

# Understanding the core business of a school council

The core responsibilities of a school council are to:

- hold true to the tradition and ethos of the school
- maintain a focus on student achievement
- operate lawfully
- ensure the school is solvent

The core responsibilities of school council members evolve from three distinct areas:

1. Fiduciary duties – derived from court-made case law
2. Statutory duties – derived from legislation
3. Regulatory duties – derived from the council's constitution and by-laws

In essence, this means that the school council:

- acts as a steward of the school, taking care and concern for the school, and ensuring the school continues to grow and prosper
- sets the mission and values of the school (its identity)
- discerns the vision for the school
- approves the strategic priorities (direction) for the school
- must be future focussed: to be 'architects of the future' (J Carver)
- ensures there is a culture of ongoing improvement for the school, the principal, and for itself
- celebrates and values diversity of opinions and views during decision making processes
- engages in oversight of risks in operating the school
- approves policies that provide the principal with permission to act
- is focussed on the big picture and avoids engaging in the day to day operations of the school