

J. Michael Clára  
Salt Lake City School Board  
District Two

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974 S. 1400 W. • Salt Lake City • Utah • USA

6 May 2014

**HAND DELIVERED**  
Kristi Swett, President  
Salt Lake City School Board  
2256 South King Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

**Re: Flawed Principal Selection Process**

Dear President Swett,

I am voting against the May 6, 2014, Human Resources Board Report,<sup>1</sup> because I believe that the names recommended as new principals were selected in violation of the school district's tenants of shared governance.<sup>2</sup> Any attempts on my part, over the past three weeks, to obtain clarification from the superintendent have been met with silence.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, I believe that the process utilized to bring these names forth, omitted school board approval<sup>4</sup> and was in violation of SLASA Written Understanding<sup>5</sup> and SLTA Written Agreement<sup>6</sup>.

Moreover, the current selection process was conducted in a manner that robbed the parents, teachers, school staff and local community members of their critical role in helping to choose the most effective leader<sup>7</sup> for their neighborhood school.<sup>8</sup>

I would betray the trust my neighbors placed in me, if I become complicit in excluding our local governing councils from what should have been a collaborative process. I cannot in good conscious offer an affirmative vote for this report.

Shalom,

J. Michael Clára  
**Board Member**

Enclosures (7)

cc: Proceedings of the May 6, 2014, Board of Education Meeting

<sup>1</sup> Human Resource Board Report, May 6, 2014

<sup>2</sup> Shared Governance Guide, pg. 2

<sup>3</sup> Letter to the School Board President, April 25, 2014

<sup>4</sup> Superintendent email exchange, December 19, 2012

<sup>5</sup> Written Understanding (SLASA) 2012-13: Procedures For Vacancies and Transfers, pg. 14

<sup>6</sup> Written Agreement (SLTA) 2013-14: [15.3.7.5] Programs and Approval, pg. 74

<sup>7</sup> Leadership Matters –What Research Says About the Importance of Principal Leadership, pg. 2-3

<sup>8</sup> School Board Policy & Procedure C-1: Parent and Community Involvement

Human Resources Board Report  
May 6, 2014

NEW CONTRACT EMPLOYMENT				
Name	Date	Position	Location	Salary
Shaw, Valerie	7/1/2014	Principal	Parkview	\$92,628.00
CONTRACT RENEWALS				
Name	Eff. Date	Position	Location	Salary
CONTRACT CHANGES				
Name	Eff. Date	From	To	Salary
Martin, James	7/1/2014	Principal @ Mountain View	School Support	\$96,546.00
Nance, Rachel	7/1/2014	Assistant Principal Northwest	Principal @ Northwest	\$86,338.00
Newell, Heather	7/1/2014	Assistant Principal North Star	Principal @ Backman	\$80,074.00
Vandeventer, Tracy	7/1/2014	Principal @ Edison	School Support	\$94,733.00
Yapias, James	7/1/2014	Principal @ Bennion	Prinicpal @ Bryant	\$94,733.00
RELEASES				
Name	Eff. Date	Position	Location	Reason

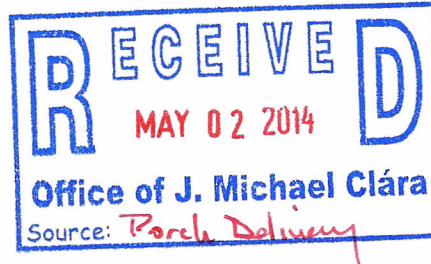


Exhibit: A2  
Board Meeting: 05/06/2014

## SHARED GOVERNANCE, COLLABORATION, AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Our school district is a complex organization, which can succeed only if we enlist the energy, creativity, and effort of many people to accomplish our goals. The Salt Lake City School District Board of Education believes that ideal conditions for student learning can be realized when shared governance is thoughtfully used to support student achievement.

Shared governance is the Salt Lake City School District's collaborative process for making decisions at school sites and in district departments. Shared governance requires each of us to work together with respect, trust, good faith effort, and purpose in pursuit of our mission: Student Learning.

The board retains overall legal responsibility for governing the district but may delegate decisions, subject to periodic review and appropriate accountability.

