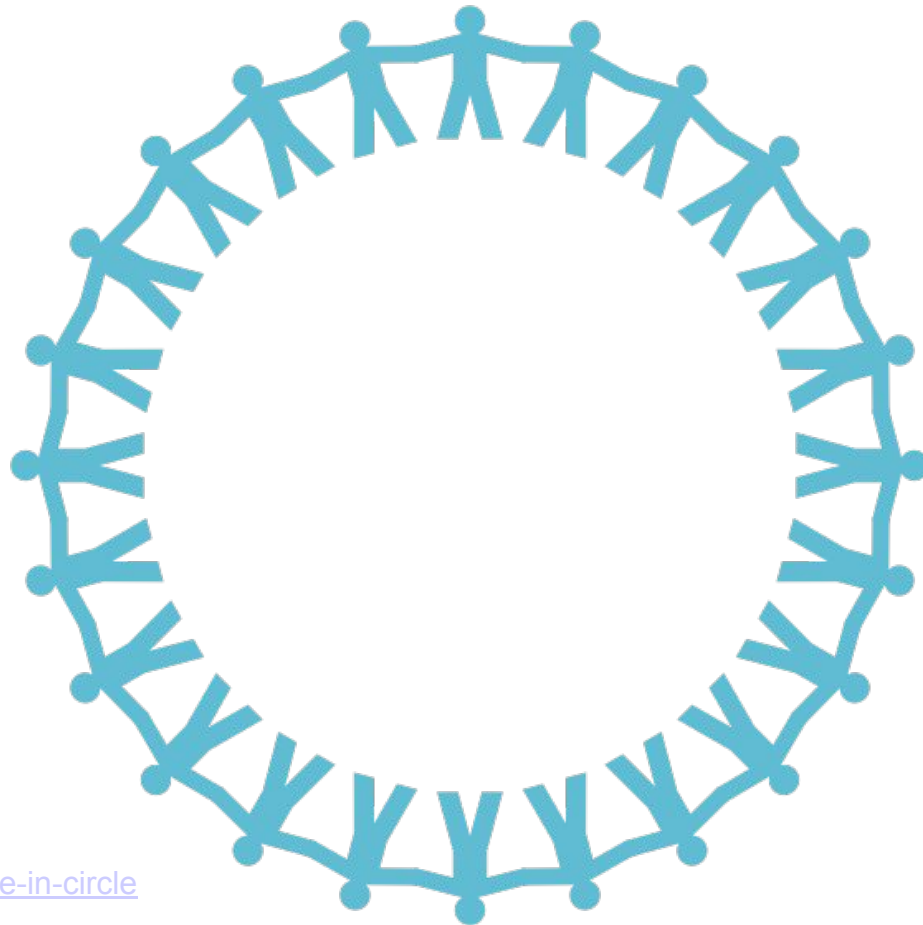


# Parent Involvement Committee: School Councils



*December 14, 2021*

# Importance of parent involvement



Clipart: <https://freesvg.org/people-in-circle>

# What is a school council?

A school council is an organization made up of parents, community members and school staff.

## Purpose

"The purpose of school councils is, through the active participation of parents, to improve pupil achievement and to enhance the accountability of the education system to parents." (Education Act, Regulation 612/00 2.1)

# What is a school council?

## Membership

Ontario Regulation 612/00 establishes that a school council will consist of the following members:

- a majority of parents, as specified in a bylaw of the school council or by the board if such a bylaw does not exist
- the principal or vice-principal of the school (the principal may delegate membership responsibility to the vice-principal)
- one teacher employed in the school, other than the principal or vice-principal
- one non-teaching employee of the school
- one student, in the case of secondary school (optional in elementary schools)
- one or more community representatives appointed by the elected council)
- one person who appointed by an association that is a member of the Ontario Federation of Home and School Associations, the Ontario Associations of Parents in Catholic Education, or Parents Partenaires en Éducation

**School Councils, A Guide for Members 2001, Revised 2002 3.2**

# How is the council formed?

## Elections and Terms of Office

At the beginning of each school year, elections are held to ensure that all parents have the opportunity to participate. Elections must be held annually, within the first thirty calendar days of the school year.

