



Prioritize



Creating a  
SHAC

## Tips for Creating a SHAC in Your District

Creating a SHAC is not a simple process, but it can be done, and there is no right or wrong way to construct an efficient and effective SHAC. The following steps provide some helpful tips for creating a SHAC.

### A. Collaborate with district and community personnel

- Recruit several parents to serve on the SHAC, including one to serve as co-coordinator, since SHACs are required to incorporate parental input in district decision-making;
- Garner support from district personnel, especially those working in the central office who understand district policies and processes;
- Advise the local superintendent and school board of the necessity and requirements of having a SHAC (refer to [Texas Education Code § 28.004](#)) – invite them to meetings and ask for their input in the recruitment of parents;
- Contact the Texas School Health Advisory Council (T-SHAC) (<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/schoolhealth/shadviseresources.shtm>) for SHAC materials and other resources.

### B. Establish operating procedures for the SHAC

- Outline long-term goals for the SHAC – these are often represented in mission and/or vision statements;
- Compose bylaws for the SHAC – bylaws codify operating procedures so that there is no confusion about organizational structure and people’s participation in the organization. Bylaws should address issues such as:
  - Number of meetings per year and the length of meetings;
  - Membership categories and roles (who can participate in discussions and vote on policy matters); selection of SHAC officers (co-coordinators, secretary); terms of service;
  - Recruitment and confirmation of members (see [section C](#) below);
  - Training of new SHAC members;
  - Open meetings; public engagement;
  - Establishment of sub-committees;
  - Agenda-setting activities (who decides what topics the SHAC will discuss and presentations from outside groups);
  - Conflicts of interest (i.e., a SHAC member who has business with the district);
  - Decision-making processes (i.e., structure of deliberations, building consensus, voting);
  - Communications (annual report, presentations to board, website);
  - Procedures to amend bylaws;



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- Seek input from board trustees and administrators in the district’s central office on establishing goals and bylaws – this will create a common understanding of SHAC purpose and procedures.

### C. Outline recruitment strategies and membership roles

- Assemble a diverse group of parents, community members, and district personnel who have interests and/or expertise in different areas of school health, and represent the demographic makeup of the student population;
- Recruit members who can commit to at least two years of service on the SHAC, can attend all of the meetings, and contribute to policy deliberations;
- Create an application for potential members to complete – this helps ensure that people are committed to serve on this committee;
- When establishing operating procedures for the SHAC (see **section B** above), specify how you will recruit parent members:
  - Open recruitment: SHAC members select new members through outreach activities (see below);
  - Recruitment by trustee: Trustees select members through their personal networks to serve on the SHAC;
  - In either case, the school board approves SHAC membership for each school year (Texas Education Code § 28.004);
- For open recruitment, seek out potential parent members at parent-teacher organization (PTO) meetings, district health fairs, and back-to-school events;
- Recruit district members from nursing staff, physical education and athletics, food service directors, health teachers, principals and any other district personnel interested in student health;
- Specify types of membership (parent, district, community), and the roles that each membership type performs – for example, in some SHACs district members serve as resources for parents and community members and do not set the agenda nor do they vote on issues or recommendations.