

Administrative Procedures Manual	Administrative Procedure 172
	Health and Safety Committee
	APPROVED: June 2020
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LEGAL REFERENCE:	Section 11, 52, 53, 196, 197, 222 Education Act Occupational Health and Safety Act Worker's Compensation Act Occupational Health and Safety Code Occupational Health and Safety Regulation

Background

The following guidelines are provided to assist principals, administrators, Division management and staff in meeting the *Occupational Health and Safety Act – Part 3*, Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committees and Health and Safety Representatives.

Changes to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (June 1, 2018) have further strengthened our Division focus on ensuring employees' safety in the workplace. To meet additional legislative requirement for ensuring that employees know of the hazards at their worksites and have access to basic health and safety committees, and know of their right to refuse unsafe work, the Grande Prairie Public School Division (GPPSD) will establish two (2) Joint Work Site Health and Safety Committees (HSCs):

- 1 Division HSC (includes all sites except for the maintenance department)
- 1 Maintenance HSC (includes maintenance staff only)

Procedures

1. Committee Membership and Term

Each HSC will be composed of at least four (4) members and will have both employer and employee representatives.

An employee representative is a Division employee who does not exercise management functions for the Division. Employee representatives reflecting a broad spectrum of the Division will be included. They will be selected by the Alberta Teachers Association (ATA) and the GPPSD Employee Association.

Employer representatives are employees of the Division who exercise managerial functions for the Division. Employer Representatives are appointed by the Division management.

Membership of the Division Health and Safety Committee will be composed of representation from the following areas:

- 4 GPPSD Management Representatives, consisting of:
 - Senior leadership, executive team members and an Administrator.
- 8 Employee Representatives, consisting of:
 - 3 Classroom Teachers
 - 1 CTS Teacher
 - 1 Educational Assistant
 - 1 Caretaker
 - 1 Administrative Support
 - 1 IT member

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1.1 Co-Chairpersons

Each HSC will have two (2) Co-Chairs, one selected from the Employee representatives and one selected from the Employer representatives. Co-Chairs will alternate serving as chair at meetings of the HSC and shall participate in all decisions of the committee.

The Co-Chairs of the HSC must ensure that:

- 1.1..1 Minutes of each meeting are recorded;
- 1.1..2 Copies of the minutes approved by the committee are given to the employer within seven (7) days of the meeting, and:
- 1.1..3 Copies of the minutes approved by the committee are posted or provided by electronic means at each school/facility within seven (7) days of the meeting.
- 1.1..4 Copies of the minutes approved by the committee are posted on the Division portal.

1.2 Terms of Office

Members of the HSC's will hold office for a term of not less than one year and can continue to hold office for three (3) consecutive years. After a three-year term, members are eligible to volunteer for re-election/selection and may continue to serve on the committee for an additional term if re-elected/selected.

Members can only maintain their position for the HSC for which they were appointed.

If a member of the committee is unable to complete their term of office, the member must be replaced with the same representation of the out-going member. The employees will choose another employee representative, or the Division will appoint another employer representative.

1.3 Notification of HSC Members

Each HSC will submit, by October 1, to the Secretary Treasurer, the names of the members of the HSC.

Each School Administrator/Site Manager will ensure that the names of the HSC members are posted conspicuously at the school/site.

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2. Duties of the HSC:

These HSCs are a group of employee and employer representatives working together to identify and provide recommendations to the employer to assist in solving health and safety concerns at the work site. The HSC is responsible for recommending how health and safety problems might be solved, not for carrying out the necessary remedial actions. The HSCs will also promote awareness and interest in Health and Safety initiatives and information from their work sites/ work groups and from the Division. The HSCs are an important part of the Division's internal structures and will help ensure that work site parties are aware of their roles and responsibilities in the workplace. No staff member can hold the HSC responsible for unsafe or unhealthy situations.

The HSC committees must establish rules of procedure for fulfilling its safety duties (terms of reference). Refer to [AP 172 Appendix A – Health & Safety Committee Terms of Reference](#).

3. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Site Contact

Employees at each school/worksite shall select an employee OHS site contact. The OHS site contact shall be an employee representative. An Employee representative is a Division employee who does not exercise management functions for the Division. They will be recruited on a volunteer basis.

The OHS site contact shall receive a general orientation on the duties and function of the role as outlined in [AP 172 Appendix A – Health & Safety Committee Terms of Reference](#).

4. Performing the Duties of the HSC

4.1 Assistance in Resolving Disagreement with Committee

If the HSC is unable to reach consensus (agreement) on a matter relating to the health and safety of employees at the workplace, a special meeting may be called to address the matter. If the issue still cannot be resolved, a Co-Chair of the committee will report this to an Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Officer, who may investigate and attempt to resolve the matter.

4.2 Process for HSC to Address Employee Concerns/Complaints

The following procedures should be followed for health and safety concerns/complaints:

4.2.1 When an employee believes a task or situation is dangerous, they should report the concern to their supervisor immediately.

