# **Section 750.400 DHS-DRS Residential School Advisory Councils**

Advisory councils (councils) to the DHS-DRS residential Schools exist to offer recommendations and advice to the Schools and to express concerns relative to the educational services provided to children who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, visually impaired, and/or physically disabled.

a) Each council's membership shall consist of a maximum of 16 individuals.

1) Ex-officio members are included among the 16 members and they are not eligible to vote or to hold office. The ex-officio members appointed to each council shall consist of:

A) the superintendent of the DHS-DRS residential School;

B) the DHS-DRS Director or his or her designee;

C) the DHS-DRS Education Liaison; and

D) a Student Representative.

2) As established in each council's bylaws or constitution, the remaining members are elected by the council as follows:

A) one-third of the members shall be parents or guardians of current students;

B) one-third of the members shall be persons with a disability (including school alumni); and

C) one-third of the members shall be professionals in a field related to the disability accommodated by the School (including former employees).

b) The length of a member's term and the number of terms he or she can serve shall be established in each council's bylaws or constitution. Vacancies shall be filled, as they occur, by election of the council. Elections shall be conducted in accordance with procedures established in each council's bylaws or constitution.

c) Officers shall be elected according to procedures established in each council's bylaws or constitution.

d) Procedures for removing members who do not attend regularly scheduled meetings or who are deemed not appropriate members of the council shall be established in each council's bylaws or constitution.

e) Each council shall meet quarterly. Meeting dates shall be scheduled during the first meeting of the new school year.

1) A notice with the quarterly meeting dates, times and locations must be published as required under Section 2.02 of the Open Meetings Act [5 ILCS 120/2.02] and shall be posted on each School's website, as well as on the DHS-DRS website. This information shall also be available at the DHS-DRS Administrative Offices in Springfield and Chicago.

2) Special meetings of each council may be called by the chairperson, or by a quorum of voting members. As required by the Open Meetings Act, a notice must be published at least 48 hours prior to the meeting date and shall include the purpose, agenda, time, date, and location of the meeting. This information shall be posted in the same manner as specified in subsection (e)(1).

3) Meetings are open to the public, except for portions of the meeting that are considered closed for executive session through a majority vote of the quorum present, in accordance with Sections 2 and 2a of the Open Meetings Act.

4) The proceedings of the meetings may be recorded by any person in accordance with Section 2.05 of the Open Meetings Act, which allows any person to record a meeting required to be open unless a witness testifying before the council refuses to testify on the basis that his or her testimony will be broadcast or televised or that motion pictures will be taken during testimony. If a witness objects to recording, the meeting shall not be recorded.

5) The chairperson or his or her designee shall submit written copies of meeting information to the School superintendent and other DHS-DRS employees as determined by each council. This information shall include, but not be limited to, the meeting dates, times, locations, agendas, minutes or reports.

6) Travel expenses incurred by voting members for regular and special meetings shall be reimbursed according to State travel regulations (80 Ill. Adm. Code 2800 and 3000).

f) Each council shall develop its own bylaws or constitution. The DHS-DRS Director shall approve all changes or additions to ensure compliance with federal and State laws and regulations, and shall approve all council procedures to ensure budgetary constraints are recognized and improprieties do not exist.

g) The superintendent shall maintain a copy of all documents required by this Part related to his or her School's council for inspection by anyone and shall provide copies, upon request, in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act [5 ILCS 140] and DHS' FOIA rules (2 Ill. Adm. Code 1176).

h) The superintendent shall provide support services (meeting place, clerical assistance, supplies, postage, etc.) and technical assistance whenever possible. The DHS-DRS Director or his or her designee shall assure that a prompt response, as well as feedback, is provided to each council member through oral and written reports at meetings, correspondence, and the distribution of DHS-DRS plans, reports and other official documents pertaining to the Schools.

i) The superintendent shall attend annually a minimum of 3 of his or her School's council meetings, with the remaining meeting attended by either the superintendent or his or her designee. Each council shall have the authority to enter into executive session and conduct discussion without the presence of the superintendent or his or her designee, when necessary.

j) The council may advise on the following areas:

1) education and residential care programs;

2) training programs;

3) relationships with parents or guardians, families and other interested parties;

4) relationships with related agencies (State, federal, local and private);

5) follow-up studies of former students;

6) fiscal and budgetary issues;

7) physical plant adequacy (buildings, grounds, heating, cooling, etc.); and

8) DHS-DRS programs, policies and issues relative to the School's interests.

(Source: Amended at 37 Ill. Reg. 17091, effective October 8, 2013)