



School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) Frequently Asked Questions July 26, 2023

1. What is a school health advisory council (SHAC)?

As defined by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), a SHAC is appointed by the school district to serve at the district level and to provide guidance to the district on coordinated school health programming and its impact on student health and learning. The group of individuals represent segments of the community. More information regarding SHACs can be found on the DSHS SHAC [website](#).

2. Are school districts required to have a SHAC?

Yes. According to [TEC, §28.004\(a\)](#), the board of trustees of each school district shall establish a local SHAC to assist the district in ensuring that local community values are reflected in the district's health education instruction.

3. Are charter schools and districts of innovation required to have a SHAC?

Open-enrollment charter schools are not required to have a SHAC because they are not subject to the provisions of TEC 28.004. Additionally, a district designated as a district of innovation (DOI) is permitted to be exempted from certain requirements in Texas Education Code, including TEC, [§28.004](#). DOIs must specify in their approved local innovation plan whether they are exempted from this statute. Questions regarding a district's specific exemptions as a DOI should be directed to the district.

4. What are the required duties of a SHAC?

Information about local SHAC job duties can be found in [TEC, §28.004\(c\)](#).

The local school health advisory council's duties include recommending:

- The number of hours of instruction to be provided in K-8 health education and if the school district requires health education for high school graduation and health education in grades 9–12;
- Policies, procedures, strategies, and curriculum appropriate for specific grade levels designed to prevent physical health concerns, including obesity, cardiovascular disease, Type 2 diabetes, and mental health concerns, including suicide, through coordination of health education (which must address physical health concerns and mental health

concerns to ensure the integration of physical health education and mental health education), physical education and physical activity, nutrition services, parental involvement, instruction on substance abuse prevention, school health services including mental health services, a comprehensive school counseling program, a safe and healthy school environment, and school employee wellness

- Appropriate grade levels and methods of instruction for human sexuality instruction
- Strategies for integrating the curriculum components specified above with the following elements in a coordinated school health program for the district:
 - school health services, including physical health services and mental health services, if provided at a campus by the district or by a third party under a contract with the district;
 - a comprehensive school counseling program;
 - a safe and healthy school environment; and
 - school employee wellness.
- Joint use agreements or strategies for collaboration between the school district and community organizations or agencies, if feasible
- Strategies to increase parental awareness regarding risky behaviors and early warning signs of suicide risks and behavioral health concerns, including mental health disorders and substance use disorders; and available community programs and services that address risky behaviors, suicide risks, and behavioral health concerns
- Appropriate grade levels and curriculum for instruction regarding the dangers of opioids, including instruction on opioid addiction and abuse, including addiction to and abuse of synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and methods of administering an opioid antagonist, as defined by Health and Safety Code, §483.101
- Appropriate grade levels and curriculum for instruction regarding child abuse, family violence, dating violence, and sex trafficking, including likely warning signs that a child may be at risk for sex trafficking, provided that the local school health advisory council's recommendations under this subdivision do not conflict with the essential knowledge and skills developed by the State Board of Education under this subchapter.

5. What are the membership requirements of a SHAC?

The [TEC, §28.004\(d\)](#), states that the board of trustees shall appoint at least five members to the local SHAC. A majority of the members must be persons who are parents of students enrolled in the district and who are not employed by the district. One of those members shall serve as chair or co-chair of the council. The board of trustees may also appoint one or more persons from each of the following groups or a representative from a group not listed below.

- Classroom teachers employed by the district
- School counselors certified under [Texas Education Code, Chapter 21, Subchapter B](#), employed by the district
- School administrators employed by the district
- District students

- Health care professionals licensed or certified to practice in this state, including medical or mental health professionals
- The business community
- Law enforcement
- Senior citizens
- The clergy
- Nonprofit health organizations
- Local domestic violence programs

6. How many times is a SHAC required to meet?

[TEC, §28.004\(d-1\)](#), requires that a SHAC must meet at least four times each year.

7. Are there any requirements governing SHAC meetings?

Yes. In accordance with changes made by HB 1525, 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, [TEC, §28.004\(d-1\)](#), states for each meeting, the SHAC is required to:

- Post notice of the date, hour, place, and subject of the meeting on a bulletin board in the central administrative office of each campus in the school district at least 72 hours before the meeting
- Ensure that the notice of the date, hour, place, and subject of the meeting is posted on the district's website at least 72 hours before the meeting
- Prepare and maintain minutes of the meeting that state the subject and content of each deliberation and each vote, order, decision, or other action taken by the SHAC during the meeting
- Make an audio or video recording of the meeting
- Submit the minutes and audio or video recording of the meeting to the district not later than the 10th day after the meeting

8. Are districts required to post minutes and audio or video recordings of SHAC meetings?

Yes. In accordance with changes made by HB 1525, 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, [TEC, §28.004\(d-2\)](#), requires a school district to post the minutes and audio or video recording on the district's internet website if the district has an internet website as soon as practicable after receipt of the minutes and audio or video recording of a SHAC meeting.

9. Is the recording of meetings required for the subcommittee meetings, or only for the full SHAC committee meetings?

The recording and posting of minutes and video recordings only applies to the full SHAC committee meeting.

10. Are SHAC meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act in Chapter 551 of the Government Code?

No. Although a SHAC must comply with certain requirements as outlined in [TEC, §28.004\(d-1\) and \(d-2\)](#), HB 1525, 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, 2021, did not make SHAC meetings subject to the Open Meetings Act in Chapter 551 of the Texas Government Code.