

Best Practice Advice for Elementary School Structuring

Many times KASC is asked if a school council has the authority to determine the structure of an elementary school or even a grade level. We believe it is best practice for the school council to make these decisions pursuant to their lawful authority over school scheduling, student assignment, and developing policies to increase student achievement. KRS 160.345.

When a school is deciding to be departmentalized, multi-aged, looped grades or other structures, this discussion could turn into an educational philosophy discussion. It also could affect scheduling and placement of students, areas in which a legally required policy is needed. When we direct members to their policies, those policies usually do not explicitly mention how to change the structure of a school or even a grade level.

At KASC, we believe the best practice is council involvement in the discussion and decision-making. If a school feels a particular structure will increase student achievement, then the council needs to be there to hear the research, give pros and cons, and provide input. The law (KRS 160.345) states, "The school council shall have the responsibility to set school policy consistent with district board policy which shall provide an environment to enhance the students' achievement..." Based on this part of the SBDM law, combined with the school council authority to set policy on the school schedule and student placement, KASC advises that council involvement is best practice.