

# The 'art' of being a good Chairperson

The Chairperson has an important role. They preside over meetings to ensure that proceedings are conducted in a proper and orderly manner and that the legal formalities are observed.

A good Chairperson should be an active listener, able to summarise the discussion and ask members what they want next.

A Chairperson should not allow prolonged discussion without a motion. This doesn't mean that you don't ever have open discussion, but rather that a Chairperson and the members decide to have it and put an agreed time on it.

A Chairperson should be able to identify the strengths and skills of the other members and know when to call on them.

A good Chairperson should concentrate on the 'art' of getting the group to work together to reach its goals.

## OUR MISSION

The WA Council of State School Organisations Inc. influences the direction of public education towards the views of parents and citizens for the benefit of students

WACSSO is the representative of over 650 Parent & Citizens' (P&C) Associations throughout Western Australia. It influences the direction of education as one voice through negotiation with federal, state and local governments, the Minister for Education, and key stakeholders.

Founded in 1921, WACSSO strives to influence in a positive way, the future direction of education for the benefit of students encompassing all aspects of learning, including cognitive, social, emotional, health and physical education.

### We are involved in:

- advocating for air-conditioning in schools
- changes to school crossings and the 40km zone around schools
- supporting the continuation of onsite Dental vans within schools
- delivering a P&C training program to P&Cs
- keeping in touch with relevant healthy school policy and Canteen issues
- continuing to influence the Federal Government to introduce greater funding to schools through the Investing in our Schools process and extensive input into associated legislation to bring about positive changes for government schools.



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THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL  
OF STATE SCHOOL ORGANISATIONS INC.



**WACSSO**  
Supporting P&Cs since 1921

# Chairing a P&C Meeting

Helpful hints for the  
P&C President and others  
who chair meetings





## Parents and Citizens working together to represent the school

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A meeting should not be something that has to be endured, it should be the place where decisions are made and topics are discussed. People should leave a meeting happy that progress has been made - and want to come back.

The role of the Chairperson is very important in making sure that meetings are productive and interesting.

### MORE INFORMATION

The Rules of Debate and Standing Orders for use by P&Cs should be observed at P&C meetings. These can be found at appendix B of the WACSSO Constitution & Rules. Refer to the WACSSO website [www.wacssso.wa.edu.au.publications](http://www.wacssso.wa.edu.au.publications)

The Effective Meeting—Guidelines booklet is a WACSSO publication, available from the WACSSO office or refer to the WACSSO website [www.wacssso.wa.edu.au.publications](http://www.wacssso.wa.edu.au.publications)

# The P&C Chairperson

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The P&C Constitution states that the President, when present, will chair the P&C meeting.

It is the responsibility of the Chairperson to:

- ◆ Determine that a quorum is present throughout the whole meeting.
- ◆ Create an agenda before the meeting in consultation with the Secretary.
- ◆ Follow the agenda during the meeting and keep members on track.
- ◆ Sign the confirmed minutes of the previous meeting. Minutes of a meeting are not an official record until confirmed at a subsequent meeting.
- ◆ Control the debate. The Chairperson should seek to avoid disorderly and irrelevant discussion.
- ◆ Ensure motions and amendments are clear and relevant.
- ◆ Keep speakers to the point and allotted time; and ensure that they are not interrupted.
- ◆ Ensure that all discussion is addressed through the Chairperson.
- ◆ Sum up both sides of any debate. Care must be taken to ensure that no personal bias is introduced.
- ◆ Ensure motions/amendments are clearly understood by all members before voting.

## RUNNING THE MEETING

The Chairperson presides over meetings to ensure that proceedings are conducted in a proper and orderly manner, that the legal formalities are observed, and to guide the meeting towards achieving its aims. In order to do this the Chairperson has the power to:

- ◆ Open the meeting.
- ◆ Rule on procedure.
- ◆ Decide who can speak and in what order.
- ◆ Close debate - when it is considered that sufficient discussion on the question has taken place or there are no further speakers for or against any motion or amendment.
- ◆ Reject motions - because they are outside the power of the Association; insufficient notice has been given (some motions require a minimum notice); are inconsistent with a previous decision; phrased in objectionable language or the wording is ambiguous.
- ◆ Request that a speaker be seated or stop speaking.
- ◆ Close the meeting.

## DISSENT FROM THE CHAIR

The Chairperson controls the meeting on behalf of the participants. If any member present at a meeting disagrees with a ruling of the Chairperson a motion of dissent can be moved. Once the motion has been accepted, the Chairperson shall vacate the chair until a decision is made.