



Student voice is already there. It's not something we give. It's something we honor. And we do when we listen.
-Monte Syrie

WHAT IS A STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE (SVC)?

Student Voice Committees (SVCs) aim to create meaningful partnerships between students, educators, and administrators with the goal of enhancing the climate and culture of their school building. With the ultimate goal of including students in the decision-making process, Student Voice Committees help to:

1. elevate student voice and perspective within their school and the division at large
1. strengthen the school community through action research and continuous improvement
2. support students as they hone their leadership skills

WHY DOES MY SCHOOL NEED A STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEE?

Students are our most important stakeholders, but often are not considered in the decision-making process within their schools. We believe including student voice and perspective in the decision-making process can significantly improve the climate and culture of a building, as well as increase student ownership and buy-in. Students should be a school's greatest ally in school improvement efforts. For students to effectively participate in this process and build partnerships with adults, they need to develop key leadership skills and competencies such as collaboration, facilitation, respectful dialogue and discussion, public speaking, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy. Through active participation in Student Voice Committees, students can practice these skills in an authentic setting, as well as become advocates for increased student voice and engagement throughout their building.

HOW DO STUDENT VOICE COMMITTEES WORK?

Student Voice Committees are established in coordination with school administration. The administrator will help select a faculty sponsor, who will support the students in their work. The sponsor will receive compensation for their time and engagement with their school's SVC. Each sponsor also receives on-going training to support the work of their SVC.

Student Voice Committees should be composed of a diverse set of students that reflect the population of their school community. Each SVC will use a consistent application to elicit membership. The application review can be unique to each school's SVC.

The school's Student Senator will take an active role in the development of meeting agendas, communication with stakeholders, as well as the facilitation of meetings. Student Senators, as well as other nominated members of the SVC, will receive on-going leadership development training.

Meetings will offer opportunities for students to collaborate in the discussion of topics and issues they feel passionate about within their school community. Students will engage in on-going cycles of data collection and analysis, the design and implementation of action plans, and meaningful reflection.

In addition to school-based activities, participating within Student Voice Committees allows students to build relationships and leadership skills with students from across PWCS. During the academic year, students will be able to attend student leadership workshops where they will learn and practice valuable leadership skills, as well as collaborate with other student leaders from across the school division.