

School Statement of Needs Parent User Guide

What is the School Statement of Needs (SSON)?

- This is the form completed by the school council/parent representative of every school each fall.
- It outlines the parent/community priorities for the school that the superintendent will use to identify a principal if one needs to be appointed. It is a record of the main priorities of the parent community and the school board for that specific school.

What is it used for?

- It is this form that will be used by the superintendent if a different principal needs to be appointed. This form replaced the previous “Principal Profile” that school councils completed annually, as per the Ministry of Education’s “School Councils – A Guide for Members” document.

Who completes the SSON?

- Any parent/guardian who has a child in the school and who has been chosen by the school council/parent community can complete the SSON after consulting with the parent community.

When is it completed?

- Every school in the TDSB should complete the SSON and give it to their superintendent by November of each school year.

Where do we find the form?

- Your current principal and/or superintendent will have a copy of the form.
- You can also find the form on the PIAC website at www.torontopiac.com.

What happens if my school community receives a principal new to the school?

- If a principal returning from a leave, or as a result of a central transfer, is appointed to your school (your superintendent will know this), your superintendent will contact the school council chair to confidentially confirm the name of the incoming principal.
- If your school has a principal vacancy, and will be receiving a principal through transfer or vice principal promotion (your superintendent will know this), you will need to select 1 – 2 parents to represent the views of the school community.

How do we choose the parent representatives?

- They must be a parent/guardian of a child in the school. Remember, they are not choosing the incoming principal. They are representing the school community’s priorities.

What do the parent representatives have to do?

- Review the SSON and when a vacancy exists, the parent representative(s) and trustees will meet with the superintendent to ensure the SSON reflects the school community priorities.
- Be available for a follow-up discussion with the superintendent regarding the profile of the recommended candidate. The superintendent will speak to the profile of the recommended candidate and describe how s/he meets the school priorities in the SSON.

How do we decide what to put on the form?

The form is just a record of the school community's priorities. Each school has its own culture in addition to the common goals of improving student achievement and well-being, as well as parent and community involvement. Consultation with the parent community can take place at a school council meeting or a meeting specifically designed for this reason. Consider the following suggestions:

- Consult as widely in your community as possible.
- Publicize this item on your school council agenda so parents will know when and where it will be discussed. A fall meeting is recommended.
- Translate this information so non-English speaking members will be aware.
- Consider holding a separate meeting for this task either at the school or in the community.
- Consider inviting your superintendent and trustee to a meeting to discuss your school's priorities.
- Consider including feedback from students and teachers.

What are some examples of school and community needs/priorities that could be listed on this form?

- True parental involvement including innovative ways to promote a diverse School Council
- Support for the highly valued range of unique programs (e.g. Arts, health and wellness, student leadership, equity, special education, etc.)
- Community partnerships
- Communication of School Improvement Plans, school budget, school safety plan and school staffing proposals (elementary) to parents, the School Council and the school community.
- Visible administrator who actively interacts with students and school community.
- Support and positive change for special needs students within the school including support for implementing IEP's

Do the parent representatives get the final say?

- While parents have input into the SSON, they must remember that they have an advisory role only. This means they can suggest they have concerns that the candidate profile presented by the superintendent may not meet the needs outlined in the SSON. The superintendent must report back to them on how their suggestions have been taken into consideration, but it is the superintendent who makes the final recommendation.

How much time does it take to be the parent representative?

- The time can vary somewhat but will likely require about 4 – 6 hours over a number of days.

Do I need to be available during the day?

- While daytime availability can be helpful, it is NOT mandatory.

**What happens if a principal returning from leave or centrally transferred is appointed to my school?
Is there a meeting with the principal?**

- Yes. As part of the incoming principal's entry plan, there will be a meeting to discuss the school priorities.

How else are parents involved this procedure?

- Interested parents can volunteer to be on interview teams for teachers applying to become vice-principals. This is NOT for VP for your own school but for the TDSB in general.

How much time does it take to be involved in vice-principal interviews?

- You must be available for one full day from 8:00 until 4:00 (this will usually be in November or February).
- You must attend one training session (once/year, usually in January or February) that will be in the evening for approximately 2 hours.

Why are parents involved in vice-principal interviews?

- Parent involvement in education increases student performance. How VP's and P's include parents in the school is very important.
- Parents do not evaluate a candidate's educational training and experience.
- Parents give feedback to the team about the candidate's inclusion of parent and community involvement.
- Parents do not ask their own questions in the interview. They comment on how the candidate includes parents and community in their answers.

How do I volunteer for vice-principal interviews?

- Email the Parent and Community Involvement Coordinator at info@torontopiac.com

Who should I ask if I have other questions?

- You can ask your principal, superintendent or your PIAC ward representative. You can also email PIAC at info@torontopiac.com.

Once your school has completed the entire process, please have the parent(s) most involved complete the PIAC survey found on our website at www.torontopiac.com. PIAC will use this information to help advocate for improved parent involvement at the TDSB.