



Understanding School Societies

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What is the Difference?

Council

- School councils are a non-business entity – not incorporated (Alberta School Act).
- School councils work together to support and enhance student learning.
- Members of the (school) community can consult with the principal and student board and offer advice.
- School councils:
 - Focus on what is best for students
 - Consider the interests of school stakeholders
 - Develop, maintain, and reflect school culture
 - Represent a parent voice in the school community



What is the Difference?

Society

- Incorporated non-profit society (Alberta Societies Act).
- School societies are formed to help schools fundraise and develop relationships in the community.
- All financial transactions must be conducted within the society.
- Insurance optional but recommended.

- Separate entity from the school it is fundraising for.



General Considerations

Council

- No regulatory paperwork required.
- Council will generally establish its own working procedures which should be documented.
- Establish Council executive.
- Document and file all meeting minutes.
- ECSD requires annual report for Council activities.



General Considerations

Society

- Establish Executive Committee as per bylaws
- Bank Account(s)
- Prepare financial statements.
- Meetings / Meeting Minutes
- Alberta Corporate Registries
 - Annual Return
 - Dissolution after 2 years of non-compliance.
- AGLC
 - Annual Return – Financial Reconciliation.
 - Required to maintain account in good standing and ensure Gaming (Casino) licenses are not compromised.



DOCUMENTS

For compliance and operation

Society

- Alberta Corporate Registries
 - Certificate of Incorporation
 - Certificate of Amendment
 - Bylaws
 - Annual Return
 - Financial Statements
 - Executive List
 - Proof of Filing
 - Bank Statements
- AGLC



ESSENTIALS

Society

- Keep documentation up to date (especially financial information)
- Ensure all regulatory requirements are followed
- Coordinate storage and access of society and/or council documents
- Keeping everything in order has a significant impact on accessing grant funding
- Keep in mind summer vacation – potentially 2 months of no access to documents



ESSENTIALS

Society

- Fiscal Year End
 - Determined in bylaws.
 - Does not change for any reason – do not adjust FYE to match other deadline reporting requirements.
- Alberta Corporate Return
 - Due on or about last day of month of corporate registration
- AGLC Annual Return
 - As determined by AGLC

*NOTE: All three dates are most likely all different



MEETING STRATEGIES

- Running Meeting (Council vs Society)
 - Two separate meetings, held one after the other
- Sample Agenda
- Who can make a motion?
- Quorum



MEETING STRATEGIES



- Document Review
 - See cheat sheet provided at check in table
- Annual General Meeting
 - As per bylaws – typically requires minimum 30 days notice
 - Voting in of new members

MEETING STRATEGIES

- Tips to support Families
- Enticing Parent/Caregiver participation
- Provide food, advertise at events, babysitting fees, taxi/uber
- Combine meeting with other event (opening BBQ, school event)
- Committees
- Smaller tasks so jobs are not so overwhelming for new members (hot lunch, playground)



For More Information

School Society overview videos:
<https://www.ecsd.net/school-society-training-videos>

Reach out to
schoolcouncils@ecsd.net
for support



Thank You

