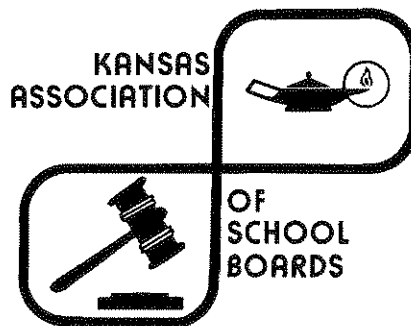


A Principal's Guide for Effective School Site Councils

A Resource Guide for

Site Council Members
Legislators

School Board Members
Parents, Patrons and Staff



1420 SW Arrowhead Road
Topeka, KS 66604-4024

About the Kansas Association of School Boards

The Kansas Association of School Boards is composed primarily of the boards of education of Kansas public school districts. School boards determine each year whether to join, and more than 95 percent of the 296 school districts consistently choose to be members.

KASB provides many services to member districts, including legal and negotiations, education and curriculum, governmental relations, policy, research and risk management services. Specific activities of the association include providing numerous publications on school board and education issues, conducting training through inservices and seminars, providing consultation services and engaging in governmental relations activities.

KASB strongly supports statewide school improvement measures. To enhance this effort, KASB has identified site councils as an appropriate audience for association programs and services. Site council training is available through seminars and individual on-site presentations.

Working through the local board of education, site councils can access KASB's information and services. To receive more information about KASB, talk to your superintendent, principal, or board of education and ask them to contact KASB at:

Kansas Association of School Boards
1420 SW Arrowhead Road
Topeka, KS 66604-4024
Phone: 785-273-3600
Fax: 785-273-7580
KASB e-mail: e-mail@kasb.org
Web site: www.kasb.org

About This Guide

This guide is designed to be helpful to both new and veteran site council members. Revised in October 2006, it has been aligned with the most recent state and federal laws and regulations. It contains both necessary requirements and helpful suggestions for effective site council operation.

Kansas School Site Councils

INTRODUCTION

Site councils are a vital and permanent ingredient in the collaborative effort to promote school improvement in Kansas. First created in 1992, actions taken during the 1995 legislature ensured site councils' continued existence by removing the sunset clause that could have led to their elimination. Though important for their first 10 years, site councils will be even more important the next 10 as schools try to reach the goal of "leaving no child behind," which is now embedded in federal law and state regulation.

THE LAW

The 1992 School District Finance and Quality Performance Act required each school to have a site council. The act gives the council the following responsibility: "... providing advice and counsel in evaluating state, school district, and school site performance goals and objectives and in determining the methods that should be employed at the school site to meet these goals and objectives." In March 2002, the Kansas State Board of Education approved a set of guidelines that does not have the force of law but does broaden the scope of site council activities. (See Appendix A.) The same guidelines also offer more details about site council composition and structure. In 2004, the Legislature amended the law. The new language, it can be argued, only codifies site council activities that were already

permissible. Given the many fiscal challenges districts face, the focus on efficient management definitely encourages broader site council involvement in building, and possibly, district decisions. Between the new student achievement accountability measures, the guidelines, and the 2004 language, site councils have both a need and an opportunity to operate differently than they have in the past.

The Kansas Association of School Boards has prepared this document to help school board members, site council members and particularly principals better understand how site councils can and should function.

THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE

Although no job in the school setting could ever be considered "easy," the principal can have a difficult job working effectively with his or her building site council. Much like the superintendent's work with the board of education, the principal has to do two jobs at once that are often conflicting. First, the principal has to "lead" the site council by helping recruit its members and providing it appropriate resources and direction. The site council actually represents the "owners" of the building, and the principal serves as a district employee. This is not to say the principal is the site council's employee. Rather, it is to point out student achievement will not make the necessary gains in most schools without a more coordinated effort by staff, parents

Site Council Legal Responsibilities

The legal responsibility of a site council is to provide advice and counsel in two areas:

- **In evaluating** state, school district and school site performance goals and objectives; and
- **In determining** the methods to meet those goals and objectives at the school site.

The site council may also make recommendations and proposals regarding budgetary and school district matters, including but not limited to, identifying and implementing the best practices for developing efficient and effective administrative and management functions.

A Critical Point to Remember

- The work of the site council is advisory only; it makes recommendations, not decisions.

and community. Savvy principals will see the potential upside of an active, effective site council and will work hard to serve it, not direct it.

NEW FEDERAL LAWS AND STATE REGULATIONS PROMOTE SUCCESS FOR ALL

New regulations have taken effect for accrediting the over 1,400 K-12 public school buildings in the state. (See Appendix B.) Site council members need a basic understanding of the state's role in accrediting schools and how the concept of "continuous improvement" drives that process.

