. The written minutes of a school community council meeting are a public record under Title 63G, Chapter 2, Government Records Access and Management Act and shall be retained for three years.

[Utah Code. § 52-4-103\(97\)\(c\)\(iii\) \(20253\)](#)

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1203 \(2021\)](#)

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

## School Land Trust Program

The LAND trust plan is a school's plan to use School LAND Trust Program money to implement a component of the school's teacher and student success plan, including a description of programs, practices, materials, or equipment needed to implement the ~~component of the~~ plan.

The program developed by the council to use the School LAND Trust funds is subject to the approval of the Board of Education. The program, as approved by the Board of Education, shall be implemented by the school. The school shall provide ongoing support for the council's plan [and responsibilities](#). The school shall also publicize to its patrons and the general public how the School LAND Trust funds were used to implement a component of the teacher and student success plan and the results of those efforts. The principal shall ensure that the school website fully communicates how parents can directly influence expenditure of School LAND Trust Program funds and includes the dollar amount of funds received by the school each year. Also, the school shall prepare and post on the state School LAND Trust Program [reporting](#) website an annual report each fall that details the use of School Land Trust funds and which assesses the results obtained from the use of those funds. (To assist with this annual report, the District shall record expenditures of School Land Trust Program funds through a financial reporting system identified by the State Board of Education.) A summary of this report shall be provided to parents or guardians of students who attend the school.

The council shall create and vote to adopt a LAND trust plan in a meeting of the school community council at which a quorum is present.

If a majority of the quorum votes to adopt a LAND trust plan, the LAND trust plan is adopted.

A school community council shall:

1. Post a LAND trust plan that is adopted on the state School LAND Trust program [reporting](#) website; and
2. Include with the LAND trust plan a report noting the number of community council members who voted for or against the approval of the LAND trust plan and number of members who were absent for the vote.

The Board of Education shall approve or disapprove the LAND trust plan. If the Board of Education disapproves a LAND trust plan, the Board will provide a written explanation of the reasons for disapproval and request the council to revise the plan and the council shall submit a revised plan to the Board of Education for approval.

Once the Board of Education has approved a LAND Trust plan, the school community council may amend the plan by majority vote of the council subject to Board of Education approval.

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# School Community Councils - GE

The school shall implement the program as approved, provide ongoing support for the **program council's plan and responsibilities** and meet State Board of Education reporting requirements regarding financial and performance accountability of the program.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1206 \(20254\)](#)

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1305\(4\) \(2019\)](#)

The president of the Board of Education shall ensure that the members of the Board are provided annual training on the School LAND Trust Program and its requirements.

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1206\(7\) \(20254\)](#)

## **Permissible Uses of School LAND Trust Program Funds**

School LAND Trust Program expenditures shall have a direct impact on the instruction of students in the particular school's areas of most crucial academic need and consistent with the academic priorities of the Board of Education to increase achievement in English, Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science, and for secondary schools to increase graduation rates and promote college and career readiness. The school community council shall review school-wide assessment data annually and use School LAND Trust Program funds in data-driven and evidence-based ways to improve educational outcomes, consistent with the academic goals of the school's teacher and student success plan framework and the priorities of the Board of Education. This includes strategies that are measurable and show academic outcomes with multi-tiered systems of support and counselors and educators working with students and families on academic and behavioral issues when a direct impact on academic achievement can be measured.

School LAND Trust Program funds may not be used for (a) costs related to district or school administration, including accreditation, (b) expenses for construction, maintenance, facilities, overhead, furniture, **storage of student personal property**, security, or athletics, or (c) expenses for non-academic in-school, co-curricular, or extracurricular activities.

A school that demonstrates appropriate progress and achievement consistent with the academic priorities of the Board of Education may request Board approval of a plan to address other academic goals if the plan includes (a) how the goal is in accordance with the core standards established by the State Board of Education in Utah Administrative Rules R277-700, (b) how the action plan for the goal is data driven, evidence based, and has a direct impact on the instruction of students consistent with the requirements above, (c) the data driving the decision to spend the School LAND Trust Program funds for these academic needs, and (d) the anticipated data source the school will use to measure progress.

Student incentives implemented as part of an academic goal in the School LAND Trust Program may not exceed \$2 per awarded student in an academic school year.

[Utah Admin. Rules R277-477-45 \(October 8, 2024 ~~January 10, 2024~~\)](#)

## **Child Access Routing Plan**

Issue Date: 4.21.2021

Updated: 11.20.2024

# **School Community Councils - GE**

Each school community council shall annually develop a child access routing plan for its school and submit it to the school traffic safety committee.

[Utah Code § 53G-4-402\(19\)\(c\)\(i\) \(20254\)](#)

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(3\)\(a\)\(ii\)\(C\) \(2024\)](#)

## **Subcommittees and Task Forces**

A school community council may create subcommittees or task forces to advise the council or make recommendations to the council, or to develop all or part of the plans that the council's duties require it to prepare. However, any plan or portion thereof developed by a subcommittee or task force shall be subject to the approval of the council.

A school community council may appoint individuals who are not members of the council to serve on a subcommittee or task force (including parents, school employees, or other community members).

[Utah Code § 53G-7-1202\(6\) \(2024\)](#)