



**BEING AN EFFECTIVE SCHOOL
ADVISORY FORUM CHAIR**

District Advisory Council

SCHOOL ADVISORY FORUM

- Open to all stakeholders
- An Advisory Forum is a group of concerned advocates for students and the school community, established by Board policy.
- Working together to help identify needs and recommend ideas
- **All duties will be advisory in nature, none of which will conflict with any of the powers and duties reserved by law, policy, or administrative guidelines to the principal.**



THE VALUE AND ROLE OF THE ADVISORY FORUM

- Provides all inclusive, free membership
- Helps develop better policies and programs
- Keeps up to date on issues
- Networks
- Sets goals and work to achieve them
- Turns negative criticisms into positive solutions
- Participates in the School Improvement process
- Acts as a liaison between the school and community (informs and advises)
- Seeks community input
- Understands the relationship and differences between SAC, SAF and PTA/PTO.



SAF CHAIR'S RELATION WITH YOUR PRINCIPAL

- Be aware of the position you hold. SAF Chairs should be discreet and diplomatic . They also need to have a great sense of humor!
- It should be the goal of every School Advisory Chairperson and principal to work collaboratively in finding solutions to school concerns.
- As SAF Chairs, we bring to the table information regarding the community and culture that assists a principal in interacting with the parents of your community.
- A SAF Chair should meet with the principal once a month to review the agenda so that emerging concerns may be addressed by SAF.
- A SAF Chair should be supportive of the school and facilitate finding solutions to concerns being raised at the school level.
- A SAF Chair should not shy away from bringing something to the attention of the principal.
- Remember, we work together.
- We are not always going to receive a yes.



SAF DUTIES

- Elect School Advisory Forum (SAF) chair at May meeting. (May not be a School Board of Broward County employee, with benefits, at that school)
- Conduct monthly School Advisory Forum meetings. (All meetings must be conducted in accordance with the Florida Sunshine Laws).
- Share information received from attending Area Meetings, EABs, and other civic and community organizations.
- Record and maintain minutes of all meetings. Post copy of minutes at school.
- Represent SAF (designee permitted) at Area Advisory meetings. (One vote per school)
- A designee must identify themselves to the Area Chair prior to the beginning of the meeting.



WHAT TO DO BEFORE A MEETING

- Organize and prepare the agenda.
- Share the agenda with the principal; ask if he/she has any additions.
- NEVER surprise the principal with an item on the agenda that could be a problem.
- Confirm any speakers or program.
- Post the agenda and the last meeting's minutes on the website.



ESTABLISH PROCEDURES

- Ask for all agenda items to be given to you in advance. This way you can collect necessary information to address agenda items. (i.e. policies, school staff member)
- Write all motions down. (A motion is a sentence explaining an action that someone would like to see taken.)
- The SAF Chair does not offer his or her opinion. (This is probably the hardest thing to do.)
- SAF Chairs facilitate meetings, not drive the discussion.
- Keep order while still encouraging conversation.




BASIC RULES FOR A MEETING

- Read and approve minutes.
- Guide the meeting through the agenda, keeping the group focused on the task.
- Do not cut someone off with an idea. He or she may never be comfortable offering another one.
- Conduct yourself in a professional manner.
- Reach consensus when possible.
- Ask participants for any final comments.
- Offer thanks for their participation.



MEETINGS FOR SAF CHAIRS

**As Chair of your School Advisory Forum,
these are the meetings you should plan on
attending:**

- Monthly SAF meeting at your school (You chair this one!)
 - School Advisory Council meetings (You or a designee are appointed to this committee by policy)
 - Area General Meeting
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ADVISORY PROCESS: NAVIGATING THE SCHOOLS

The SAF Chair is there to help parents/community members navigate the school system.

- Resolution Process
 - Teacher or School Personnel
 - Administrator (Assistant principal, guidance counselor)
 - Principal
 - Area Office (Area Director, ESE Coordinator, etc.)
 - Other Advisories (Gifted, ESE, and ESOL)
 - Area Advisory Chair



MOTIONS

A motion is a sentence or two that describes a change or concern.

- Motions start at one of our schools. At a School Advisory Forum meeting a topic may generate much discussion and a motion may come out of that discussion.
- If SAF votes in favor of the motion, it passes to the Area for consideration.
- The School Advisory Forum Chairperson brings the motion forward to the Area General Meeting.
- If the Area Advisory Council approves the motion, it passes to the District for consideration.
- The Area Chairperson presents the motion at the District Advisory Council General Meeting and it is voted upon there.
- The District Advisory Council Chairperson forwards the motion to the Superintendent.
- The District Advisory Chair presents all motions to the School Board in the DAC Chair's report to the Board.



MEETING DECORUM AND ROBERT'S RULES

- Part of the business of Area/SAF is discussion.
- We speak one at a time and through the Chair.
- Be respectful; nothing is personal.
- We are governed by Robert's Rules of Order.
- Sometimes we are also governed by Bob's Rules.
- The Chair will do his or her best to call on those who wish to speak or have a new point to make during discussion.
- At the end of the meeting, we are still all colleagues.



RELATIONSHIPS

- Advisory is about building relationships.
- Get to know each other.
- Use your Area Chair and Steering as a resource.
- Use you DAC officers and Steering as a resource.
- Do not hesitate to call or email.



SIMPLE MEETING NORMS

- **Respect each other.**
- **It is okay to disagree.**
- **Listen as an ally.**
- **Everyone participates; no one person dominates.**
- **Honor time limits.**

