



# ASSOCIATION OF YUKON SCHOOL COUNCILS, BOARDS & COMMITTEES

## **BACKGROUND**

Education in the Yukon is a partnership between governments, educators, School Councils/Boards, parents, students and community. Each partner has an important role to play – to be effective, the partners must collaborate. And while collaboration is a vital component for a high quality education system, autonomy of each partner group is also important.

One component of building meaningful partnerships is to recognize that each partner group must have a mandated area of authority and responsibility.

At the Fall 1999 School Councils' Conference, delegates gave their unanimous support to the creation of an association. In November 2000, it was officially named the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC) with the Constitution and Bylaws being passed by resolution. The organization is registered as a society with YTG Corporate Affairs.

## **LEGISLATION**

Under section 121 of the Yukon Education Act, it states:

*“School Boards and Councils may form and become members of an Association of School Boards and Councils and may make grants or payments to the association.”*

## **MANDATE**

Through its activities, the Association provides services and support to its members. The focus is on working collaboratively for high quality public education and promoting and supporting the value of locally elected School Councils, Boards and Committees.

The objectives of the Association include:

- To undertake and / or coordinate project initiatives identified as being of a common priority by its membership and disseminate any resulting information.
- To ensure access to training programs on behalf of its members.
- To ensure effective communication between the Association, its members and external contacts.
- To provide expert advice to its members.

AYSCBC can represent membership, as directed, on matters affecting public education in the Yukon.

## **EXECUTIVE**

In accordance with the Bylaws, there are to be up to seven members on the Executive, and where possible, three are to be from the rural communities, three from within Whitehorse periphery and one is open to the Yukon at large. The term of office is three years. As per 3.9 in the Association By-laws, vacancies may be filled through by-election or by appointment. AYSCBC tables an annual report to the membership at the Annual General Meeting.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Membership is voluntary and application for membership is open to every Yukon School Council, and the Yukon Francophone School Board.

## **STAFF**

The organization has an Executive Director as professional staff, all Executive Members are volunteers.

## MEMBER SERVICES

### **Enhanced Communication:**

- Considerable time is spent communicating with other groups and individuals. The Association has provided guidance and coordination on issues of common concern that the Minister, the department and other organizations require input on.
- Research is conducted on a number of relevant issues. AYSCBC continues to build a repository of information and resources relevant to councils' roles and responsibilities and ensures this information is accessible, understandable, accurate and meaningful.
- The Association supports networking between councils. This entails maintaining the connection between AYSCBC and each individual council, as well as the connection all councils have with each other for information sharing, decision-making and support.
- Efforts are made to ensure that councils have access to information that is user friendly, through such methods as newsletters, and other information resources tailored to school council needs.
- AYSCBC assists during the planning and coordination of conferences/gatherings based on the interests from a school council perspective.
- Affiliations have been made with several other School Council/Board associations in other jurisdictions. This has proved to be a great source of information and resource sharing.

### **Training and Professional Development:**

- The Association plays an active role in training and professional development for School Councils. These have been delivered by the Executive Director and members of the AYSCBC Executive at conferences and to Councils in their communities. When not delivering training, AYSCBC has been active in the coordination of same.
- The Association ensures School Councils are better informed, focused and effective. This contributes to the efficiency and credibility of councils.
- The Association sets standards for their members such as a Code of Conduct. One has been adopted for Executive Members and a Policy re: Code of Conduct has been adopted for all members.
- Through input provided in the planning and organization of conferences and other meetings, these functions are more focused and tailored to the needs of School Councils. Issues can be discussed, debated and voted on. Through membership in the Association, Board/Committee/Councils have a mechanism to collectively vote on issues.
- Through affiliation with other similar associations, increased professional development opportunities exist. This is an important aspect of being able to take on a leadership role in an organization serving others. At times, it may be necessary to hire other expertise to educate councils on trends and policies in education.

### **Autonomy and equality as Partners:**

- As the Association is a member-driven self-governing organization, it does not have competing demands/responsibilities from other programs, departments, initiatives, etc. This helps councils focus their work by being informed and able to be proactive.
- While it is the decision of individual School Councils as to who sits on departmental committees, the Association provides a mechanism for the department and other organizations to coordinate representation from School Councils.
- The Association provides support to school council members sitting on departmental or other Committees.
- The Association will provide support to School Councils in the hiring of administrators.
- The Association can assist with Councils taking on additional powers that they may be unable to do individually without support.

- Tracking of issues of concern can be done so there is a “corporate history” and councils do not burn out by constantly reinventing the wheel. This also allows for more forward movement and resolution of issues.
- AYSCBC can coordinate a policy-setting process allowing members from across the Yukon to present a collective voice on territorial educational issues. This involves providing support for councils to pursue and respond to common issues of concern.
- Members are situated throughout the territory and many feel very remote from the Department of Education. Through ongoing connection with the Association, the voices of those elected by the school community can be ‘amplified’.

### **Staying connected**

AYSCBC has a role as a clearinghouse of information that provides a two-way flow of communication to and from members, as well as many others involved with Yukon education. Communication with current and prospective School Council/Board and Committee members, Department of Education staff, the Minister of Education, Council of Yukon First Nations, First Nation Education Directors, school staff and others has been a major undertaking for AYSCBC.

Outside of Yukon, contact has been made and is maintained with many relevant educational organizations and projects--some of these are:

Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB)  
 Alberta Home and School Council Association (ASCA)  
 British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils (BCCPAC)  
 British Columbia School Trustees’ Association (BCSTA)  
 Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) and its initiatives:  
     Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre  
     Health & Learning Knowledge Centre  
     Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre  
 Canadian Education Association (CEA)  
 Council of Early Child Development (CECD)  
 First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC)  
 First Nations School Association (FNSA)  
 Imagination in Education Research Group (IERG)  
 Manitoba Association of Parent Councils (MAPC)  
 Manitoba School Improvement Program, Inc. (MSIP)  
 Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA)  
 People for Education (P4Ed)  
 Saskatchewan Association of School Councils (SASC)  
 Society for the Advancement of Excellence in Education (SAEE)

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