Members are elected for a one-year term.

**School Councils, A Guide for Members 2001, Revised 2002 3.3**

### Make a Difference: Join a School Council

#### To Parents/Guardians:

Successful education requires a strong partnership between the school, the home, the staff and members of the community. School Councils serve in an advisory capacity to the school Principal and the Board to promote continued excellence in education, placing the overall interest of students first.

School Councils engage parents in their child's learning and provide a powerful network of support.

You can nominate yourself (See Self-Nomination Form) or someone else (See Candidate Nomination Form).

Elections for School Council must take place within 30 days of the school year start.

To find out more, contact the Rainbow School nearest you.

*Please return this nomination form to the Principal at your child's school.*

*You will be notified when your nomination has been received.*

#### Self-Nomination Form

I wish to declare my candidacy for a position as a parent/guardian representative on the School Council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Bus) Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, who is currently registered at this school.  
(name of student)

I am an employee of the Board.  Yes  No

Candidate's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include a brief autobiography on the back of this form or on a separate sheet attached to this form.

#### Candidate Nomination Form

I wish to nominate \_\_\_\_\_ for an elected position as a parent/guardian representative on the School Council.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Tel: \_\_\_\_\_ (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Bus) Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I am the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, who is currently registered at this school.  
(name of student)

The person I have nominated is an employee of the Board.  Yes  No

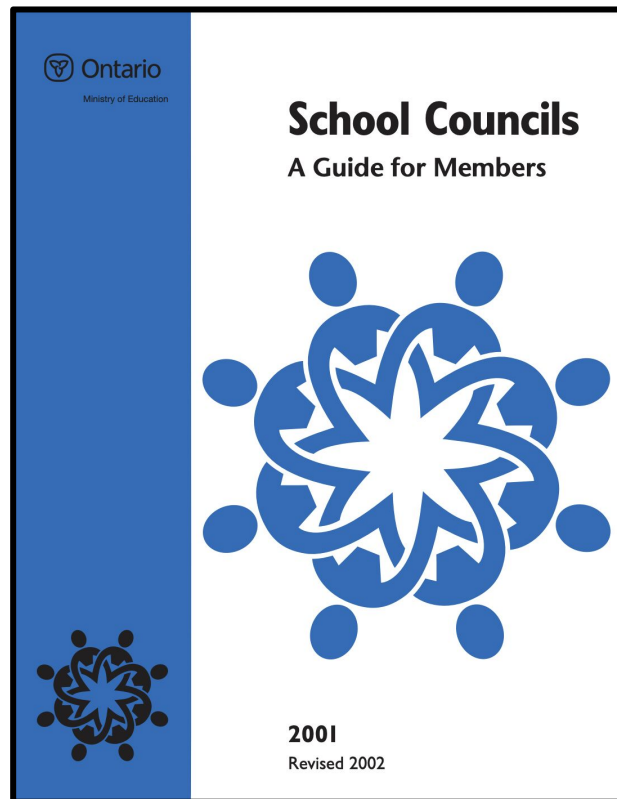
Does this person know they are being nominated?  Yes  No

Nominator's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include a brief biography of the candidate you have nominated on the back of this form or on a separate sheet attached to this form.

*In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, personal information is being collected under the authority of the Education Act and will be used for the purpose of establishing School Councils. For more information, please contact the Principal.*

# School Councils: A Guide for Members





# Membership

## Membership Requirements

*Parent members* must be a parent or guardian of a child enrolled in the school.

*Board employees* who work at the school his or her child attends are **not** eligible to serve as a parent member on the council.

*Community representative(s)* are appointed by the council, and cannot be employees of the school.