Although shared governance facilitates a broad range of decisions, it does operate within the following limits:

- law;
- board of education policies;
- negotiated agreements;
- budget; and
- ethics.

A Code of Conduct for all stakeholders is being developed by the board to further describe the ethical and professional behavior necessary for meaningful collaborative effort focused on student achievement.

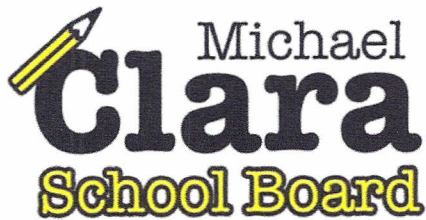
Questions about the shared governance process should be referred to the office of the superintendent. Board policies C-1, Parent and Community Involvement, and G-18, Complaint Resolution Process, which appear in the Appendix to this Shared Governance Guide, may also be helpful in understanding shared governance.

All policies discussed in the guide can be found on the school district's website:  
<http://www.slcschools.org/policies/>

## PRINCIPLES OF SHARED GOVERNANCE

Shared governance is an effective method for making decisions. It is most effective when all participants have a thorough understanding of its structure and the following basic principles:

- delegation;
- openness, trust, and equity;
- decision-making;
- review and adjudication;
- accountability; and
- dialogue and communication.



**J. Michael Clára**  
Salt Lake City School Board  
District Two

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25 April 2014

DELIVERED VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Kristi Swett, President  
Salt Lake City School District, Board  
2256 South King Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84109

**Re: Principal Selection Process**

Dear President Swett,

In this letter, I am requesting that the issue of the principal selection process be placed on the agenda for the school board meeting of May 6, 2014.

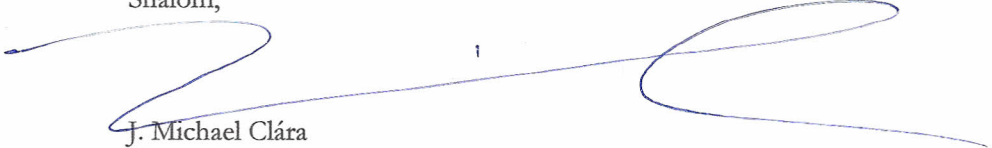
On April 23, 2014, I sent an email to Superintendent Withers and Associate Superintendent Garcia seeking clarification on the principal selection process, as I am being asked multiple questions on this issue from parents and employees alike. I have not received a response from either of them.

You will recall that in our July 9, 2013, school board meeting, I disputed Superintendent Wither's assertion that the school board had "no role" in the principal selection process. In our August 6, 2013, school board meeting, attorney John Robson quoted current state law which clearly states that the hiring of principals occurs upon the authority and approval of the local school board.

Over the years, several westside schools have been exposed to principals that have done nothing more than create a path of destruction and chaos in their wake. I believe that the placement of a principal should be a thoughtful, measured and deliberative process that includes input from all stake holders.

It appears that the agreed upon procedures have not been followed. I am troubled by the fact that community input and involvement has been excluded from this process. It appears to me that this selection process is being conducted in a very haphazard way, by the bureaucracy, which does not serve the best interest of our students or the community at large. This is unacceptable!

Shalom,

  
J. Michael Clára  
Board Member, District 2

**"Local school boards are the bedrock of our society, yet they are invisible to the public"**

Señor Florez -Deseret News

Gmail



Michael Clara <donmiguelslc@gmail.com>

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## RE: UVA program

1 message

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**McKell Withers** <McKell.Withers@slcschools.org>  
To: Michael Clára <donmiguelslc@gmail.com>

Wed, Dec 19, 2012 at 8:42 AM

Hi Michael,

I will send you a little background information on the UVA partnership tomorrow. I would have briefed the board before our participation but the invitation and funding came from a combination of the USOE and the Southwest Regional Center for the first cohort. Under NCLB, the USOE had the responsibility to provide help to identified schools and little capacity to do so. The UVA option was one way to address this responsibility. I can explain more completely in a conversation.

Thanks, McKell

**From:** Michael Clára [mailto:donmiguelslc@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 18, 2012 10:08 AM  
**To:** McKell Withers  
**Subject:** UVA program

McKell,

I was interested in obtaining information on the leadership training that some of the Principals and district personnel have received from the University of Virginia training.