THE REAUTHORIZED ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT (ESEA)

In 2000, George W. Bush ran for president with a campaign pledge to improve the American educational system so that "no child is left behind." In January 2002, President Bush signed the most sweeping federal educational legislation to date, which has become known as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The legislation addressed a segment of government funding designed in the 1960s to help poor children better succeed in school. This funding, known as Title I, was tied to higher accountability standards for the districts and buildings that receive these funds. But the law also required each state to design an accountability system for all schools that paralleled the one established by the federal government for Title I schools. Action taken by the Kansas State Board of Education in December 2002 embedded the non-Title I portion of the law into a revised QPA. The requirements of the revised QPA, which took effect July 1, 2005, are the ones on which site councils need to focus.

THE NEW QPA

QPA blends together parts of the old system, the recommendations of the KSDE review team and federal requirements.

There are three major similarities between the old and new QPA. First, continuous improvement still serves as the basic expectation. Second, outcomes, as measured by student performance on state assessments, are still

important. Third, data needs to be disaggregated, or broken apart, to ensure average student performance does not mask poor performance by a subgroup, such as an ethnic minority or low socio-economic status. But even with these core similarities, the differences in the two systems are significant. Site council members need to be very aware of them.

QPA no longer uses only outcomes, as it has since its inception. Performance Criteria, as measured by assessment results, graduation rates (for high schools), and attendance rates (for elementary and middle schools) will continue to be used. Quality Indicators, as measured by inputs, such as specific curriculum, programs and policies, are also used. (See Appendix B for the quality and performance criteria.) The other major difference is the outcomes are measured in an even more objective, time-bound manner. The five-year cycle has been replaced by the ESEA-mandated requirement of "adequate yearly progress" (AYP). Performance will be measured each year and compared to a strict and ever-increasing set of targets. As a result, accreditation status can change at a quicker pace, generally in as little as two years.

Also, the visitation teams are replaced by a report to KSDE. The visitation team appearance allowed for a building to "tell its story" using a variety of data. Under the new plan, only the Performance and Quality Criteria will be used to determine the top two levels of accreditation. Other data may be used when considering the bottom two levels. For the top two accreditation levels, there is no "wiggle room"; a building meets the targets or it doesn't.

SITE COUNCILS: IN LAW AND BY GUIDELINES

Even with recently passed legislation that has increased a school board's ability to act on issues it deems important, school districts' basic powers and responsibilities are explicitly found in Kansas law. Site councils have not received that kind of regulatory oversight.

THE ORIGINAL LAW

Passed as part of a comprehensive piece of legislation that increased state aid to most districts, provided tax relief to most property owners and continued to emphasize student

performance as the key outcome of the educational process, the site council portion of the 1992 law was relatively brief. It provided the mission, which was evaluating performance goals and determining the methods to meet those goals at the school site. It did not address in detail how site councils were to operate. As a result, site council development across the state has been uneven. Some buildings have very active and effective site councils. Some buildings have site councils that seem to serve as “rubber stamps” for the principal. And some principals report they are unable to even find people to serve.

THE NEW GUIDELINES

Partially in response to this uneven development, KSDE developed a set of recommended guidelines that provide a clearer picture of what site councils are and what they can do. Perhaps the biggest addition of the guidelines is a second mission beyond the school improvement advisory role. The guidelines add another purpose of the site council, which is to “provide ongoing support for the students and staff of the school.” This certainly opens the door for a more active site council that can address a broader variety of issues. Even with the 2004 amendment, site councils, however, are not site-based management teams. They have no budgetary authority, nor do they interview, hire or fire personnel.

EFFECTIVE SITE COUNCILS

The ultimate responsibility of a site council’s success lies with the board of education. There are two ways the board can accomplish this task. The first is to insist administrators make site councils a priority. Superintendents need to instruct principals to that effect. Second, the board needs to give site councils meaningful work. As buildings work to stay accredited, there will be no shortage of work. Boards need to take advantage of the manpower, expertise and community connections of the site council.

SITE COUNCILS, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION AND QUALITY RELATIONSHIPS

Site councils face two fundamental challenges. The first is establishing the appropriate

relationship with the board. Boards are ultimately responsible for all educational decisions. Therefore, board approval must always be sought to implement a site council’s recommendation. Site councils are charged with making recommendations to the board based on their study of school improvement data and student performance. Their role is strictly one of advising and recommending.

The following examples may help boards and site councils understand their different responsibilities:

- Boards approve all district textbooks. Site councils may review the textbooks recommended by staff to determine their appropriateness and relationship to the board-approved curriculum.
- Boards hire personnel based on recommendations made by administrators. Site councils are not involved in hiring or other personnel issues. Site councils may make recommendations to the board concerning the need for a specialized teacher in a certain area or additional staffing. These recommendations should be based on reviews of student performance data.
- Surveys conducted in the school community must meet federal guidelines and approved by the board. Site councils may recommend specific surveys be conducted to collect data that will assist with school improvement efforts. Site councils do not develop and administer surveys without board consent. Usually the staff is responsible for this task after board approval.

