

Working Together for School Improvement

# RICHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

### THE PURPOSES FOR SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCILS ARE:

- To build consistent and effective communication among parents, employees and administrators
- To allow parents an opportunity to be actively involved with the school in their children's education
- \* To make good schools better

#### **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**

- × Principal
- Chair (parent member)
- Vice-Chair (parent or employee)
- Parent/Guardian Members
- Faculty/Staff Members
- PTA/PTO Members
- Counselor (secondary schools)
- × Native American Representative for RHS

#### SIZE GUIDELINES

- A high school will have at least 6 parent/guardian members and at least 4 faculty/staff members.
- All other schools will have at least 4 parent/ guardian members and at least 2 faculty/staff members.
- Parent members must exceed the number of faculty members (including the principal) by at least two members.

#### **TERMS FOR MEMBERS**

- × A term is 2 years.
- Schools, in consultation with districts, set the beginning date.
- \* A council member may be elected to office as long as they will have a student attending the school.
- \* Recommend staggered terms

#### SCHOOL EMPLOYEE ELECTIONS

- \* Teacher/Employee Members, except the principal, are elected by employees
- Principals serve and fill an employee position but are not elected.

#### PARENT ELECTIONS

- \* The elections may be held near the beginning of the school year or in the spring if they are completed before the last week of school.
- \* The timing of the election must remain the same for at least four years.
- \* The timeline must include a notice to parents at least 10 days prior to the election that includes the open positions, how to file, and when and where the election is to be held.

#### PARENT ELECTIONS CONT...

- If there is not a contested race, the school need not hold an election.
- \* There are no term limits for parents. They may serve if they have a child attending the school during the two-year term.
- After the council is elected, the council elects a chair and a vice chair.

#### WHAT ABOUT UNFILLED POSITIONS?

- If a parent/guardian position is unfilled after elections, the parent/guardian committee members will select a parent/guardian to fill the position.
- If a faculty/staff position is unfilled after elections, the faculty/staff committee members will select a faculty/staff person to fill the position.

#### MAJOR ROLES OF THE COUNCIL

- Participate in the development of an ongoing School Improvement Plan
- Participate in the development of a School Land Trust proposal and budget
- Advise the school administration on local school issues
- Provide an opportunity for issues of concern in the community to be presented to the school administration

#### Major Roles of the Council

- Make recommendations regarding issues at the school such as internet safety, school programs, ideas/suggestions regarding students, etc.
- Provide e-mail and phone number, made public on the school's website and provided directly to all parents (state law).
- Serve as the Comprehensive Guidance Advisory Committee
- Participate in the school accreditation process

#### SCHOOL WEBSITE POSTING

- One week prior to meetings agenda with date, time, location, minutes from previous mtg.
- By October 20 yearly mtg. schedule, members contact info., prior year Trust summary
- Always on site parent opportunities, amount received, rules of order and procedure.

#### THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL

- Signs written assurance that elections are held as required by the law
- Ensures that all reports and plans are submitted as required
- Provides access to school information and budget data that relate to the School Improvement, Staff Development and Land Trust plans

#### THE ROLE OF THE CHAIR

- Set the agenda and conduct the meetings
- Assure that written minutes are kept
- Assures that the council adopts rules of order and procedures.
- Makes assignments and ensures follow-up
- Meeting Notice, Agenda and Minutes on web
- Conduct Meetings

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF EACH MEMBER

- Make a conscientious effort to attend all meetings
- Act in good faith for the benefit of all students and the school
- Participate in the development of all required plans
- Be a positive, contributing member of the council

#### Responsibilities of Each Member Cont.

EACH MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL
SHOULD REPRESENT THE COMMUNITY
TO THE SCHOOL AND THE SCHOOL TO
THE COMMUNITY – BUILD A BRIDGE.



# THE UNDERLYING FOCUS SHOULD ALWAYS BE: WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE STUDENTS?

## HOW IS A SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN CREATED?

- \* It is an on-going plan, so once created, it is reviewed and modified each year.
- Collect and review data to determine where you are as a school.
- Decide where you would like to be.
- Develop action plans and strategies that can take you from where you are to where you want to be.
- The plan should set lofty goals, but should also be realistic and sustainable.

#### SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ISSUES

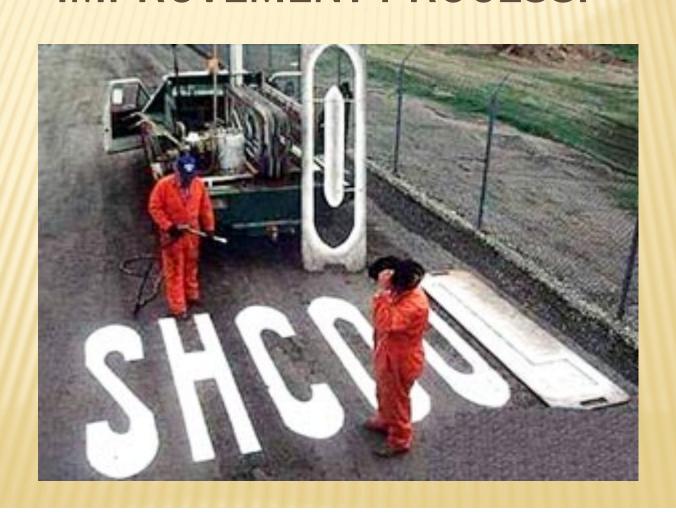
- Improvement plans should be based on needs.
- \* The School Improvement Plan *includes* the School Land Trust Plan.
- The School Land Trust Plan must focus on specific <u>academic</u> needs.
- In high schools and junior high schools, the improvement plan is part of the accreditation process.

\*School Land Trust money must address a specific "academic" need, not a work environment

need.



# YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY CHALLENGES AT YOUR SCHOOL, BEFORE YOU CAN BEGIN THE IMPROVEMENT PROCESS.



# SOME IDEAS FOR MAKING THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR ALL INVOLVED:

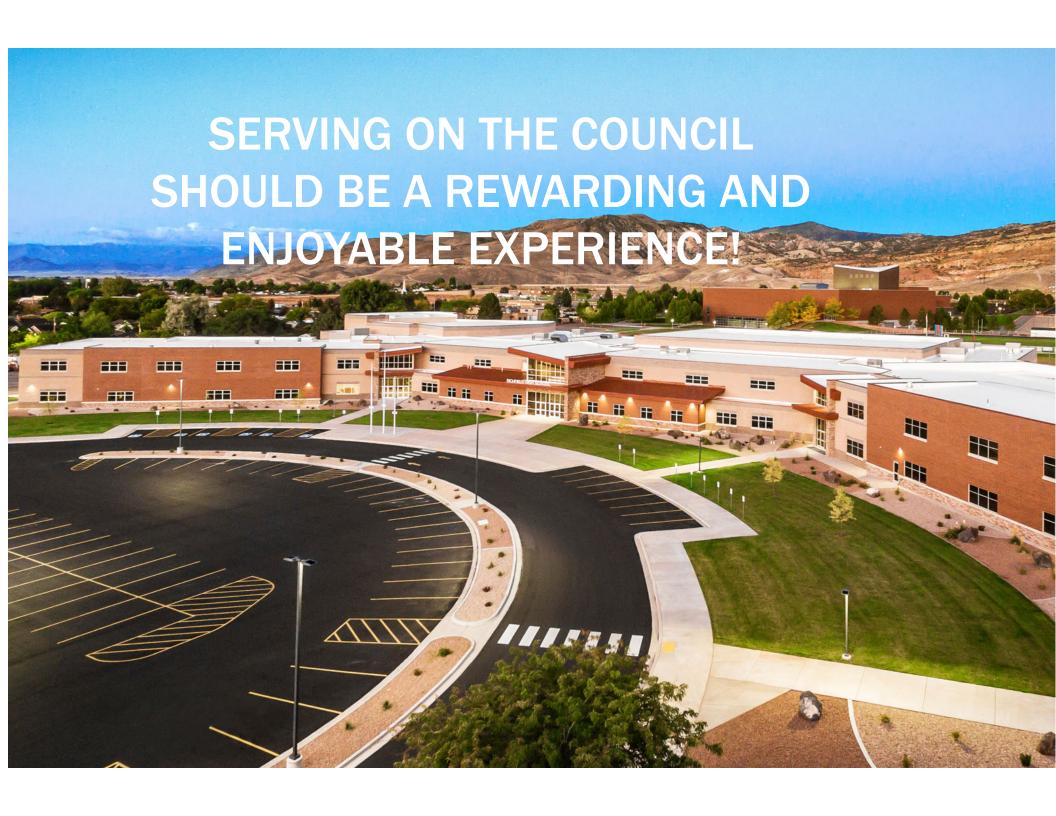
- Make sure everyone is trained
- \* Hold regular and carefully planned meetings
- × Follow a printed agenda

- Have a start and stop time
- Focus on the stated council purposes
- \* Allow some time during each meeting for issues of concern to be raised and ideas to be expressed.

# WHEN ISSUES ARE RAISED, LOOK INTO THEM AND REPORT BACK.



Photo by Vincent Laforet / The New York Times



#### IN SUMMARY:

- \* We believe that we have a great school.
- We also believe that we can and should continue to get better.
- School Community Councils are one tool that, if used effectively, can assist us in the improvement process.

#### FOR THOSE WANTING MORE....

Please feel free to visit: www.schoollandtrust.org.

### Thanks For Your Help!