

# Establishing a School Council of a new school

This information has been prepared to assist principals and regional officers to understand the process and documentation required in establishing a school council of a new school.

Once a new school is approved by the Minister, an informal **advisory group** is generally established in the year preceding the school’s opening to provide regionally based support to the principal for the establishment of the new school.

The principal is responsible for setting up an **interim** school council, subject to Ministerial approval, which is the first step in creating a governing structure, school culture and in connecting to the community. The interim school council operates with an appointed membership nominated by the principal. This council can be drawn from community members, potential parents and advisory group members, or in the case of merging schools, selected current school councillors. The nominations must be endorsed by the Regional Director and the initial council members are appointed by the Minister.

The interim council will hold office until the date of declaration of the poll for the **first school council election** as set out in the school council’s Constituting Order. The Minister must also approve the period during which the first school council election will be conducted and the size and configuration of the **elected** school council.

## Steps to be followed in establishing the school council of a new school

### Principal recommends arrangements for the school council to the Regional Director

The principal completes and forwards **Attachment A** **- *Request for a school council constituting Order* *– new school***, to the Regional Director.

The information in **Attachment A** is required by School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU), Regional Services, to request the Minister make an Order to establish the school council of the new school.

The principal provides the following information:

1. **Proposed date for establishment of the interim school council -** the proposed date by which the school council should be established.

The Minister may constitute the school council for the new school, some months prior to the commencement date of the school. This will allow the school council to enter into contracts, establish bank accounts, determine school uniform and other preliminary school establishment requirements.

1. **Proposed appointed membership -** the size and configuration of the initial membership of the school council prior to the first election.

The appointed school council membership would normally comprise Parent and DET employee members. It may also include Community members. The principal or acting principal of the new school will be a member (executive officer) of the school council of the new school, in the DET employee member category.

The size and configuration of the initial appointed membership does not need to conform to an option in [Schedule 2](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/management/sch2counciloptions.pdf) of Ministerial Order 52, but it must have a majority of members who do not work for the Department of Education and Training.

While the appointed membership of a school council may exceed 15 people (the existing maximum under Schedule 2), consideration should be given to ensuring that the size of the council is workable. Consideration should also be given to ensuring the appointed council is not less than 6 members (the existing minimum under Schedule 2).

Record the names, residential addresses, membership categories and brief background information of the persons nominated for appointment as initial members of the interim school council (eg. former president of XXXX school council, or member of XXXX school council, or person co-opted for Community membership of XXXX school council with expertise in finance).

Each proposed appointee to the new school council must complete an expression of interest form.

The principal must be satisfied that the proposed appointees are suitable and eligible. A printable form is available at : [Expression of interest in appointment as an initial member of a school council - new school](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/management/eoiapptscmember.docx)

Record the details of the manner in which the persons nominated for initial appointment to the school council were selected (e.g. consultation with local community, planning committee selected nominees, consultation with principals of local schools, expressions of interest called from parents of students enrolled at the school).

The initial appointed members of the school council will hold office until the date of declaration of the first school council election. The term of office of members of the elected council will commence on the day after declaration of the the first school council election.

1. **Elected school council membership size and configuration -** the size and configuration of the membership of the elected school council.

The **elected** school council membership size and configuration must be align with an option in [Schedule 2](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/management/sch2counciloptions.pdf). This schedule is also included in the [Principals Guide to School Council Elections](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/governance/prinsguideSCelections2019.docx)

1. **Timing of the first school council election** - the period of time during which the first school council election will be conducted.

The principal of the new school may decide to request that the first school council election be held in February/March of the year the school commences, **or** in the February/March of the following year. This corresponds with school council elections conducted across the State.

The principal may request the first school council election be held at another time of the year, for example, term two. Where this is the case, a six-week period should be allowed for the election process to be undertaken and a commencement and end date be recorded on *Attachment A*. This alternative time must be approved and will be included in the Ministerial Order.

## Regional Director’s endorsement

### Attachment A - Request for a school council constituting Order – new school

The Regional Director considers the information provided by the principal. If agreed, *Attachment A - Request for a school council constituting Order – new school* is endorsed by the Regional Director and forwarded to the School Operations and Governance Unit at school.council@edumail.vic.gov.au for preparation of the briefing for a Ministerial Order.

Note: Allow two months for the preparation, approval and notification of the Ministerial Order.

For further information, contact the School Operations and Governance Unit (SOGU) at school.council@edumail.vic.gov.au or 70221343 – Penne Daley or 7022 1345 – Paul Byrne.

## Attachment A: Request for a school council constituting Order – new school

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| Victorian State Government Logo  |
| **Request for a school council constituting Order –** **new school** |
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| **SCHOOL DETAILS**  |
| **Proposed school** |
| School name  |  |
| Has the school name gone through the official naming process?  | [ ]  YES [ ]  NO |
| Number |  |
| Address |  |
| **COUNCIL DETAILS** |
| Proposed commencement date of school council.  |  |
| **APPOINTED MEMBERSHIP OF SCHOOL COUNCIL**  |
| Nominated appointees to school council  | *(Complete attachment)*  |
| Selection process for the proposed appointees | *(Complete attachment)*  |
| **ELECTED SCHOOL COUNCIL**  |
| **Timeframe for first council election**  |
| Timeframe | [ ]  First day Term 1 20\_\_\_\_ to 31 March 20\_\_\_\_OR[ ]  Other \_\_\_/\_\_\_/20\_\_ to \_\_\_/\_\_\_/20\_\_(*Specify a six week period*) |
| **Proposed size and composition of *ELECTED* membership**  |
| Total  | Parent | DET | Community (co-opted) |
| **REGIONAL DIRECTOR ENDORSEMENT** |
| I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Regional Director, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Region make this Request and endorse the recommendations of the principal. Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**Provide details in full and submit Request and Attachment to:**school.council@edumail.vic.gov.au |

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| **Victorian State Government Logo** |
| **Attachment to Request for a school council constituting Order – new school** |
| **The following persons have consented and are nominated for appointment to the new *INTERIM* school council** |
| **Full name** | **Residential address** | **Membership category**  | **Background information** |
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| **Principal or Acting Principal of new school** |
| **Full name** | **DET** | **N/A** |

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| **Proposed composition of *INTERIM* membership**  |
| **Total:** | **Parents:** | **DET:** | **Community:**  |

**How were the proposed appointees selected?**

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