The other challenge is developing a positive relationship among the site council, the building principal and the staff. Too often site councils are underused. The astute principal recognizes the potential of his or her site council and puts it to work. There are other aspects of the school culture that affect student achievement other than instructional strategies. Site councils are an excellent resource for identifying areas besides academics that are in need of improvement, such as student discipline issues and co-curricular participation. By encouraging community input, site councils can help create public support for their school.

A productive site council also recognizes and respects the expertise of the principal and the staff. It understands staff hired by the district are the ones ultimately held accountable for student achievement. The job of the site council is to advise staff in their efforts, not direct them.

Board members, superintendents, principals, teaching staff and site councils share a common responsibility of improved student achievement. If positive relationships exist among representatives of these groups, school performance will be enhanced in a climate of cooperation and involvement.

SITE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Kansas law listed who was to serve on a site council, but the KSDE guidelines expanded and clarified membership. Site councils should consist of at least six to 12 members and include the principal, teachers, other school personnel, parents of students attending the school, members of the business community and other community groups.

Membership on the site council should represent the population the school serves, and community membership should exceed school staff membership, with special attention given toward under-represented groups. (In many schools, the group most consistently under-represented is parents of students on free or reduced lunch.)

And finally, the guidelines state local school board policies should clearly describe site council member selection, rotation, terms of service, eligibility for service and selection of leadership. (See pages 11-12 for sample bylaws.)

SITE COUNCIL AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The planning cycle for the site council is similar to the planning cycle used for school improvement. The planning cycle contains the following stages:

1. assessing needs (What are the areas that need improvement?);
2. setting priorities (Based on the information collected, which areas of need are most important?);
3. identifying issues (What are the issues involved in addressing each problem, e.g., staff, funding, time?);

4. analyzing the problem (What barriers might arise as the problem is addressed?);
5. identifying strategies (What methods best address the problem?);
6. planning actions (Who will be responsible, how much time will it take, how will progress be measured?);
7. implementing the plan (If the board approves the recommendation, who will be responsible for implementation?); and
8. monitoring progress (What progress has been made based on the data collected when compared to the baseline data?)

SAMPLE SCHEDULE OF COUNCIL ACTIVITIES

Year One

- Form the council and determine the bylaws, subject to board approval. (See pages 11-12.)
- Examine the school mission statement and have the principal share how it was developed and what it means.
- Examine the school profile, school improvement plan, survey results, needs assessment results, state and national data, and other information related to school, district and state performance goals.
- Narrow council priorities based on data collected.
- Discuss council priorities with the staff.
- Have staff members present information on current programs and curriculum and explain what goals have been set for students at different grades and levels.
- Determine which methods will be recommended to the board of education for addressing priorities established.
- Present council goals and methods for achieving those goals to the board of education for consideration and action. (Be prepared to justify any expenditure of funds that may be needed.)

Year Two and Thereafter

- Review council membership and organization.
- Review progress on current goals.

- Determine council goals for the upcoming year.
- Re-enter planning cycle where appropriate.

EFFECTIVE SITE COUNCIL MEETINGS

Conducting effective meetings is important for site councils. With limited time and the differing schedules and needs of site council members, well-planned meetings are critical.

Before the Meeting

To ensure a streamlined meeting, planning begins prior to the actual meeting time. The following activities will help site councils organize their meetings:

- Each year, an organizational meeting should be held to set dates and times for site council meetings and to take care of other important business. Varied meeting times will probably be necessary since the availability of members varies. Some site councils rotate meeting times between morning, lunch, after-school and evening meetings. An effort should be made to meet at times when most members can attend. Other items that may be discussed at the organizational meeting include rules of order (if any), how recommendations will be made and by whom, membership issues and meeting procedures.
- Once meeting dates have been established, they should be well publicized in the school community through school newsletters, local newspapers and other appropriate means. Visitors should be invited to attend and made to feel welcome at site council meetings. Site councils are required to notify any individual who requests in writing to be notified of the time, date and place of all meetings.
- Prior to each meeting, the council chair and the principal should work together to create an agenda. At the end of each meeting, the site council should discuss the next meeting and items that should be placed on the agenda. These items, along with others suggested by the chair, principal and other members should make up the preliminary meeting agenda. In time, the site council will realize some items will be repeated

from year to year. A cycle of topics that are standard and the time of year they should be discussed can be developed. This awareness will help the site council gain a sense of continuity as it works within the framework of the school improvement cycle. (Suggestions for site council agendas are listed on page 9.)

- The agenda, and any necessary supporting materials, should be sent to all site council members prior to the meeting. The site council bylaws should determine how many days in advance these materials should be delivered. (See page 12.)
- Each member should read and be familiar with the information to be discussed. Thorough preparation by all members will help make the meeting more productive.

