**Local School Improvement Council FAQs**

**What is a Local School Improvement Council?**

The West Virginia legislature mandated the public schools establish councils to collaborate with administrators and faculty to promote innovations and improvements in the teaching and learning environment in the schools.

**What authority does the Local School Improvement Council have?**

 The Local School Improvement Councils may propose alternatives to the operation of the school that will meet or exceed the high-quality standards established by the state board of education and will increase administrative efficiency, enhance the delivery of instructional programs, promote community involvement in the local school system, or improve the educational performance of the school generally.

**Where do I find the West Virginia legislative code on Local School Improvement Councils?**

The code can be accessed by typing

 <http://www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/Code.cfm?chap=18&art=5A#05A> in your browser or clicking [West Virginia Code](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/WVCODE/Code.cfm?chap=18&art=5A) .

**How do Local School Improvement Councils work?**

Local School Improvement Councils serve an integral role in school governance through shared decision making. The membership is designed to draw upon the expertise and insight of stakeholders from various backgrounds to define the strengths and weaknesses of a school and to develop solutions to improve education at the school. The LSIC is responsible for addressing complex issues and fostering changes that may drastically alter the curriculum, instruction, or administration of the school.

 Local School Improvement Councils need to not only work on projects, such as development of handbooks, revision of lunchroom policies and planning award assemblies, they need critically examine their school’s needs and develop comprehensive improvement plans. The LSIC efforts are supported by the legislation which provides a waiver process by which Councils may propose to change local and/or state board policies.

**How do you become a member of your Local School Improvement Council?**

The principal will arrange for Council member elections to be held prior to September 15 each school year and will give notice of the elections at least one week prior to the elections being held.

**Who can become members of your Local School Improvement Council?**

The Local School Improvement Council is comprised of:

1. The principal, who serves as an ex officio member of the council and is

 entitled to vote;

1. Three teachers elected by the faculty senate of the school;
2. One bus operator who transports students enrolled at the school and

one school service person, each elected by the school service personnel

employed at the school;

1. Three parents, guardians, or custodians of students enrolled at the school elected by the parent(s), guardian(s) or custodian(s) members of the school’s parent teacher organization. If there is no parent teacher organization, the parent(s), guardian(s) or custodian(s) members shall be elected by the parent(s), guardian(s), or custodian(s) of students enrolled at the school in such a manner as may be determined by the principal ;
2. Two at-large members appointed by the principal, one of whom resides in the school’s attendance area and one of whom represents business or industry, neither of whom is eligible for membership under any of the other elected classes of members;
3. In the case of vocational-technical schools, the vocational director. If there is no vocational director, then the principal may appoint no more than two additional representatives, one of whom represents business and one of whom represent industry;
4. In the case of a school with students in grade seven or higher, the student body president or other student in grade seven or higher elected by the student body in those grades.

(b) Under no circumstance may more than one parent member of the council

 be then employed at the school in any capacity.

**When is the first meeting of the Local School Improvement Council each year?**

 As soon as practical after the election of council members, and no later than October 1 of each school year, the principal will convene an organizational meeting of the Local School Improvement Council. To the extent practicable, all elections to select council members shall be held within the same week.

**How do teams work effectively?**

The Local School Improvement Council is designed to provide a forum for equal representation and equal responsibility among the members; therefore, each Council must learn to operate in ways that lead to productive and equitable decision making.

**How is your Local School Improvement Council working?**

 Local School Improvement Councils are not static. Due to the election timelines, each year new members join and new issues arise. As councils gain knowledge and understanding of school issues and develop effective team skills, operations may become smooth and effective, establishing trust, openness, responsibility and involvement.

 Council members should be aware and appreciative of stakeholder’s and member’s special skills and concerns to establish a collaborative approach in addressing school improvement.

**Must the Local School Improvement Council report to the local board of education on Productive and Safe Schools?**

Yes. Prior to submitting the report to the local board of education the LSIC must annually conduct a meeting to engage parents, students, school employees and other interested parties in a positive and interactive dialogue regarding effective discipline policies. A State Superintendent’s Interpretation and a sample reporting form can be accessed at

<http://wvde.state.wv.us/interpretations/view/5/263/interpretation.html>

**Are Local School Improvement Council meetings open to the public?**

LSIC meetings should be noticed in advance and operate under established protocols. *Robert's Rules of Order* provides an excellent resource for operating meetings.

**What should be discussed during the annual meeting of the Local School Improvement Council and the local board of education?**

WV Code §18-5A-2 (h)(2)(i) indicates the LSIC shall be prepared to address any matters as may be requested by the county board as specified in the meeting agenda provided to the council and may further provide any other information, comments or suggestions the LSIC wishes to bring to the county board’s attention. Anything presented to the county board must also be submitted in writing.

**Where can a Local School Improvement Council find information on requesting waivers?**

Information and forms for requesting waivers may be accessed at <http://wvde.state.wv.us/lsic/>.

**Can a Local School Improvement Council refuse to forward a request for a waiver that originates in the school’s curriculum team?**

WV Code §18-5A-2 (j) states that any and all matters which may fall within the scope of both the school improvement council and the school curriculum teams authorized in §18-5A-6, the school curriculum teams have jurisdiction. Therefore, the LSIC would have to submit the requested waiver to the appropriate body (e.g., local board of education, state board of education).