Is there a particular board meeting that this was discussed? If so can you tell me the date?

I have been listening to past board meetings and they have been helpful in helping me understand the issues facing the dist

Un abrazo,

## **X. PROCEDURES FOR VACANCIES AND TRANSFERS**

### **A. Vacancies/Transfers**

1. When a vacancy occurs, the process for filling the vacancy will be communicated to all administrators.
2. The process for administrative transfers and filling vacancies will be under the coordination of the Human Resources Administrator.
  - a. Consideration will be given to current district administrators in filling vacancies.
3. If a vacancy is filled or a transfer occurs and requires a salary contract change\* the terms of the contract will be identified prior to the change.

\*no contract change - salary remains status quo

\*contract change - salary increases/salary decreases

4. A selection team coordinated by the position supervisor and the Human Resources Administrator, including a representative from SLASA, will be formed when filling vacancies.
5. The supervisor of the vacant position shall request a cadre of qualified and/or certificated candidates\*, who meet the qualifications as defined and outlined in the job description. Specific vacancies shall not be advertised unless the list of district administrators and/or the applicant pool does not include an adequate supply of qualified/certificated candidates as determined by the supervisor or the selection team.
  - \*business administration - qualifications as outlined in the job description
  - \*educational administration - requires appropriate Utah Administrative Endorsement
6. The selection team shall recommend two (2) or more candidates to the position supervisor, who shall select the person to be recommended for appointment.

### **B. PRINCIPAL VACANCIES:**

1. When a vacancy occurs, the superintendent will meet [one (1) interview only, not for each vacancy] with the current certificated administrators interested in lateral transfers to "principalships."
2. After the meeting with the appropriate stakeholders (school, staff and patrons) to determine what the school, community, and administration desire in a principal, the superintendent may appoint a principal from all interested district administrators requesting a transfer.
3. If the superintendent chooses not to appoint a current district administrator, a school selection team which includes a representative from SLASA shall be formed under the direction of the Human Resources Administrator. The selection team shall screen and interview candidates from the applicant pool and recommend (alphabetically) two or more candidates.

- 15.3.7.2 Minutes Required.** Minutes of each council meeting shall be recorded so that recommendations and actions can be published and distributed throughout the school within ten (10) days.
- 15.3.7.3 Council Determines Procedures.** The council shall meet monthly and more often if business dictates. The chairman shall be elected by the council. The operating procedures of the council shall be determined through mutual agreement of the teachers and the principal.
- 15.3.7.4 SIC Meetings.** The SIC shall establish rules and regulations for its meetings in accordance with the Written Agreement.
- 15.3.7.5 Programs and Approval.** The council shall establish and implement procedures and programs for the individual school consistent with the policies of the board and approved by the faculty through consensus or ratification when consensus cannot be reached and approval of the superintendent.
- 15.3.7.6 Ad Hoc Committees.** Ad hoc committees may be appointed by the SIC. The findings of such committees shall be reported to the SIC.
- 15.3.7.7 Referral (SIC).** Items which cannot be resolved by the School Improvement Council may be jointly referred in writing by the chairperson and the principal to the superintendent with a copy to the association. If one party requests a joint referral, both parties must submit their rationale for their position to the superintendent within three (3) working days. The superintendent shall respond to all parties concerned within ten (10) working days of receipt of referral.

# Leadership Matters

**I**n today's climate of heightened expectations, principals are in the hot seat to improve teaching and learning. They need to be educational visionaries; instructional and curriculum leaders; assessment experts; disciplinarians; community builders; public relations experts; budget analysts; facility managers; special program administrators; and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives. They are expected to broker the often-conflicting interests of parents, teachers, students, district officials, unions, and state and federal agencies, and they need to be sensitive to the widening range of student needs. Although that job description sounds overwhelming, at least it signals that the field has begun to give overdue recognition to the indispensable role of and mounting demands on principals (DeVita, as cited in Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005, p. i).

