

HERCULES SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

What is the role of a school site council?

The school site council plays an important role in decision-making. Find out what School Site Council (SSC) does and how you can get involved.

Questions school site councils can ask

- What are the goals and priorities of our school?
- What data do we have that shows how well we are achieving those goals?
- Are we progressing toward our goals?
- Are there particular groups of students who are not doing as well as others?
- What supports could we put in place to help struggling students?
- How will we fund those supports?
- Do we have programs that are ineffective or unrelated to our goals?
- Is it possible to eliminate those programs?
- How will we know if our new programs are effective?

Who is best qualified to make decisions about a school? Policymakers in states across the country agree that those who are involved with schools and students on a day-to-day basis — teachers, parents, and other school employees — can make some of the best decisions. This belief led to the creation of the school site council.

What the school site council does.

The school site council is a group of teachers, parents, classified employees, and students (at the high school level) that works with the principal to develop, review and evaluate school improvement programs and school budgets. The members of the site council are generally elected by their peers. For example, parents elect the parent representatives and teachers elect teachers.

Over the course of a year, a typical council might consider the goals of the school or district and then work with the principal to evaluate the school's progress toward those goals as it pertains to student achievement and school improvement plan. In this evaluation, the council might consider school test scores, attendance and discipline records, parent surveys and input from students. In addition to academic planning, many site councils are also responsible for making decisions about parent engagement, safety and discipline.

After looking at the big picture of the school's progress, the council and the principal create a plan for improvement. This plan might involve a new academic program, staff member or parent outreach strategy. For example, one council might use funds to develop a new math program, while another might decide to hire a reading specialist. Another council might decide that hiring an additional teacher to reduce class sizes in a particular grade or a parent liaison to get more

parents involved would be the best use of its money. Because school budgets are limited and many funds can only be spent in certain ways, there are always tough decisions to make.

School site council members don't just represent their own interests. They have an obligation to make decisions that will best serve the whole school community. In fact, many site councils are specifically charged with finding ways to close gaps in achievement between groups of students.

How to get involved

All School Site Councils are open to the public. If you feel the need to be a voting member, then you will have to be elected by your peers. School Site Council Ballots are still available and we have several openings:

- 1 – Parent
- 3 – Students
- 3 – Teachers

To find out more about what your school site council does, attend our first school site council meet on September 16th @ 4:00pm in the High School Library.