

PURE *FACT SHEET* What are LSCs?

What are Local School Councils (LSCs)?

Local School Councils (LSCs) are elected bodies at nearly every Chicago Public Schools (CPS) elementary, middle and high school. The LSC has 6 parents, 2 community members who are not parents of students at the school, 2 teachers, the principal, and, in high schools, a student member. The parents and community members are elected by the parents and community residents around the school. Teachers are selected by the school staff. These members serve for a two-year term. High school student members serve for one year. By law, the LSC chairperson must be a parent representative.

The LSC's major responsibilities are to approve the school budget and annual strategic plan (called the school improvement plan), to evaluate the principal every year and to decide every four years if they want to renew the principal's contract or hire a new principal. This is the strongest site-based management system in the nation.

LSCs usually meet about once a month, though they may also hold special meetings to vote on budget and other items. The meetings are open to the public with a few exceptions (in cases where the LSC discusses personnel issues, for example) and the meetings must be posted with an announcement giving the time, date, and location of the meeting and what will be on the agenda. Parents and other interested people should also be able to call the school and find out when the meetings are held.

LSCs can be very effective in making change happen at schools. Many LSCs have committees where non-LSC members can participate. The public can also go to LSC meetings and speak out about what's happening in the school.

LSCs have

- set up parent patrols,
- replaced principals who were not attentive to school needs,
- directed discretionary funds to pay for school bands and other fine arts programs,
- created computer labs,
- fought for repairs, renovations, additions and new schools to relieve overcrowding,
- helped move their schools off of academic probation,
- set up before- and after-school programs,
- established schools within schools programs,
- implemented parent programs to increase parent involvement,
- created gifted programs,
- established committees to involve more members of the school community in such areas as facilities, student climate, curriculum, parent involvement, budget, and school improvement planning, and
- encouraged active teacher leadership through Professional Personnel Leadership Committees.

Parents United for Responsible Education (PURE)

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