During the Meeting

- People have busy schedules so meetings should start and end at the time stated in the agenda. When meetings do not start and end on time, those who are trying to fit the meeting into a tight schedule may choose to skip the meeting and may even decide they do not have time to participate at all. Consistently starting and ending on time may help assure busy individuals their valuable time will not be wasted.
- The chair should call the meeting to order at the designated time. At the beginning of the meeting, the site council should make any necessary changes and approve the agenda.
- Minutes should be taken during the meeting. These should include all items discussed and any recommendations or assignments made. It is not necessary to transcribe the entire meeting, only to create an accurate description or record of what takes place.
- Site councils should employ effective meeting procedures that include adequate time to discuss each agenda item but also allow for movement through the agenda in the time allotted for the meeting. Some councils designate a timekeeper for each item. At the beginning of each meeting, the council agrees on the amount of time needed for each item. The timekeeper's role is to be sure the council knows when

the time for each item has been expended. If needed, the council may decide to extend the time. This procedure helps keep the meeting on track.

- Site councils must follow requirements of the Kansas Open Meetings Act. Specifically, site council meetings must be open meetings. This means all business of the site council must be conducted in a public meeting; no secret meetings may be held. Individuals wishing to attend a site council meeting must be allowed to do so. Also, site councils should notify the public of the meeting and must provide information to specific individuals who have requested notification of all meetings. Finally, because of the specific legal requirements that must be met, a site council would not be allowed to have an executive session or “closed” portion during a meeting. None of the legal reasons for conducting an executive session apply to site councils since it should not be discussing personally identifiable

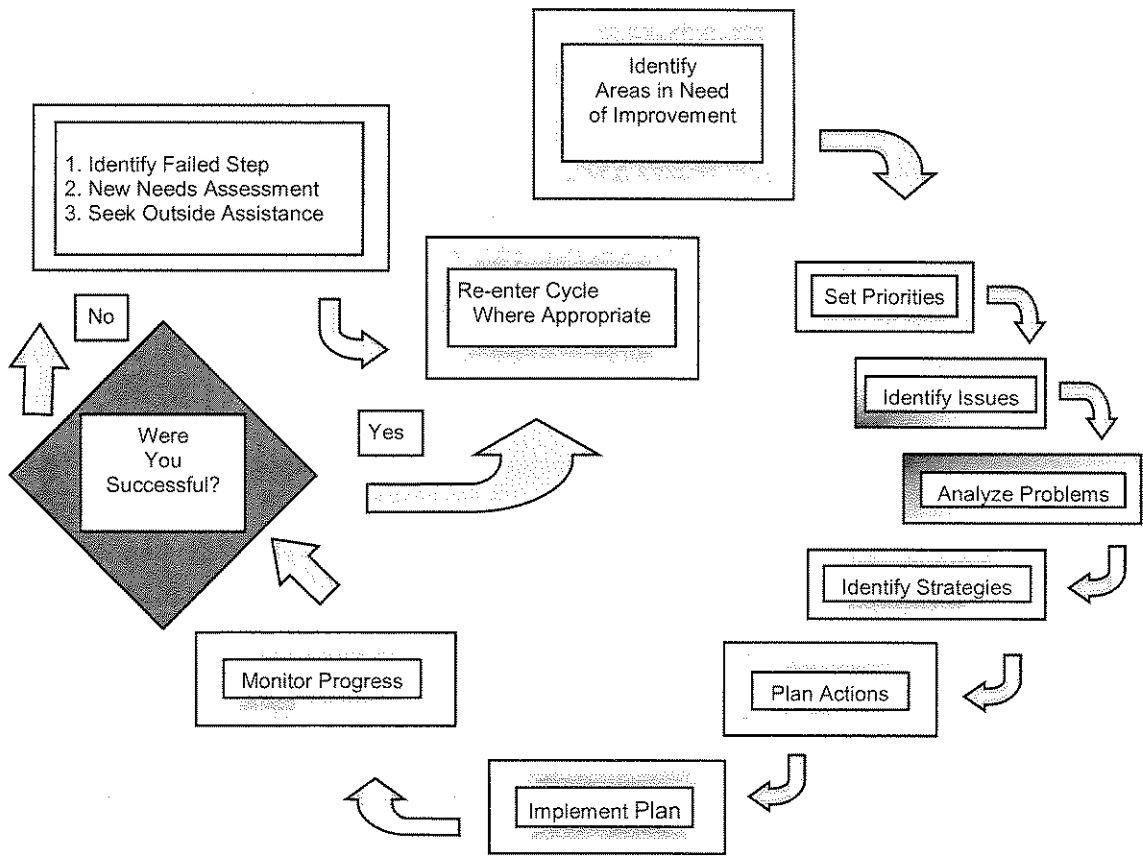
information that may interfere with student and employee privacy rights. The nature of the site council’s responsibilities and, therefore, discussions would not meet the specifications for an executive session in the *Kansas Open Meetings Act*.

- At the end of each meeting, the council should engage in a brief review of the meeting proceedings and a discussion regarding the agenda for the next meeting.

After the Meeting

- Minutes should be typed immediately following the meeting and should include the time, date and location of the meeting. A list of who was present may also be included. Once the minutes have been typed and signed by the individual who wrote them, a copy should be sent to the chair for inclusion with the next meeting’s materials. Once the site council has approved them at the next meeting, a final copy should be sent to the clerk of the board of education for filing.

The Site Council Planning Cycle



- A summary of the meeting should be submitted for inclusion in the school and/or district newsletter and other appropriate media.
- Reasonable efforts should be made to keep all members of the school community informed about site council activities.
- Necessary follow-up tasks should be performed. Information needed for the next meeting should be collected.

If a report to the board is required or necessary, preparation for this presentation should begin.

THE SITE COUNCIL'S ADVOCACY ROLE

In the broadest sense, advocacy means any effort to advance or defend the interest of an individual or group. It simply means trying to get what you want for yourself or someone else. When there is not enough of something people want to go around, or when people disagree on the conduct of their relationships, conflict occurs. Advocacy is usually defined as taking place within the political or governmental sector: the legislative process, executive agencies and the courts. This is because the government has the ultimate responsibility to resolve these conflicts by passing and enforcing laws, committing public resources and defining rights and obligations.

The state legislature is perhaps the most important focus of school advocacy because the legislature controls the purse strings and defines the scope of authority for local boards. Working with the legislature is also relatively easy. Every site council member is represented in the legislature by a senator and representative; the legislature is in session for approximately 90 days; and education is the largest function of state government. (See page 11.)

Under the Kansas Constitution, the Kansas State Board of Education has the power of "general supervision" over school districts and approves most of the regulations that govern the day-to-day operation of school programs. But few people know or work closely with their elected representative on the state board. Being an *effective* advocate for your school requires interaction with your state board member.

The role of the U.S. Congress in education changed dramatically with the passage of No

Child Left Behind (NCLB). The impact of federal laws, from special education requirements to mandates in such areas as asbestos, lead, smoking and weapons, on district programs and budgets has grown over the years, but NCLB raised federal involvement to new heights. The increased requirements for assessments alone will dramatically change the daily classroom routine. This makes advocacy work at the federal level, although a daunting task, even more important.

Local governments, like cities and counties, have little direct influence over schools, but cooperative relationships between these units may be the most effective way to improve the overall climate for learning and services to students.

School site council members need to understand each of these governmental levels, be able to follow their activities, and know how to communicate and influence their decisions.

Site Councils as Advocates

Site council members are chosen to represent different parts of the education community. They frequently have perspectives on education issues the board and district staff may not have, and they should be prepared to exercise their role of advocating for the interests of the school. Here are some things site council members can do:

- Find out where candidates stand on educational issues and support those with whom you agree. Be prepared to provide the candidates information on education in your district and especially about your school. Help them walk your neighborhood or distribute literature. Put up a yard sign. Building a good working relationship early will help; even if they are not successful candidates, they will remain active in the community.
- Have your site council, or a combined meeting of district site councils, host a meeting for candidates before the election or for the winners after the election. Show them around your school and talk about both district and your building's achievements and your challenges.
- Communicate with your elected legislators when important issues are coming up: write a letter, make a call or visit in

person. As a site council member, you have credibility. Use it.

CONCLUSION

Few people will challenge the importance of involvement in local schools by parents, community members and business leaders. By inviting school leaders to work together with the larger school community, lawmakers have asserted their belief educational opportunities increase when everyone works together. Site councils have the unique opportunity to engage in the work of improving schools for all Kansas children.

The Kansas Association of School Boards affirms the key role of site councils and is committed to providing quality services to school districts and their site councils as they continue with school improvement efforts.

Training for Site Councils

Inservices

The Kansas Association of School Boards can provide training for a single site council or a group of site councils. Programs can be tailored to meet local needs and usually run from one to three hours. Topics covered generally include Site Councils and the Law; its Role in School Improvement; its Relationship to the Board; its Relationship to School Staff; Reports to the Board; and Effective Meetings. For more information about site council inservices, contact the KASB Education Services department at 785-273-3600 or e-mail edservices@kasb.org.

Suggestions for Site Council Agendas

- Have the principal of each building share the building (and/or district) mission statement and explain how it was developed and what he or she thinks it means. The site council may provide feedback and suggestions for change.
- Distribute copies of the curriculum goals and objectives to all council members. These materials should be released subject-by-subject over time so there is not an overwhelming amount of information. After members have studied them, have the principal and some of the teachers lead discussions of what the goals and objectives mean and how they were developed by the staff. The site council may provide feedback and suggestions for change.
- Have teachers, principals and other appropriate staff members lead discussions about how the various areas are intended to fit together. Attention should be given to how students are supposed to progress through the grades, how different grade levels work together and how planning and coordination takes place among the various teachers at a specific grade level.
- Councils could review student and faculty handbooks and board of education curriculum policies to see if they support school improvement efforts and state and local goals. If not, the council may suggest changes.
- School profiles and school improvement plans should be presented to the site council for their input.
- At times, it would be appropriate for all the district's councils to meet together to share their findings, their concerns and how they are learning to function as groups.
- Councils should talk about ways to report to the board, using report guidelines that have been approved by the board. An early draft of each report should be presented for discussion several weeks before the report is due. Councils should decide in advance who is to give the report, which members will attend, who will speak and how long they will spend giving the report. They should also talk about questions the board might ask and what appropriate answers could be.
- If the council's recommendations will propose changes in the school's structure or require money to implement any of the suggested educational improvements, the council must discuss in advance how it can justify these suggestions to the board. The council should be prepared to make suggestions on expenditures and activities to cut in order to find revenue to implement the proposed changes.

