

Tustin High School

School Site Council Election 2016-2017

The Role of the School Site Council

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.

The exact duties of school site councils vary from state to state and even between districts in the same state, but site councils generally either make decisions or advise the principal on the school budget and the academic or school improvement plan.

In addition to academic planning, many site councils are also responsible for making decisions about parent engagement, safety and discipline.

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. In this evaluation, the council might consider school test scores, attendance and discipline records, parent surveys and input from students.

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 from one school might use funds to develop a new math program, while another council at another school 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.

In some schools, the site council merely advises the principal and does not have any authority to make decisions. In other schools, site councils are powerful and have the last word on staffing and budgeting decisions, including evaluating the principal and hiring teachers. Even at schools where the official duties are the same, some site councils generally defer to the principal's judgments, while others are actively involved in developing new programs or overseeing major school change.

Successful school site councils, regardless of their specific agendas, are more than a "rubber stamp" committee, and always ask thoughtful and challenging questions.

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.

From "greatschools.net," <http://www.greatschools.net/cgi-bin/showarticle/ca/38>

The School Site Council Election

During school registration, Tustin High School asked for parent volunteers to seek election to the 2016-2017 School Site Council. On the back of this page are the nominees. This year there are four vacant School Site Council positions.

Using this form as a ballot **PLEASE VOTE FOR TWO NOMINEES** to the school site council. Parents elected to the site council will be notified by the school principal.

Thank you for supporting the students and teachers of Tustin High School.

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?