

What Are School Health Advisory Councils (SHACs)?

A SHAC is a group of individuals representative of segments of the community, generally appointed by the school district to serve at the district level. They provide advice on coordinated school health programming and its impact on student health and learning.

SHACs provide recommendations that impact the entire school district, not just individual school campuses. School districts use a SHAC to advise them on a variety of topics, such as health education curriculum or drop out prevention.

It is important to emphasize that SHACs provide advice and can only make recommendations to the school district Board of Trustees. They are not part of the paid administrative staff or structure of the schools; nor do they have any legal responsibilities within the school district. However, Texas law requires that every school district have a SHAC and the majority of members must be parents not employed by the school district.

SHACs are required to meet at least four times annually and are required to report directly to the school board with a detailed account of any recommendations made and topics discussed. Some of the local school health advisory council's duties include recommending:

- the number of hours of instruction to be provided in health education;
- curriculum appropriate for specific grade levels designed to prevent obesity, cardiovascular disease, and Type 2 diabetes through coordination of:
 - health education;
 - physical education and physical activity;
 - nutrition services;
 - parental involvement; and
 - instruction to prevent the use of tobacco;
- appropriate grade levels and methods of instruction for human sexuality instruction
- strategies for integrating the curriculum components with the following elements in a coordinated school health program for the district:
 - school health services;
 - counseling and guidance services;
 - a safe and healthy school environment; and
 - school employee wellness.

For more information about School Health Advisory Councils, please see the [School Health Advisory Council Guide](#) that has been published by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS).