INCLUSIVE MEETING PROCEDURES FOR SCHOOL COUNCILS

Supporting student members to meaningfully participate in school councils, or any adult-dominated meeting space, takes purposeful work. The below procedures can help make meetings more inclusive and effective for everyone involved.

BEFORE THE MEETING

- Meeting preparation, particularly supporting student members, should be seen as part of council members' commitments as this is integral to students being able to meaningfully participate as school council members.
- Meetings should be held at a time when student members are able to attend.
- Send out detailed and plain English agendas early.
- Agendas should include a clear statement about the style of each item of business – identifying brainstorming or discussion items, or formal motion-moving or decision-making items.
- Support student members to meet before the meeting to go through the agenda and ask any clarifying questions. Students could meet with each other, with a mentor and/or with another school council member.

AT THE MEETING

- At the end of each item of business, the chairperson should summarise the key points of discussion and the decisions on action to be taken, and who is responsible for each action.
- Before decisions are made, allow time for members, particularly student members, to talk with each other to make sure they understand the issues.
- Motions should be written out in plain English and be available for all members to read before making a decision.
- Avoid using jargon and never assume knowledge:
  - Explain all acronyms and initials.
  - Any other groups, committees or individual roles that are referenced should be explained fully.
  - Unpack "common" pedagogical and education policy language.
- All members should be encouraged and empowered to ask questions about the use of a name, word or phrase and be answered seriously.

AFTER THE MEETING

- Meetings should finish with a summary of the major decisions made and actions to be taken by who and by when.
- Support student members to meet after the meeting to debrief and discuss what happened. Regular check ins with student members will help improve meeting processes and procedures to be as inclusive and meaningful as possible.