This assessment of the importance of principals is echoed repeatedly by educators, researchers focused on leadership, and organizations concerned with ensuring that all students have access to high-quality schools. For example, a report issued by the Southern Regional Education Board suggests that "a principal can impact the lives of anywhere from a few hundred to a few thousand students during a year" (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011, p. 2).

But—and this is key to understanding how a good principal supports high levels of teaching and learning—"it is neither teachers alone nor principals alone who improve schools, but teachers and principals working together" (Schmidt-Davis & Bottoms, 2011, p. 2). Principals are increasingly expected to lead their schools within a framework of collaboration and shared decision making with teachers and other staff members.

## Linking Principal Leadership and Student Learning

For more than a decade, the Wallace Foundation has sponsored rigorous research on school leadership. In a recent report, the foundation highlighted an important message from the research: "A particularly noteworthy finding is the empirical link between school leadership and improved student achievement" (Wallace Foundation, 2011, p. 3). The foundation said about this link:

Education research shows that most school variables, considered separately, have at most small effects on learning. The real payoff comes when individual variables combine to reach critical mass. Creating the conditions under which that can occur is the job of the principal. (Wallace Foundation, 2011, p. 2)

Researchers Louis, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, and Anderson (2010) concurred with this assessment and drew from findings of a research project that spanned six years:

In developing a starting point for this six-year study, we claimed, based on a preliminary review of research, that leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning. After six additional years of research, we are even more confident about this claim. To date we have not found a single case of a school improving its student achievement record in the absence of talented leadership. Why is leadership crucial? One explanation is that leaders have the potential to unleash latent capacities in organizations. (p. 9)



Earlier findings from Louis et al. provide additional details about the link between principal leadership and student learning:

**Leadership is second only to classroom instruction among all school-related factors that contribute to what students learn at school.**

While evidence about leadership effects on student learning can be confusing to interpret, much of the existing research actually underestimates its effects. The total (direct and indirect) effects of leadership on student learning account for about a quarter of total school effects....

This evidence supports the present widespread interest in improving leadership as a key to the successful implementation of large-scale reform....

**Leadership effects are usually largest where and when they are needed most....**

While the evidence shows small but significant effects of leadership actions on student learning across the spectrum of schools, existing research also shows that demonstrated effects of successful leadership are considerably greater in schools that are in more difficult circumstances.

Indeed, there are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader. Many other factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst. (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004, p. 5)

***How Do Principals Affect Student Learning?***

Discussions about the scope of the principal's job too often focus on a to-do list: helping teachers improve their teaching, using data to review and refine the instructional program, and ensuring that the school is kept clean and safe. The more abstract but very tangible elements of leadership, however, are often what spell the difference

between adequate and excellent principals. The research can address this aspect of the link between principal leadership and student learning.

Louis et al. (2010) offered a definition of "leadership" that is distilled from the essence of their findings: "Leadership is all about organizational improvement; more specifically, it is about establishing agreed-upon and worthwhile directions for the organization in question, and doing whatever it takes to prod and support people to move in those directions" (pp. 9–10).

In the executive summary of that report, the researchers said that "leadership effects on student learning occur largely because leadership strengthens professional community; teachers' engagement in professional community, in turn, fosters the use of instructional practices that are associated with student achievement" (Wahlstrom, Louis, Leithwood, & Anderson, 2010, p. 10).

Other researchers conducted a meta-analysis that focused on the relationship between school leadership and student achievement. They also found that principal leadership is correlated with student achievement and that there were especially strong links between specific principal behaviors and student learning. One such behavior was the extent to which the principal "is aware of the details and undercurrents in the running of the school and uses this information to address current and potential problems" (Waters, Marzano, &

McNulty, 2003, p. 4). In the view of those researchers, "effective leadership means more than knowing what to do—it's knowing *when, how, and why to do it*" (Waters et al., 2003, p. 2, emphasis added).

In a recent report, the Wallace Foundation (2011) identified five key functions of principal leadership:

- *Shaping a vision of academic success for all students*, one based on high standards.
- *Creating a climate hospitable to education* in order that safety, a cooperative spirit and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail.
- *Cultivating leadership in others* so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision.