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE ADVOCATE

RULE 1:

Know what you want. Through your vision and planning process, identify your building and district's needs. When action by some other level of government is required to address those needs, that action becomes your advocacy objective.

RULE 2:

Know the legislative calendar. Understand when elected bodies will be in session and their schedule for taking action on your issue.

RULE 3:

Research your legislators' background, committee assignments and voting records on your issues to find out how they can be most helpful.

RULE 4:

Develop relationships with your legislators by visiting, writing and calling. But, don't overdo your advocacy. Call or write on specific issues and only when you have something to say.

RULE 5:

Invite your legislator to events in the district. Ask them to tour your school district and see programs in action. Share your life experiences and personal insight. It's your most persuasive tool.

RULE 6:

Set priorities. When everything is important, nothing is important. This applies to how you spend your time as well as what you communicate to your legislators. They probably won't support you on every issue. Let them know what is the most important.

RULE 7:

Shore up allies from your community to demonstrate broad support.

RULE 8:

Don't forget the media. Getting your message out to the press can influence your legislators and public opinion.

RULE 9:

Always be positive and courteous. No legislator or elected official will support your position 100 percent of the time. Avoid alienating and making enemies by being polite, regardless of the circumstances.

RULE 10:

Everyone appreciates a "thank you" and recognition. Remember to thank your legislators for jobs well done. Do this often in writing.

Local School Site Council Bylaws

(Sample—Needs Board Approval)

_____ School
School Site Council Bylaws

NAME

The name shall be the _____ School Site Council.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the _____ School Site Council shall be to:

- Provide advice and counsel to the school in evaluating state, school district and school site performance goals and objectives;
- Help determine methods which should be employed by the school to meet the goals and objectives; and
- Provide ongoing support for the students and staff of the school.

REPRESENTATION AND MEMBERSHIP

The _____ School Site Council is required by Kansas law to have the following groups represented:

- The principal
- Teachers
- Other school personnel
- Parents of pupils attending the school
- The business community
- Other community groups

SELECTION PROCEDURES

Initially council members shall be identified by the building administrator, who shall recommend their appointment to the superintendent and board of education. The board shall approve all appointments.

TERMS OF SERVICE

All appointed members of the council shall serve _____ -year terms. The length of terms will be staggered. The number of terms a member may serve shall be _____.

or

No limit shall be set on the number of terms a member may serve.

Membership on the council shall terminate when a member:

- No longer has a child enrolled in the school or no longer lives in the school attendance area (parent position only);
- No longer holds a teaching position at the school (teaching position only);
- No longer holds the principal's position at the school (principal position only);
- Has missed _____ consecutive scheduled meetings without proper notice to the chair; or
- Submits a letter of resignation to the chair.

If a vacancy exists, the chair (or principal) shall recommend an appropriate representative to the board. If approved, the person shall finish the remainder of the term. If the recommendation is not approved by the board, the board may direct the superintendent, the council chair or a building principal to present another recommendation.

OFFICERS

The officers of the _____ Council shall consist of a chair, vice chair, and secretary. The officers shall be elected annually by the council membership in the first meeting of each academic year (or _____).

At no time shall these positions be held exclusively by all educators or parents.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

The chair shall preside at all meetings and have general supervision of the council's activities. The chair shall work with the principal in planning and directing the council's activities.

The chair, in consultation with the principal, shall prepare an agenda for all council meetings and arrange for the agenda to be delivered to each member at least _____ days before each meeting. The vice chair shall exercise all functions in the absence of the chair and assist the chair as needed.

The secretary is responsible for:

- Keeping an account of the proceedings and transactions of all council meetings;
- Providing a copy of the minutes to the council members and the clerk of the board within _____ days of each meeting;
- Preparing any official correspondence the chair may request;
- Maintaining a council file in the school's administrative offices containing copies of all minutes, council correspondence, the annual school report and the current council guidelines; and
- Maintaining a list of council members with current contact information, including e-mail addresses.

MEETINGS

The council shall meet (monthly, or locally determined frequency) in the (location) on the (determined dates). Special meetings may be called by the chair or vice chair as long as all council members are notified of the meeting at least two days in advance and notice of the meeting is given to those who have requested notice of council meetings.

