

# Urangan SHS

## School Council Charter

### Strategic intent

Developing individual and collective excellence; for an inclusive, dynamic, and cohesive community.

### Revision history

Version date	Version status	Updated by
1 <sup>st</sup> November 2022	Consultation Draft	Tony McCormack
21 <sup>st</sup> February 2023	Adopted	Tony McCormack

### Purpose

This charter seeks to set out the roles, responsibilities, and ways of working for the Urangan SHS School Council (Council) and its members.

### Statement of governance

The Urangan SHS School Council will provide governance oversight for the leadership of Urangan SHS across four spheres:

- 1) **Accountability** – the council will provide accountability<sup>1</sup> by ensuring:
  - a. a clear written statement of roles and responsibilities for the Council exists;
  - b. appropriate transparent management and reporting systems exist;
  - c. regular effective communication takes place with key stakeholders including the P&C, with and through the Principal;
  - d. adequate avenues exist for people seeking bona fide communication with the school;
  - e. active monitoring of the performance of the school against approved strategic plans and objectives is carried out;
  - f. expenditure of money and use of resources is consistent with the approved plans; and
  - g. it sets a respectful, ethical, and transparent organisational culture.
- 2) **Strategy** – the Council is responsible for providing input into the school's strategic direction and will do so by ensuring:
  - a. the Council plays an active role in advising on strategic matters;
  - b. the whole Council is engaged in strategic planning and review processes;
  - c. inclusion of proper consideration of risks, opportunities, and stakeholder views in all strategic planning;
  - d. inclusion of clear measurable financial and other objectives in all strategic plans;
  - e. preparation of business plans and annual estimates of revenues and expenses (budget) consistent with, and to support, agreed strategic plans; and
  - f. the monitoring and performance review of the school against approved strategic plans and objectives.
- 3) **Monitoring and supervising** – the Council is responsible for monitoring the implementation of agreed plans and policies of a strategic nature (including budgets) and will do so by ensuring:
  - a. it receives and reviews regular reports against approved plans including:
    - i. Annual Implementation Plan including the school budget;
    - ii. Quadrennial School Strategic Plan;
    - iii. Workplace reform proposals, where relevant;
    - iv. Student Code of Conduct; and
    - v. other documents relevant to the school's strategic direction;
  - b. the council has access to the Business Services Manager to enable clarity of understanding of financial reporting.
- 4) **Policy** – the Council is responsible for the development of appropriate policy affecting strategic matters and will do so by ensuring:
  - a. development of key governance policies within appropriate practices in governance accountability;
  - b. the Principal is accountable to the Department of Education for developing appropriate operational policies;
  - c. organisational and operational policies of a strategic nature are approved by the Council where appropriate and if otherwise the Council is aware of them;

- d. there is clear delineation between Council policy and policy which is the Principal's responsibility to develop and monitor; and
- e. active monitoring of all Council approved policies.

<sup>1</sup> Section 81 Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld) and School Council Constitution, Clause x Functions.

### **Working with the Principal**

The Council is responsible for forging a strong and productive mutually trusting working relationship with the Principal for the benefit of the school, by ensuring:

- a) openness and honesty in all matters is encouraged between the Council and the Principal;
- b) this relationship is fostered between meetings through encouraging a close working relationship between the Chair and the Principal;
- c) regular ongoing reporting by the Principal to the Council in a form which is meaningful and relevant;
- d) the Council will not:
  - i. interfere with the management by the Principal of the day to day operations of the school and its curriculum;
  - ii. make operational decisions about the use of teaching and learning resources; or
  - iii. make decisions that are contrary to law or written policy of the department.

### **Relationship between the School Council, the School and the P&C**

The School Council and the P&C share mutual interest in the success of the School. Each have a valuable contribution to make to the life of the School and its Community.

The **School Council** will guide the broad strategic direction of the school including:

- a) monitoring the school's strategic direction;
- b) approving plans and policies of the school of a strategic nature or other documents affecting strategic matters (including the budget);
- c) monitoring the implementation of the plans, policies and other documents approved by the school council; and
- d) advising the school's principal about strategic matters.