*School staff representatives* include one teacher. Any non-teaching member in the school is eligible to seek election for the one non-teaching staff position on the school council.

**School Councils, A Guide for Members 2001, Revised 2002 3.2-3.3**

# Roles and Responsibilities

## Chair / Co-Chair

- must be a parent / guardian
- elected by the school council
- voting member
- duties include:
  - arranging meetings
  - preparing agendas
  - ensuring the minutes of meetings are recorded and maintained
  - communication with the school principal

## Parent Representative

- are voting members of the council
- participate in meetings
- can represent the views of other parents within the school community
- may participate in any committees established by the council



# Roles and Responsibilities (cont'd)

## Principal

- must be a member of the council
- must attend meetings (this responsibility can be delegated to the vice-principal)
- is a non-voting member of the council
- takes recommendations from the council and may solicit the views of the council on any matter
- provides reports and updates on school matters
- provides the council with information from the board and / or Ministry

## Student representative

- are voting members of the council
- participate in meetings
- can represent the views of other students within the school community

# Roles and Responsibilities (cont'd)

## Community member

- voting members
- can represent, and share, input and views from the local community

## Staff representative (teaching and non-teaching)

- are voting members of the council
- participate in meetings and discussions
- provide communication between staff groups and the council



Clipart:  
<https://pixabay.com/vectors/people-human-group-person-symbol-3245739/>

# What does the council do?

## **Communicate**

The principal is responsible for communicating key information about the school, including information about school council meetings and documents recording the activities of school council.


## **Provide community input into decision making**

School council provides input on a variety of matters including (but not limited to): code of conduct, appropriate dress, action plan based on EQAO reporting, special school events, safe-arrival planning, and homework policies.

## **Develop relationships with community partners**

In consultation with the principal, school councils can work to foster relationships with community partners.

# Principal Profiles



HR-06

## Principal Profile

SCHOOL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SCHOOL YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_

**PURPOSE**

The School Council, facilitated by the Chair and the Principal, are required to prepare a Principal Profile. Periodically, the Rainbow District School Board will consider the transfer and/or placement of administrative staff to and from a school community. These School Council recommendations will provide input to Executive Council in the selection process.

**When preparing your Principal Profile, please consider/complete the following:**

**SCHOOL/COMMUNITY GOALS**

The school Principal and staff, in consultation with the School Council, work collaboratively in order to develop school improvement plans. The following summary provides indicators which positively influence student learning:


<p><b>Mission/Goals</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared values and beliefs</li> <li>• Clear goals</li> <li>• Instructional leadership</li> <li>• High level of trust and mutual respect</li> </ul>	<p><b>Instruction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High expectations</li> <li>• Teacher teamwork and the sharing of responsibilities</li> <li>• Instructional and curriculum focus</li> <li>• Frequent monitoring of student achievement</li> <li>• Frequent monitoring of student behaviours</li> </ul>	<p><b>Learning Environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student involvement, commitment and responsibility</li> <li>• Safe school environment</li> <li>• Student recognition and incentives</li> <li>• Code of student behaviour</li> <li>• Parental and community involvement and support</li> </ul>
--	--	---

**Our school should continue to:**

**Our school should no longer:**

**Our school should begin to:**

408 Wembley Drive, Sudbury, Ontario P3E 1P2 | Tel: 705.674.3171 | Fax: 705.674.9112 | [rainbowschools.ca](http://rainbowschools.ca)



HR-06

## Principal Profile

**EXPECTATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATORS**

Please respond to the following:

**Identify the leadership characteristics/qualities which are important to your school community goals.**

**Outline strategies the Principal/Vice Principal should use to implement the goals of the school.**

The Principal/Vice Principal Profile has been jointly prepared by the School Council and the current school administration.

SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL	DATE (dd/mm/yyyy)
SIGNATURE OF SCHOOL COUNCIL CHAIR	DATE (dd/mm/yyyy)

408 Wembley Drive, Sudbury, Ontario P3E 1P2 | Tel: 705.674.3171 | Fax: 705.674.9112 | [rainbowschools.ca](http://rainbowschools.ca)

# Funding

## Parent Reaching Out (PRO) Grants

School Councils can apply to the board annually for access to Parent Reaching Out (PRO) grants. These grants are used to support initiatives that engage parents with the school. More information on PRO Grants is available on the Ministry of Education [website](#).





# Annual Report



Clipart:  
<https://pixabay.com/vectors/list-icon-symbol-paper-sign-flat-2389219/>



# How often does the council meet?



Clipart:

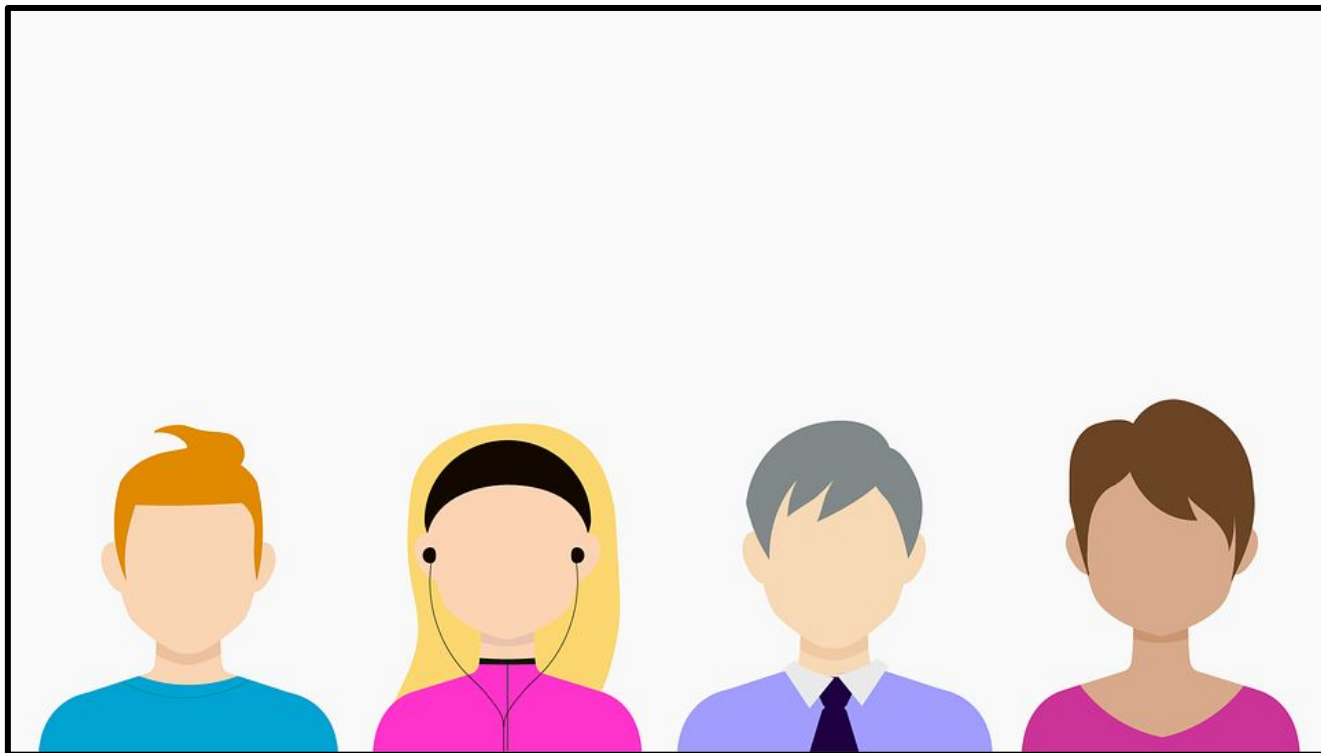
<https://pixabay.com/vectors/calender-icon-pictogram-web-black-2389150/>