*Achieving success as a leader, by virtually any definition, requires 'doing right things right.'*

(LEITHWOOD, 2005, P. 3)

# Board Policy C-1: Parent and Community Involvement



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## REFERENCES

Administrative Procedures for Board Policy C-1

Utah Code § 53A-1a-108

Utah Code § 53A-3-402

Utah Code §53A-16-101

Utah Administrative Code R277-477

Utah Administrative Code R277-491

Section 1118(a) Federal Elementary and Secondary School Act (NCLB)

Shared Governance Guide

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## THE POLICY

It is the policy of the Salt Lake City School District Board of Education to promote parent, family, and community involvement as beneficial to student success

The purpose of this policy is to encourage family and community involvement in schools and in decisions impacting education and to require that district employees comply with applicable laws, regulations, and board goals.

**Parent and Community Involvement:** The board invites and encourages parents or guardians, volunteers, business partners, elected leaders, community members, and employees to be actively involved in promoting student learning. Parent and family involvement can occur in a variety of ways. Examples include supporting progress toward student achievement goals through activities at home, such as reading together, checking homework, and talking about new things learned; attending school events and teacher conferences; and participating in the development and implementation of the Student Education Plan, the School-Parent Compact, and the School Improvement Plan. Serving on the School Community Council (SCC) and/or participating in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) or other parent organizations can also be effective ways to influence school-level support for student learning. The board encourages the development of Community Learning Centers to further enhance family and community involvement in activities and services collaboratively designed to improve and enrich the community.

The board expects each Salt Lake City School District school to build a school culture that welcomes family and community involvement. Educational programs should be designed to link family members to student achievement goals, engage them in activities supporting those goals, and encourage frequent, appropriate, and varied two-way communication between school and home, so that all families understand what is happening in the classroom and what they need to do to support student learning.

**Shared Governance:** The board supports shared governance as a process for educational decision-making and has delegated the responsibility for that process to the superintendent. Shared governance represents the district's philosophy that education is a shared responsibility of the school district, parents, and community. Under shared governance, parents, district personnel, and community members can actively participate and cooperate in the development, implementation, and review of school plans related to the education of students. School-level decision-making operates within board of education policy, ethics, budget, and law. Shared governance training is offered prior to the beginning of each school year for SCC chairs and members, and by request throughout the year.

**School Community Councils and District Advisory Groups:** Within each local school, the SCC, which operates in accordance with state law and the principles of shared governance, provides an important forum for cooperative improvement of educational programs and conditions. District advisory groups may also be established by the board of education to allow staff, parents, and other community members, and/or organizations to participate in supporting and improving the district's educational program. When appropriate, board leadership and the superintendent will consult with representative groups regarding the membership of such committees.

Non-Discrimination Statement: The Salt Lake City School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities, except where appropriate and allowed by law. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding prohibited discrimination, harassment, and retaliation: Kathleen Christy, Assistant Superintendent, 440 East 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84111, 801-578-8251. You may also contact the Office for Civil Rights, Denver, CO, 303-844-5695.

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# C-1: Administrative Procedures

## Parent and Community Involvement

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### REFERENCES

[Salt Lake City School District Policy C-1](#)  
[Salt Lake City School District Policy G-3](#)  
[Salt Lake City School District Policy I-8](#)  
[Salt Lake City School District Policy I-14](#)  
[Shared Governance Guide](#)

