



**EDMUND RICE EDUCATION  
AUSTRALIA**  
NSW Colleges Ltd

**ERA NSW Colleges Ltd**

# **School Advisory Councils Charter**

*Approved by the Board: 3 April 2025*

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## PREAMBLE

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EREA NSW Colleges Ltd (EREA NSW) is the civil identity that governs seven New South Wales schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition and is the school proprietor for purposes of school registration and accreditation. The Sole Member of EREA NSW is the Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia (TEREA). The New South Wales schools are part of the national community of schools known as Edmund Rice Education Australia.

The Board of EREA NSW delegates to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), EREA NSW the responsibility to oversee the management of NSW schools. School Principals have delegated responsibility for the management of operations of the school, and they in turn receive advice and support from members of the School Advisory Council.

## The School Advisory Council Charter

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The School Advisory Council Charter was known previously as The Design. The concept and context of the Design is historical. From 1793 to 1796 Edmund Rice developed a framework for managing the future operations of his brotherly community. This framework was known as The Design. The Design was influenced by the 'governance and constitution' of the Presentation Sisters. This Design document (currently called Charter) has been developed to provide clarity for School Advisory Council members on the role that School Advisory Councils play in assisting and advising Principals and leadership teams in the smooth running of their school.

It applies to the School Advisory Councils of all schools governed by EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.

NOTE: [Appendix 1](#) presents in chart form the Governance Structure for EREA NSW Colleges Ltd and its relationship with the Trustees Edmund Rice Education Australia.

# 1. ROLE AND SCOPE OF THE SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

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The School Advisory Council provides advice and support to the Principal in ensuring faithfulness to the *Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition* (see [Appendix 3](#)). Members of the Council are rich sources of wisdom and insight in their service to the Principal and the school.

The School Advisory Council is also an important expression of the educational partnership that exists between parents, the school and the wider community. It provides a forum for discussion and discernment, where parent voice and community perspectives assist in shaping the decisions of the Principal.

The School Advisory Council is not a Board of governance and has no decision-making authority. The Council is not involved in the day-to-day operations of the school and a Council member cannot speak on behalf of the school.

Council members do not hold legal responsibility for the school, nor are members legally liable for any advice given by the Council.

## 1.1 Specific Duties of the School Advisory Council

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The School Advisory Council:

- Provides advice and support to the Principal in enhancing the school's authenticity as a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition;
- Provides advice regarding quality stewardship to assist the Principal to enable the best possible learning communities for students and young people;
- Draws on rich sources of wisdom and insight to provide perspectives on the individual School context, as a means of strengthening community links;
- Encourages, supports and advises the Principal, without involvement in the day-to-day operations of the School;
- Contributes to formal submissions to EREA NSW Colleges Ltd that support the school's long-term sustainability such as the School Strategic Plan;
- Provide representation in the recruitment process of the Principal and senior staff.

## 2. MEMBERSHIP

### 2.1 Size and Composition

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- The School Advisory Council will have a minimum of five (5) and a maximum of nine (9) members. The written approval of the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO is required if the Principal wishes to extend the total number of members beyond nine.
- The Principal of the School is an Ex Officio Member of the School Advisory Council and therefore not included in the quorum.
- Members of School Advisory Councils are chosen to meet the expertise requirements of the Advisory Council, not as representatives of any group.
- The composition of the School Advisory Council should, as far as possible, reflect a commitment to diversity, i.e. gender, external members as well as parents, relevant expertise, old collegians, and others more directly associated with the school. It should also reflect the specific context of the school.
- Consideration in composition should also be given to Child Safe Standards and Conflict of Interest.
- Paid employees or their partners are ineligible for appointment to the Council.

### 2.2 Recruitment Process

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School Advisory Council members are chosen to meet the expertise needs of the School Advisory Council considering the needs of the school at the time. The Principal and the Chair of the School Advisory Council, in consultation with the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO, consider the remaining tenure of their current School Advisory Council membership, to plan for future appointments.