The first council meeting of the academic year shall be called in (determine date).

_____ council members shall constitute a quorum. (A quorum must be present to conduct business.)

All council meetings are open to the public, and members of the public shall be encouraged to attend. Persons desiring to speak at a council meeting may request to be put on the agenda no later than _____ days before the meeting date.

REPORTS

The council shall report to the board _____ times a year. Reports shall be written and filed with the clerk of the board. The board may invite some or all of the members to discuss the reports. After the board accepts each report, copies shall be shared with the principal and staff.

The council shall report to the Kansas State Board of Education if required.

LEGAL DUTIES

Site councils shall not have any of the powers and duties reserved by law or regulation to the school board. Site councils shall comply with all applicable conditions of the *Kansas Open Meetings Act* and the *Kansas Open Records Act*.

TRAINING

An orientation session that includes information about council roles, responsibilities and functions, as well as information on school and local policies and procedures, shall be held annually for all council members. Council members should attend training workshops sponsored by the district and, if the board approves, are encouraged to attend training sessions sponsored by other agencies. Training expenses (may/shall) be paid by the board.

AMENDMENTS

These guidelines shall be reviewed annually; any recommended changes approved at a council meeting shall be forwarded to the superintendent. The superintendent shall consult with the board president on when to place the recommended changes on a regular board meeting agenda. If the recommended changes are approved by the board, they shall become effective immediately and shall be filed with the clerk.

AREAS THE BOARD SHOULD CONSIDER

Because the law does not state how the following are to be handled, local boards should address these issues when working with site councils. Many of these issues are addressed in the sample bylaws. (See pages 11 and 12.)

- If there are to be membership categories in addition to statutory requirements, establish what these categories are to be;
- Determine the length of each council member's term on each council;
- Select meeting dates, rules of conduct at meetings and, if they are to be allowed, provisions for special meetings;
- Determine whether there will be officers and, if so, how these officers shall be selected, the length of their terms and the duties of each;
- Define a quorum for the site council to do business;
- Determine how vacancies on the councils shall be filled;
- Determine if minutes of the site council meetings are to be taken and, if they are taken, who will receive copies of the minutes;
- Determine, if any, the extent of funding and staff time that is to be made available to the councils;
- If funding is to be provided for each site council, set the budget amount for each and establish a procedure for prior approval of expenditures;
- Determine whether school facilities are to be made available for the councils to meet;
- Determine how and when the board will receive written and/or oral reports from site councils;
- Establish a process for amending operational guidelines of the site councils;
- Determine how to provide site councils with training and technical assistance;
- Assist site councils with the development of operation guidelines;
- Conduct a periodic review of the work of each site council; and
- Provide training for site council members on the *Kansas Open Meetings Act* and *Kansas Open Records Act*.

Should the board grant authority in these or other areas to the site councils, it should be the result of action taken by the board. KASB does not recommend granting site councils additional authority beyond the legislative mandate.

APPENDIX A

Approved Local Site Council Guidelines

Purpose

The purpose of the school site council is to advise the school on such matters as student learning, education programs, school improvement planning, and accreditation issues. The site council also plays an advocacy role for the school regarding the same issues. Specifically, the purpose is to:

- Provide advice and counsel to the school in developing, implementing, and evaluating school performance goals and objectives, and
- Provide ongoing support for the students and staff of the school.

Membership

- The site council consists of at least six to 12 members and includes the principal, teachers, other school personnel, parents of students attending the school, the business community and other community groups.
- Membership on the site council is representative of the demography the school serves.
- Community membership exceeds school staff membership with special attention given toward underrepresented groups.
- Local school board policies clearly delineate site council member selection, rotation, terms of service, eligibility for service and selection of leadership.

Meetings

- Councils meet at regularly scheduled times agreed upon by site council members.
- Councils meet at least six times annually but optimally once a month during the school year.
- Council agendas include discussion of student learning, educational programs, school improvement planning, and accreditation issues.

Responsibilities of Site Council Members

- The chair, in consultation with the building principal or his or her designee(s), establishes agendas, conducts meetings, and communicates site council advisement.
- Site council members participate in sanctioned school improvement meetings and visits in an advisory capacity.
- Site council members periodically communicate with the school community and, at least annually with the local board, on site council activities and other council matters.
- Site council members take part in ongoing training to build their knowledge and skills related to site council work.

APPENDIX B

Framework for QPA

Accreditation Process

Beginning no later than 2005-2006 all schools will be accredited based on meeting the quality and performance criteria noted below. Accreditation status will be determined every year by KSDE.