# How is equitable access ensured?



Clipart:  
<https://pixabay.com/vectors/association-community-group-meeting-152746/>

# Effective school councils



Clipart: <https://pixabay.com/illustrations/avatar-clients-customers-icons-2191932/>

# Encourage input

- Develop a parent survey to engage parents and ensure that their priorities are reflected in planning for school council meetings
  - the survey should be distributed to all parents.
  - survey questions should address all of the ways parents may become involved in the school, rather than focusing solely on involvement in school council.
  - it is often desirable to translate the survey into a variety of languages.

# Encourage input

- In developing the survey, consider including:
  - a list of the types of specific activities;
  - an opportunity for parents to identify the special skills, talents or experience they would be interested in sharing;
  - a list of information topics about the school with an opportunity for parents to indicate which areas they would like to learn more about;
  - a suggestions area in which parents can indicate how they feel communication with the school could be improved;
  - an opportunity for parents to identify any barriers which prevent them from becoming involved, or attending school events; and
  - contact information, including email, telephone and mailing address, where parents would like to receive information, keeping in mind appropriate Freedom of Information protocols

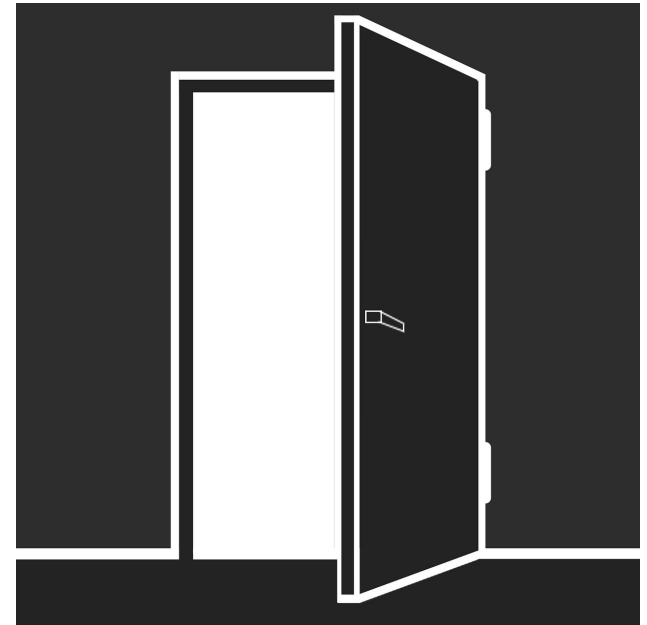
# Keep recruiting

- Create a "welcome" package for new families that includes information about the school council, including dates and locations of meetings
- Encourage school council members to "bring a friend" to council meetings; have them invite another parent to attend with them
- Make connections between council members and parents through after school activities and events
- Make a point of acknowledging and welcoming new members at council meetings



# Remove barriers

- Consider offering babysitting services for families with young children
- Explore the possibility of translation services for families for whom english is not their first language
  - Support may be available through the YMCA Immigrant Services
- Run hybrid (virtual and in-person) or off-site meetings to minimize barriers for families with transportation concerns
- Provide flexible meeting times to meet the needs of all community members
- Ensure the physical space used is accessible to all community members



# Maintain organization

- The principal and chair(s) should communicate in advance of the meeting to set an agenda and discuss items for consideration
- Circulate the agenda in advance of the meeting
- Ensure appropriate materials are available in advance (handouts, etc.)
- At the beginning of the meeting, introduce members and ensure procedures are understood
- Keep minutes of the meeting
  - Designate a secretary for this purpose



# Effective meeting strategies

You will know that a council meeting has been effective when all participants feel that:

- the meeting had a purpose;
- they have a sense of accomplishment;
- they contributed to the discussion;
- they were valued by others;
- creative ideas, alternatives, or solutions were generated;
- they were able to share different points of view;
- they are committed to the decisions made and
- the actions taken;
- they are willing to work together again.