If this appointment is for the Chair of the Advisory Council, the same process is followed by the Principal and the CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.

The Principal or current Advisory Council members may suggest people who could be suitable Advisory Council members. Vacancies may be advertised within the school community and more broadly and interested people are provided with an opportunity to learn more about the School Advisory Council. Expression of Interest for Membership forms and a Curriculum Vitae should then be directed to the

Principal and the Chair of the School Advisory Council.

The Principal and Chair of the Advisory Council consider each Expression of Interest and CV and formally meet with a prospective new Council member. Support of School Advisory Council members should be sought prior to forwarding a recommendation for appointment to the CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd. The recommendation to the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO should be accompanied by:

- Expression of Interest form
- Curriculum Vitae
- Skills matrix conducted by the Principal and Chair of the Advisory Council

### **2.3 Appointment Process**

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- Appointments to the School Advisory Council are recommended by the Principal and the Chair of the School Advisory Council to the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO for approval.
- Prior to commencing appointment, School Advisory Council Members are required to:
  - agree and sign the School Advisory Council engagement letter
  - provide a current Working with Children Check;
  - complete a declaration of interest;
  - agree to participate in induction and ongoing EREA NSW Colleges Ltd formation activities, including Safeguarding training.
- Upon appointment, the School Advisory Council Member will complete the Volunteers and Contractors induction training.
- The Chair of School Advisory Council is appointed by the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO and the Board Chair on advice from the Principal and after such consultation with the local community as the Principal considers appropriate.
- The Chair and the Principal will create a succession plan to identify a Deputy Chair that will be appointed by the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO and the Board Chair on advice from the Principal.

## 2.4 Selection Criteria

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A person appointed to a School Advisory Council will:

- demonstrate an understanding of, and a commitment to, the ethos of a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition;
- be willing to support and uphold the values of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd;
- have the capacity to contribute skills and knowledge to the School Advisory Council that complement those of other Council members;
- be an ethical and reliable professional or member of the community;
- be willing and able to attend meetings and come prepared;
- be willing to participate in ongoing School Advisory Council formation and mandatory training.

In addition to the criteria for School Advisory Council membership, a person appointed to the position of Chair of a School Advisory Council is expected to commit to:

- participating in Chairs' gatherings and formation activities sponsored by TERE and EREA NSW Colleges Ltd;
- building a good relationship with the Principal.

## 2.5 Tenure of Appointment

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- School Advisory Council members will be appointed for an initial term of one (1) to three (3) years, which may, by mutual agreement, be extended for a further three (3) years, with a maximum term of six (6) years.
- School Advisory Council Chairs may be appointed for a term of three (3) years, which can, by mutual agreement, be extended for a further three (3) years, with a maximum term of six (6) years.
- In some exceptional circumstances, a further appointment beyond the six years for an Advisory Council member or Chair may be considered by the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO, subject to the recommendation of the Principal and after consultation with the School Advisory Council member or Chair.

## 2.6 Termination of Membership

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The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd CEO may terminate the membership of a School Advisory Council Member on advice from the Principal. This may include, but it is not limited to situations such as:

- breach of the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Code of Conduct
- lack of active participation in Council meetings
- lack of attendance at Council meetings, or
- lack of alignment with EREA and school values.

## 3. PROCEDURES

### 3.1 Meetings

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- The School Advisory Council meets at least four (4) times each year at a time and date determined by the Principal in consultation with the Chair of the School Advisory Council.
- The School Advisory Council will not meet without the presence of the Principal or their delegate.
- The quorum for a School Advisory Council meeting will be a simple majority of all members. No quorum exists if the Principal (or their delegate) is absent. As the Principal is an ex-officio, they are not counted towards the quorum.
- The agenda for the meeting is determined by the Principal in consultation with the Chair of the School Advisory Council and will include standing agenda items required by EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.
- A declaration of interest is a standard item at the beginning of each meeting. If a perceived or actual conflict of interest is named, the Council is to determine how it is to be managed (e.g. simply to note it or to exclude the person from the discussion). It is acceptable for there to be an annual declaration of any interest that is ongoing.
- At least one week before an upcoming meeting, the Principal shall provide for all

members the agenda for the meeting, a copy of the minutes of the previous meeting and all relevant papers.