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### PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. **Parent and Community Involvement:** Parents will be encouraged to be actively involved in their children's education through the development of individual Student Education Plans (SEPs) or Student Education Occupation Plans (SEOPs) and attending individual parent conferences that are scheduled at least two times each year.
  - a. Reports of student progress will be made available to parents formally at least three times per year through a report card and/or conference and more frequently on an informal basis through varied methods including such things as graded papers, projects, and tests; notes or calls home; and/or, updated individual student on-line reports. Parents are encouraged to contact teachers regarding their student's progress and to schedule appointments at times other than conferences. If needed, a translator may be provided.
  - b. Schools will be expected to keep parents informed about school events, schedules, rules, and other important activities. Information will be provided to parents on a regular basis using varied formats, such as newsletters, memos, telephone calls, emails, or on-line calendars and announcements.
  - c. Teachers will be expected to inform parents about curriculum, classroom requirements, and expectations. Each teacher will distribute to parents and students disclosure documents at the beginning of each school year. Disclosure documents will include basic requirements for the class, standards and skills to be learned, instructional material to be used, grading practices, special rules or conditions to be met, and other appropriate information. Information, to the extent that is practical, should be in a language and format that can be understood by the parents.
  - d. All schools will be encouraged (Title I schools are required) to involve parents in the development of a Parent Compact (or Parent/Administrator/Student/Teacher Agreement) which outlines the responsibilities of each entity in the educational process of the school. Students benefit when all parties with whom they are involved work collaboratively for their success. In accordance with this policy, Parent Compacts act as an individual school's parent involvement policy and must be reviewed annually. Parent Compacts will be reviewed, updated, and approved annually by the School Community Council (SCC) and such review will be noted in minutes of the meeting.
  - e. Title I schools, under federal law, have additional specific responsibilities which relate to parent communication and involvement. These include the following:
    - Incorporation of all school level parent involvement policy requirements as outlined in Sec. 1118 of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB);
    - Providing assistance to parents to help them understand such topics as the state's academic content and academic achievement standards;
    - Providing materials to assist parents in working with their children to improve achievement;
    - Communicating information to parents about the school and their student's progress in a timely fashion and a manner that parents can understand;
    - Coordinating parent involvement activities with other programs in which their student may be involved, such as Head Start, Reading First, Early Reading First, and Even Start;
    - Informing parents about their right to know the qualifications of the teachers and paraprofessionals working with their student;
    - Informing parents when their child is taught by a teacher who does not meet the highly qualified requirements under federal NCLB and
    - Informing parents when their child is selected to participate in an English language program and of their right to determine if they want their child to participate.
2. **Shared Governance:** Our school district is a complex organization, which can succeed only if we enlist the energy, creativity, and effort of many people to accomplish our goals. The Salt Lake City School District Board of Education believes that ideal conditions for student learning can be realized when shared governance is thoughtfully used to support student Achievement.

- a. Shared governance is the Salt Lake City School District's collaborative process for making decisions at school sites and in district departments. Shared governance requires each of us to work together with respect, trust, good faith effort, and purpose in pursuit of our mission: Student Learning.
  - b. The board retains overall legal responsibility for governing the district but may delegate decisions, subject to periodic review and appropriate accountability.
3. **School Community Council and District Advisory Groups:** Salt Lake City School District School SCCs will include elected staff, community, and parent representatives who will share the responsibility of helping each school to provide quality learning opportunities leading to high levels of student achievement.
- a. The decisions and responsibilities allocated to SCCs will include, but are not limited to the following:
    - Completing an annual needs assessment, which includes a thorough analysis of student achievement data to identify critical academic needs;
    - Reviewing school budgets and other data to assist in developing a school improvement plan;
    - Developing annual goals based on student learning needs;
    - Preparing school improvement and land trust plans to address the goals;
    - Assisting with dissemination and implementation of the school's plans;
    - Making recommendations for programs, practices, materials, or equipment needed to implement the plans and to increase student achievement;
    - Providing input, to assist with the professional development and plan implementation by staff;
    - Developing and implementing a child access routing plan, safe walking route;
    - Making recommendations that enhance wellness practices consistent with G-3 Wellness policy;
    - Reviewing the school's Emergency Preparedness Plan annually; and,
    - Making recommendations to school and district administrators and the local school board regarding the school and its programs, school district programs, and other issues relating to the needs of students.
  - b. Annual school plans will be submitted to the board for approval and will be made available to the school community, to the extent practicable, in a language and format that can be understood by the parents. Information about school plans and progress will be posted on the district website [www.slcschools.org](http://www.slcschools.org), sent in newsletters, and shared at parent meetings.
  - c. At the conclusion of the school year, an evaluation of the school's accomplishments will be completed and results will be used to assist in the development of the next year's plan.
  - d. School Community Councils will strive to involve parents in the academic achievement of their children by integrating parental involvement strategies and activities in the school. Parents will be involved in the planning and implementation of effective parental involvement activities which improve student achievement and school performance. Activities should be evaluated for content and effectiveness to assist in efforts to achieve greater parental participation.