

Bylaws Q&A

- Q. Based on the presentation, is it fair to say that the way we would run our meetings is how we decide and set in our school council bylaws? (Parent asking finds that school council looks for guidance from principals a lot of the time to see what needs to be done.)**
- A. Yes, decision is made in bylaws, with a reminder to check the RVS Policy/Procedure, as well as the hierarchy of authority (Education Act > School Councils Regulations > Rocky View Schools Policy /Procedures etc.)
- Q. Our School Council Bylaws are from 2009. You mentioned requiring a special meeting to amend any bylaws. Can I call a special meeting on the same night as the regular meeting?**
- A. Yes.
- Q. When we recently elected a School Council Chair for our High School, we noticed they don't have Bylaws. Instead, we found Operating Procedures from 2016, but couldn't find record of where or who they were signed by. Prior to end of last year, we reviewed those Operating Procedures and voted them in at our September meeting. Should we now have Bylaws even though we have Operating Procedures?**
- A. No, while not my recommendation (which I shared in the presentation) some School Councils have decided to have Operating Procedures as opposed to Bylaws. As long as the Operating Procedures are covering the important things your Bylaws would and there was notice provided that the School Council would be voting to approve the Operating Procedures, it's likely you don't have to worry about having Bylaws as well.
- Q. Can we share our bylaws with someone from within RVS or outside of, to share and go over?**
- A. I have provided support in the past to school councils when reviewing and/or drafting their Bylaws and am available (along with other trustees) to support as best we can. Additionally, ASCA provides support to school councils with this and in a number of other areas: <https://www.albertaschoolcouncils.ca/>
- Q. I am seeing language about executives and then directors and then parents in our Bylaws and wondering who these individuals are and how we are expected to fill their seats/roles. We are not seeing many out to meetings, so wondering about all of these proposed positions.**
- A. I'm wondering if these are not official positions...members at large, part of the decision making but not holding a place of office.
- Q Yes. There are 11 positions for members at large. Our Bylaws are older.**
- A. Okay. If it says you need these members for quorum, you don't have that many members in attendance and your Bylaws are older, the Bylaws should likely be updated. You could use the opportunity to reduce the number of members at large and/or use language like "up to". Remember the motivation to keep simple and using language that will give some freedom.
- Q. We are a School Council in Beiseker, with rural attendance from areas such as Irricana. Our Bylaws state that we have to have a community member from these rural areas on councils, but it has been difficult to ensure we have an individual from each that is able to commit to attendance. Do we need to follow the Bylaw?**
- A. If it is in the Bylaws, yes it should be done. The School Council can continue with business as usual, but should actively communicate the desire to fill the vacant positions. This can also be amended/updated in your Bylaws.
- Q. Did you say that when you're running a proper AGM, you don't need to do three calls for nominations?**
- A. Yes. You can simply open up for nominations initially and once there are no further nominations, simply close the nominations. No need to do this three times.