- In the absence of the Chair, the meeting is chaired by the Deputy Chair.
- Paid employees of the school, for example the Business Manager, may be invited to attend the Council meetings with the agreement of the Chair of the School's Advisory Council.
- The Principal is required to provide a copy of the Principal's report and approved minutes (signed by the Chair) to the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd office within 14 days of being approved at the following meeting.
- Original School Advisory Council minutes and papers are to be stored at the school in a manner approved by the Principal and should be retained permanently.

### **3.2 Committees**

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- Each School Advisory Council may establish Standing Committees as necessary to enable members to provide advice on relevant areas like Finance, Property and Identity.
- Other committees and working parties of the School Advisory Council may be established at the discretion of the Principal in consultation with the Chair of the School Advisory Council.
- Membership of the School Advisory Council committees should include at least one School Advisory Council member (who should be the Committee Chair) and others as deemed appropriate by the Chair of the Schools Advisory Council and Principal.
- The Principal, Deputy Principal, or member of school leadership team are to be an ex-officio member of the committees.
- Non-School Advisory Council members may be appointed as members of committees and working parties. Such appointments are made by the Principal in consultation with the Chair. They are appointed for a maximum initial term of three (3) years and may be appointed for a further term of a maximum of three (3) years, with a maximum term of appointment of six (6) years.
- The Chair of the School Advisory Council and Principal have a right to attend any committee or working party of the Advisory Council, but are not obliged to attend such meetings.

- The quorum for a committee meeting is a simple majority, except that there must be one School Advisory Council member and a delegate of the Principal present.

## 4. SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL EXPECTATIONS

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Members of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd School Advisory Councils should apply ethical principles and act in good faith, with care and diligence, in the interests of the school and EREA NSW Colleges Ltd. They are obliged to comply with EREA's Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest Policy and Confidentiality Agreements. Members participate in ongoing formation activities throughout their tenure.