School Councils: A Guide for Members, 2001 (8.10)

# Methods for generating ideas

- **Brainstorming**
  - work with the whole council
  - ensure that everyone is clear on the issue to be brainstormed
  - accept all ideas without either positive or negative comment. encourage quantity, not quality – the more ideas the better
  - ask school council members to rank the ideas they feel are the best
- **Round table**
  - subdivide the group into smaller groups
  - give each group a time limit
  - record all ideas on flip charts and report back to the main group
- **Brain writing**
  - give index cards to each group
  - ask each group member to write down one idea on each card
  - exchange cards and new and add new ideas or comments
  - the facilitator collects the cards and summarizes for the group

# Sample agenda

## SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING

[Date]

[Location]

### Agenda

*Welcome and introductions (15 minutes)*

*Business arising from the minutes (5 minutes)*

*Old business/updates (10 minutes)*

- Farewell plans for international students
- School council annual report to the board
- Bylaw amendments

*New business (45 minutes in total)*

- Review of the EQAO Grade 3 and Grade 6 test results
- School council input to principal placement process
- Draft school council code of ethics
- School council training workshop

*Principal's report (20 minutes)*

*Reports (45 minutes in total)*

- School image
- Promotions, communication, and marketing
- Curriculum and new provincial/board initiatives
- Community representative
- School Council Assembly

*General information updates and inquiries (maximum 5 minutes)*

*Next meeting date, time, and location*

*Agenda items for next meeting*

*Adjournment*

# Sample minutes

Sample School Council Meeting Minutes: Sample 1

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING		
[Date]		
Minutes		
Members Present: _____		
Regrets: _____		
Agenda Item	Decision/Action Taken	Person(s) Responsible
<i>Welcome and introductions</i>	Call to order: 7 p.m. Welcome and introduction of guests	Chair
<i>Review and approval of agenda</i>	_____ moved that they be accepted. _____ seconded the motion. CARRIED.	
<i>Review and approval of previous minutes</i>	_____ moved that they be accepted. _____ seconded the motion. CARRIED.	
<i>Declaration of conflict of interest</i>	[The teacher] declared conflict of interest regarding the status of negotiations on the teachers' collective agreement.	
<i>Business arising from the minutes</i>	Thank-you letters were sent out to the corporate sponsors of the school's drama production.	Public Relations Committee
<i>Old business</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bylaw amendments were circulated for the council's consideration.</li> <li>Motion made by _____, the committee chair, to approve the amendments.</li> </ul> CARRIED.	School Council Bylaws Committee
<i>New business</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the EOAO Grade 3 and 6 test results was led by the principal. A preliminary plan was presented for consideration, with a focus on three areas for improvement.</li> <li>Input to the principal placement process by the school council.</li> </ul>	Council members to provide feedback to principal  Chair to submit results of discussion to supervisory officer

Preparing for and Running Meetings

Agenda Item	Decision/Action Taken	Person(s) Responsible
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft School Council Code of Ethics circulated for the council's consideration.</li> <li>School Council Training Workshop. Discussion. What do we want out of this workshop?</li> </ul>	Members to review and prepare comments for next meeting  Chair to provide board with results of discussion
<i>Principal's report</i>	Enrolment for next year is above the current year's numbers. This will result in fewer split grades in the middle grades.  Class sizes will be at the average (25 students per class) with four classes at the primary level below 25 students and three classes in the higher grades with more than 25 students.  The board will be reviewing its transportation routes for students for the next school year and is looking for school council members to participate on the review committee.	
<i>Other reports</i>	[Community representative]: Several sponsors are providing tangible support for the Grade 6 field trip to be held this year.	
<i>Public comments</i>	The school's efforts to involve seniors in school activities are appreciated.	
<i>Next meeting date</i>	[date/month/year, location, time]	
<i>Agenda items for next meeting</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Code of ethics</li> <li>Appropriate dress policy</li> <li>Results of feedback regarding the School Improvement Plan</li> <li>Other agenda items are to be submitted to the chair two weeks prior to the next meeting.</li> </ul>	Principal and chair to summarize comments submitted by members.  Council members to consider strategy to survey parents and provide comments for next meeting.  Principal to summarize comments, revise plan as appropriate for the council, and provide information at the next meeting.
<i>Adjournment</i>	9 p.m.	