The **P&C's** primary role is to promote the interests of and facilitate the development and further improvement of the school by promoting parent participation and encouraging collaboration. The P&C President is a member of the School Council. The P&C will:

- a) foster community interest in educational matters;
- b) endeavour to build closer co-operation between the parents, members of the wider school community, staff members, and students;
- c) provide recommendations to the Principal at the Principal's invitation, in relation to student issues and the general operations of the school;
- d) give, or assist in the giving of financial or other resources or services, that benefit students of the school; and
- e) perform any other functions as required by the Minister for Education.

The **School Council** and the **P&C must not:**

- a) interfere with the management by the Principal of the day-to-day operations of the school and its curriculum;
- b) make operational decisions about the use of teaching and learning resources ;
- c) make decisions about individual teaching styles; or
- d) make decisions that are contrary to law or written policy of the department.

Source: School Council Constitution and P&C Association Constitution



## **Role descriptions**

### *Role of School Council Chair*

The Chair of the Council is the leader of the Council, as distinct from the school, leadership of which is a responsibility of the Principal. Within the ambit of the role as leader of the Council, the Chair assures the integrity of the Council's processes and, secondarily, represents the Council (when explicitly authorised to do so) as appropriate to outside parties.

Accordingly, within this role:

- a) the Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Council operates effectively, including through the chairing of meetings so as to ensure that there is rigour in advice and decision-making through robust discussion and a culture which encourages appropriate questioning and enquiry about all matters put before the Council for decision;
- b) the Chair of the Council is empowered to chair Council meetings, with all the commonly accepted authority of that position (for example, ruling on issues, recognising speakers);
- c) the Chair is responsible for ensuring that there is a flow of accurate, timely, and relevant information from the Principal to the Council to enable the Council to make well informed decisions;
- d) the Chair develops a close working relationship with the Principal, liaising with the Principal between Council meetings to ensure optimum efficiency in the presentation of all recommendations to the Council and for the ongoing support and monitoring of the Principal on behalf of the Council;
- e) the Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Council operates consistently within its own processes and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organisation;
- f) the Chair is to assure the implementation of the procedural aspects of the governance policies and processes agreed by the Council, except where the Council specifically delegates components of this to others;
- g) the Chair of the Council may represent the Council to outside parties in announcing Council-stated positions or otherwise as expressly delegated by the Council from time to time;
- h) the Chair may not delegate the responsibilities outlined above except with the prior agreement of the Council, unless the urgency of a situation, as identified by the Chair in his or her discretion, demands otherwise; and
- i) in spite of the above responsibilities, the Chair of the Council has no authority greater than delegated to him or her by the Council as a whole and so has no added authority to supervise or direct the Principal or other members of school staff.

Eligibility and tenure of the Chair is set out in the School Council Constitution.

### *Role of School Council Vice-Chair*

The Vice-Chair of the Council is an honorary role, primarily filled by a student member of the Council, who works alongside the Chair to support the work of the Chair. There is no provision for a Vice-Chair within the School Council constitution, and accordingly the role is to be appointed as appropriate. A Vice-Chair may not necessarily be appointed within each term of the Council.

As an honorary role, the Vice-Chair:

- a) supports the Chair to ensure that the Council operates effectively, including through deputising for the Chair as necessary to chair meetings in a way that ensures there is rigour in advice and decision-making through robust discussion, and a culture which encourages appropriate questioning and enquiry about all matters put before the Council for decision;
- b) supports the Chair to ensure that there is a flow of accurate, timely, and relevant information from the Principal to the Council to enable the Council to make well informed decisions;
- c) supports the Chair by developing a close working relationship with the Principal, liaising with the Principal and Chair between Council meetings to ensure optimum efficiency in the presentation of all recommendations to the Council and for the ongoing support and monitoring of the school's strategic work; and
- d) in spite of the above responsibilities, the Vice-Chair of the Council has no authority greater than delegated to him or her by the Council as a whole and so has no added authority to supervise or direct the Principal or other members of school staff.



### *Role of School Council Secretary*

The Secretary plays an important role in supporting the operations of the Council through ensuring effective administration of Council meetings.

Accordingly, within this role:

- a) the Secretary develops a close working relationship with the Chair and the Principal, liaising between Council meetings to ensure ongoing co-ordination of meetings, planners and management of correspondence of the Council;
- b) the Secretary keeps full and correct minutes of the proceedings of school Council meetings and ensures minutes are distributed to the Council within one week of each meeting;
- c) the Secretary distributes to Council members an agenda and copies of Council papers one week prior to each meeting;
- d) the Secretary ensures a transparent process exists for the safe custody and access to all books, documents, records and registers of the Council, which are accessible to any person within the school community; and
- e) the Secretary, with the assistance of administrative support provided by the school, supports the Council in other administrative functions of the Council from time to time.