## 5. GENERAL

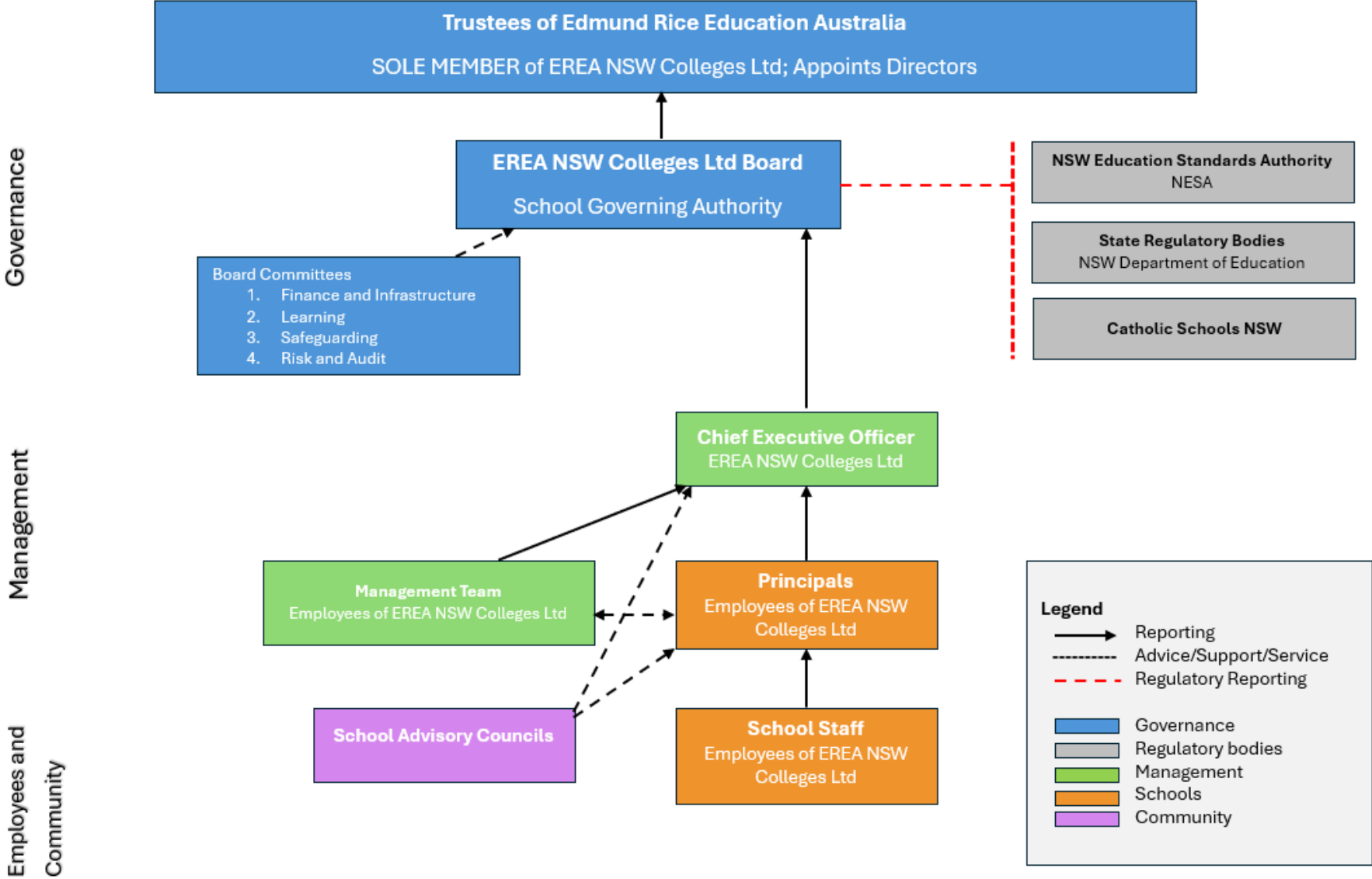
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- This Charter is an EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board policy and may not be amended except with the approval of the Board, on the recommendation of the CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.
- A review of the School Advisory Council and its operations is carried out at the initiation of the Principal, in consultation with the CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd, at least once every two years.
- In the event of any dispute or uncertainty as to the meaning or intent of any clause in this Charter, the matter shall be referred to the CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd for interpretation and their determinative decision on the matter.
- The Principal is to inform the CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd of any serious issue/s arising in the operation of the Council and the CEO will assist in resolving the issue. The CEO will report on the action taken to resolve the issue to the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board.
- The Advisory Council's Nominations Committee (or relevant) will develop and regularly review its skills matrix, in considering the expertise needs of the Council at any time. This matrix would seek to ensure Advisory Council membership includes, at a minimum, legal, financial, education and specific community expertise.

## Document Control

Action	Detail
Responsible Director	CEO, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd
Approved by	Board, EREA NSW Colleges Ltd
Approval date	3 April 2025
Review date	April 2028

# Appendix 1: TEREA Governance Chart for NSW



**Membership of School Advisory  
Council  
Conflict of Interest Declaration**

<b>Name</b>	
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Employment</b>	
<b>Contact details for correspondence</b>	
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Mobile number</b>	
<b>Students enrolled at the School</b>	
<b>Student's name &amp; year level</b>	
<b>Student's name &amp; year level</b>	
<b>Conflict of Interest</b>	
<b>Describe any perceived conflict of interest you may have in carrying out your role as a member of the School Advisory Council or Committee</b>	

Signature:

Date:

## APPENDIX 3

### Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition - Our Touchstones

[To be distributed]