Accreditation Criteria: Quality Indicators

Each school will be assigned an accreditation status based upon the extent to which it has met the following quality criteria:

- A school improvement plan that may be for a period of two to five years and that includes a results-based staff development plan;
- A technical assistance team that is external to the school;
- Locally determined assessments that are aligned with the state standards;
- Formal training for teachers regarding the state curriculum standards;
- 100% of the teachers assigned to teach in those areas assessed by the state or described as core academic subjects by the U.S. Department of Education, and 95% or more of all other faculty, fully certified for the positions they hold;
- Local graduation requirements that include at least those requirements imposed by the state board;
- Curriculum that allows each student to meet the Regent's Qualified Admissions requirements and the State Scholarship program;
- Programs to support student learning and growth at both the elementary and secondary levels including the following:
 - o Computer literacy
 - o Counseling services
 - o Fine arts
 - o Language arts
 - o Library services
 - o Mathematics
 - o Physical education, which shall include health and instruction about human sexuality and AIDS
 - o Science
 - o Services for students with special learning needs
 - o History and government
- Programs to support student learning and growth at the secondary level, including the following:
 - o Business
 - o Family and consumer sciences
 - o Foreign language
 - o Industrial and technical education
- Local policies ensuring compliance with other accreditation regulations and state education laws including requirements for substitutes and emergency substitutes, student credit, records retention, interscholastic athletics, and athletic practice, and if an elementary school, enrollment of 10 or more students on September 20.

Accreditation Criteria: Performance

The performance criteria used in the accreditation process will include the following:

- Meet the percentage prescribed by the State Board of students performing at or above the proficient level on state assessments
- An attendance rate equal to or greater than that prescribed by the State Board (e.g., 90 percent or higher or an increase from the previous year)
- For high schools, a graduation rate equal to or greater than that prescribed by the State Board (e.g., 75 percent or higher or an increase from the previous year)
- A student participation rate on state assessments at 95 percent or higher

Levels of Accreditation

Four levels of accreditation status are possible based upon meeting or not meeting the quality and performance criteria, to include the following:

- Accredited: A school meets the minimum performance and quality criteria established by the State Board.
- Accredited on Improvement: A school for two consecutive years, does not meet one or more of the performance criteria for any subgroup or all students assessed or fails to meet three or more of the quality criteria.
- Conditionally Accredited: A school for three consecutive years, does not meet the prescribed percentage of all students assessed who perform at the proficient level or above or fails to meet four or more of the quality criteria.
- Not Accredited: A school that for five consecutive years, does not meet the prescribed percentage of all students assessed who perform at the proficient level or above or fails to meet four or more of the quality criteria.

Sanctions That Apply to All Schools

Accredited on improvement or conditionally accredited schools will:

- Be assigned a technical assistance team by the state
- Develop a specific plan to address deficiencies
- Abide by federal sanctions that may apply
- Abide by other actions as may be determined by the state board

State Assessments

	Assessments in 2006-2007
Reading Diagnostic	K, 1 or 2 annually
Reading	Grades 3-8, one high school, annually
Mathematics	Grades 3-8, one high school, annually
Writing	Grades 5 and 8

APPENDIX C: Glossary

Accreditation: The state’s “seal of approval.” Accreditation is the primary way the Kansas State Board of Education ensures educational quality.

Accreditation Criteria — Performance Indicators: Under the new QPA, student learning will be monitored through state assessment results that will be used in conjunction with Quality Indicators to determine building accreditation status.

Accreditation Criteria — Quality Indicators: Under the new QPA, buildings need to provide a specific level of programs, policies and practices that will be used in conjunction with Performance Indicators to determine building accreditation status.

Continuous Improvement: The driving concept behind the original QPA and the No Child Left Behind Act. Improvement in student achievement for all student groups, not just for “average” scores, is expected.

Disaggregation: The processing of breaking apart data so “average” performance is not able to mask poor performance of identified subgroups. The subgroups identified for QPA are: ethnicity, low socio-economic status, English as a Second Language (ESL) and special education. School buildings are allowed to address other subgroups, such as gender, as well.

Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA): A piece of federal legislation that directs much of the federal involvement in public education. Originally passed in 1965, it is revisited by Congress and revised every 5-10 years. The most recent revision was passed in 2002.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB): A name that is synonymous with the current Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It gained the name as a result of President George W. Bush’s involvement and support.

Quality Performance Accreditation (QPA): The state process by which school buildings are accredited. Current regulations were implemented in 1992. A revised version is scheduled to take effect July 1, 2005.

Results-Based Staff Development Plan (RBSD): Part of the School Improvement Plan, RBSD connects adult learning to student learning. The new licensure system, which took effect July 1, 2003, rewards teachers who can demonstrate student learning has improved as a result of professional development activities.

School District Finance and Quality Performance Act: Passed by the Kansas Legislature in 1992, the law substantially changed the level of state involvement in schools, including school funding and operation. It also required the establishment of a building site council.

School Improvement Plan (SIP): A written document that describes conditions, goals, responsibilities, strategies and time lines to guide school improvement efforts.

Technical Assistance Team: External to the school, the team provides advice and assistance; a quality indicator criterion in the new QPA.

Title I: Title I is one part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. It identifies the federal funds for students affected by poverty that are available to public schools and how they are to be spent.

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