Eligibility and tenure of the Secretary is set out in the School Council Constitution.

### *Role of the School Council Member*

As set out in the School Council Handbook, as a member of the School Council you will be required to:

- a) Be conversant with the School Council Constitution and the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006;
- b) Be familiar with the school's strategic plan;
- c) Understand the philosophy and core values on which the school's services and programs are based;
- d) Demonstrate a personal suite of values aligned to realising harmonious and constructive conversations and decision making;
- e) Offer an array of personal capabilities to assist creative and productive discussions and decision making relative to the strategic responsibilities of the Council;
- f) Work cooperatively with other Council members to ensure productive and constructive discussion;
- g) Leave aside personal agendas and bias;
- h) Assist in strategic planning and development;
- i) Understand the difference and the delineation between operational, governance and strategic issues;
- j) Liaise with relevant stakeholder groups to effectively represent views and opinions of staff, parent and community bodies (when explicitly authorised to do so by the Council);
- k) Engage in shared leadership;
- l) Work with other Council members, school personnel and other decision-making bodies, for the benefit and betterment of all students and the community;
- m) Follow through on tasks and meet associated timelines;
- n) Attend Council meetings as required;
- o) Prepare for (by reading materials in advance if required to do so) and actively engage in Council meetings;
- p) Represent the Council (when explicitly authorised to do so by the Council) and support decisions made;
- q) Actively promote and portray a positive image of the Council;
- r) Undertake extra activities or duties as requested by the Council or the chair;
- s) Keep the broad school community involved in the activities of the Council, the communication of which is agreed by the Council;
- t) Refrain from providing directions or instructions to, or from seek seeking official information from, school staff in their capacity as a Council member; and
- u) Redirect student, parent or community enquiries to the Principal or via established communication protocols.

## Code of Conduct

This code of conduct sets the expected standards of conduct for all school council members. It has been adopted to aid all members of our school community to work as a cohesive group in partnership with the school. The code is intended to promote and maintain the highest standard of ethical behaviour by school council members. Members of school councils should adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times. This code applies to each member of a Queensland state school council established under the *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*.

### *Integrity and Impartiality*

School council members are to:

- act in the best interest of the total school community at all times
- conduct and present themselves in a professional manner
- act with courtesy and demonstrate respect for all persons, whether fellow school council members, school staff, parents/carers, students, community members
- remain objective and avoid personal bias at all times
- build open and honest communication
- represent all members of the school community
- act ethically and with integrity at all times
- declare any conflicts of interest and not misuse their office to advance individual views or for personal gain
- make fair, transparent and consistent decisions
- provide objective and independent advice
- engage with the school community in a manner that is consultative, respectful and fair
- listen and be tolerant of the views and opinions of others, even if those views and opinions differ from their own
- draw upon personal and professional insight (background and experience) when reviewing information.

### *Promoting the Public Good*

School council members accept and value their commitment to:

- be responsive to the requirements of the school community
- engage the school and wider community in developing and effecting school priorities, policies and decisions
- seek to achieve excellence in educational outcomes for all students at the school
- listen and respond to issues and concerns regarding strategy and policy.

### *Commitment to the system of government*

School council members will:

- offer constructive, impartial and professional feedback when consulted regarding official school priorities, policies and decisions
- work within the boundaries of *the Education (General Provisions) Act 2006*, *the Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2006*, and the Department of Education's policies and procedures relevant to school council operations.

### *Accountability and Transparency*

School council members will:

- treat official information with care and use it only for the purpose for which it was collected or authorised
- respect confidentiality and information privacy (about the school, community members, staff or students) at all times and not disclose confidential information
- store official information securely
- not use confidential or privileged information to further personal interests.



### **Retention and disposal of school council records**

A school council is a public authority under the [Public Records Act 2002](#). Records of school councils are to be maintained as per the Queensland State Archives [General Retention and Disposal Schedule for Administrative Records](#) and departmental procedure: [Managing the Department's Records](#).

Documentation such as nomination forms and ballot papers are to be retained for five years.