Preparing for and Running Meetings

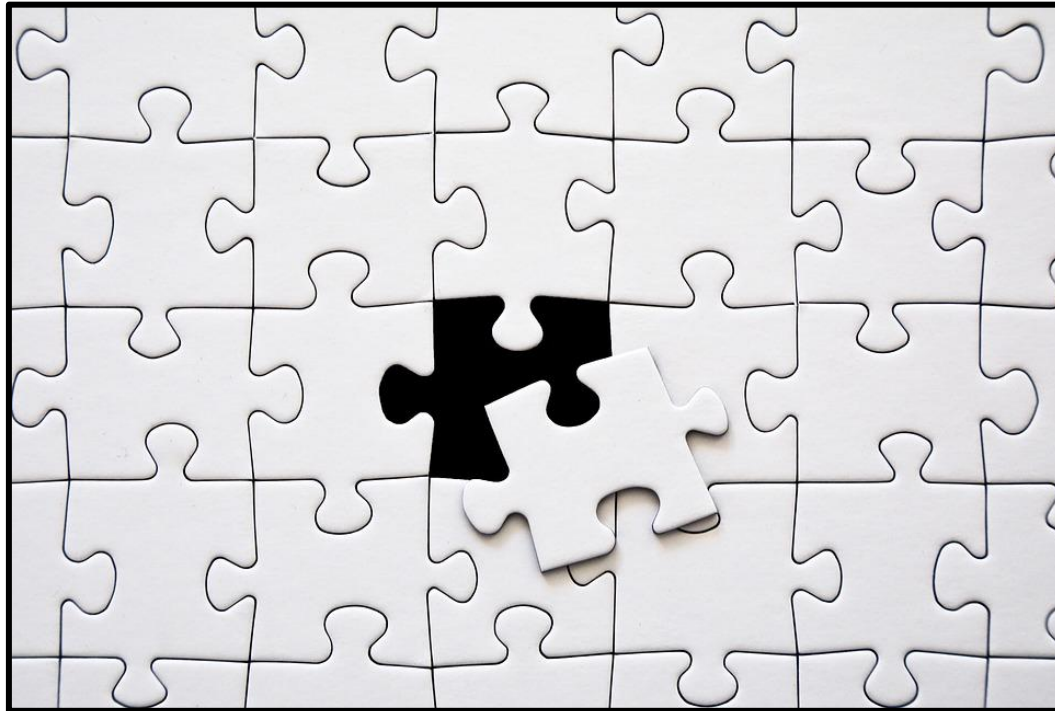


# After the meeting

- Ensure action items are assigned, with timelines determined
- Review the minutes to ensure no errors or omissions
- Post the draft meeting minutes publicly for review
- Send out reminders of the next meeting



# Final thoughts...



Clipart: <https://pixabay.com/illustrations/puzzle-share-match-put-together-1261138/>



# Questions?



Clipart: <https://pixabay.com/vectors/question-mark-question-1750942/>

# Resources

[School Councils: A Guide for Members \(Ministry of Education\)](#)

[School Councils \(Rainbow District School Board\)](#)

[Education Act – Ontario Reg. 612-00 School Councils and Parent Involvement](#)

[Planning Parent Engagement \(CODE\)](#)

[Parent Tool Kit \(CODE\)](#)

[Parent Engagement \(Ministry of Education\)](#)

[YRDSB School Councils - An Overview \(York Regional District School Board\)](#)