4.2.2 Together, the employee and the supervisor must attempt to resolve the concern/ complaint as soon as possible.

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- 4.2.3 If the concern/complaint can't be resolved satisfactorily for either party, the matter can be referred to an HSC Co-Chair or representative.
- 4.2.4 Once the matter is brought to the HSC, an employee member and an employer member will jointly investigate the complaint.
- 4.2.4.1 The investigating members will inform the employee and the supervisor/ employer in writing, of the results of their investigation and may make recommendations to the employer.
- 4.2.4.2 If the investigating members concludes that there is a danger, the supervisor/ employer must ensure that no person is subjected to the danger and must rectify the situation.
- 4.2.4.3 The investigating members provides a summary to the committee.
- 4.3 Recommendations to the Employer
- If a health and safety matter is brought to the attention of the Division Management by the HSC with recommendations to remedy the matter:
- 4.3.1 Division Management must resolve the matter within 30 days and inform the HSC, in writing that it has been resolved.
- 4.3.1.1 Formal recommendations will be sent to the Deputy Superintendent via e-mail, and the Deputy Superintendent will respond within 30 days.
- 4.3.2 If the matter cannot be resolved within 30 days, management will respond in writing to the HSC, stating:
- How the concern will be addressed
 - When the concern will be addressed, including:
 - A timeline for implementing changes to address the matter, and
 - Any interim control measures that will address the matter until the matter is resolved.
- 4.3.3 If management disagrees with the recommendations, they will give in writing to the HSC the reasons why they disagree or why they do not accept or believe there are any safety concerns.

If the written reason(s) provided by the employer does not satisfy the HSC member or it is believed that a safety concern or matter still exists, the HSC can

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refer the matter to a Government of Alberta OHS officer for review and remediation.

4.4 Hazard Identification & Performing Worksite Inspections

The purpose of worksite inspections is to identify hazards and monitor current work practices to ensure the safety of all staff. Workplace inspections determine:

- If a hazard is present as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- Which employees may be exposed to identified hazards.
- Any employees who have been subject to illness or injury.
- If established health and safety practices are being followed.

Formal facility inspections will be conducted by school administration and the school/site OHS safety contact every 2nd month for a total of 5 times per school year. Higher risk areas such as CTS classrooms and science labs will be conducted monthly by the classroom teacher. Deficiencies must be corrected or controlled immediately with any follow up actions required reported into the GPPSD Maintenance system for appropriate follow-up.

The Maintenance HSC will alternate the following inspections prior to each HSC meeting:

- 4.4.1 Building inspections (entire building).
- 4.4.2 Yard inspections (yard and all outbuildings).

5. Meetings

5.1 Schedule

The HSCs will meet regularly, during regular operating hours, and not less than four times each school year.

In the event of an urgent safety concern at the worksite, an HSC Co-Chair may call a special meeting to deal with the urgent concern.

- 5.1.1 When an urgent concern or safety hazard is reported to the HSC that has potential to cause harm to people or loss to Division property, the requirement of [AP 160 – Health and Safety of Students and Staff](#) will apply. These concerns must be immediately reported to the school Principal or Site Management and reported in Public School Works.

The meetings will be held quarterly and are to be scheduled by the HSCs during

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the first meeting as part of the terms of reference review.

The committee Co-Chairs are responsible for securing meeting rooms, coordinating with administrative staff and any other logistical issues that may impact the meeting.

5.2 Quorum

Meetings can only proceed if all of the following criteria is met:

- 50% of the members are present;
- At least one Co-Chair is present;
- There are members for both the employer and the employee present; and
- At least one-half of the present members are employee members (voting management members does not exceed the number of voting employee members).

If for any reason quorum is not met, the chairperson will ensure that a meeting of the HSC is rescheduled as soon as possible.

5.3 Agenda

Co-Chairs and the Division Safety Coordinator will work collaboratively in producing the agenda for each meeting. It will be distributed one week in advance of the meeting.

6. Confidentiality

All members will be bound by confidentiality except where disclosure of information is specifically required by legislation. *Alberta's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)* legislation will be adhered to by all committee members.

7. Record Retention

Copies of all records shall be kept and secured for a minimum of three (3) years, this includes but is not limited to: meeting minutes, inspection records, records of safety complaints or concerns, hazard assessments, incident investigation documents, incident records, training records of committee members, employer recommendations and responses, etc.

All records are subject to record retention audits which will be completed by the Secretary Treasurer or designate. The purpose of these audits is to ensure that records meet record retention requirements.

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The destruction of any records can only be performed by the Secretary Treasurer after three (3) years.

8. Training & Time Away from Regular Duties

8.1 Training

Committee Co-Chairs are required to take the mandatory 6 - 8 hour online or facilitated HSC training offered by a training agency approved by Alberta OHS. This training will review legislation, HCS requirements, and the duties and functions of the HSC committee.

Where any member gives reasonable notice, they will be permitted to take time away from their regular duties to attend health and safety training programs, seminars or courses of instruction.

The amount of time allowed annually for training is the greater of:

- 16 hours, or
- The number of hours normally worked during two (2) shifts.

8.2 Time Away from Regular Duties

All duties of the HSC members are to be conducted during regular business hours. Committee members are entitled to take the following time away from their regular duties:

- The time determined necessary by the committee to prepare for each meeting.
- The time to attend each meeting.
- The time to attend health and safety training as approved by the committee and the employer, or by the employer representatives.
- The time to carry out the members duties as determined by the HSC, (i.e. meeting minutes preparation, meeting agenda preparation, inspections, investigations, meetings with management or external parties, etc.).