

AUSTIN ROAD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SCHOOL COUNCIL BYLAWS AND CODE OF ETHICS

HCBOE Approved
10/10/16

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this school council shall be the Local School Council, organized under the authority of state law and the Henry County Board of Education.

ARTICLE II

PREAMBLE AND PURPOSE

The General Assembly of Georgia and the Henry County Board of Education (hereinafter, "the board") believe parent and community support is critical to the success of students and schools. The establishment of school councils is intended to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and principals, and bring parents into the school-based decision making process.

The management and control of public schools shall be the responsibility of the board. School councils shall provide advice, recommendations, and assistance and represent the community of parents, educators and businesses. Each member of the council, as a community representative, shall be accorded the respect and attention deserving of such election.

ARTICLE III

SCHOOL COUNCIL TRAINING

The superintendent or designee shall provide a training program to assist schools in forming a school council and to assist school council members in the performance of their duties. Such training shall address the organization of councils, their purpose and responsibilities, applicable laws, rules, regulations and meeting procedures, and important state and local school system program requirements. The superintendent or designee will conduct school council training at least twice per school year upon the completion of annual school council elections. Additional training, including whole council training, may be scheduled through the Office of the Superintendent.

ARTICLE IV

SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND TERM OF OFFICE

The property and business of the council shall be managed by seven school council members of whom a majority shall constitute a quorum. School council members must be individuals who are 18 years of age or older. The council shall be comprised of the following members:

Parent Members and Business-Parent Members

Membership shall include four parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school, two of whom shall be business persons, so that parents make up a majority of the council.

- A. An employee of the local school system may serve as a parent representative on the council of a school in which his or her child is enrolled, if such employee works at a different school.
- B. A parent of a child enrolled in Academy for Advanced Studies, EXCEL Academy, and/or Impact Academy does qualify for election as a parent in the home school where their child would attend.

- C. While terms of office are for two years, parents of any grade-level child enrolled in the school are eligible to vote and hold office, regardless of whether or not their child may graduate from the school in one year or less.
- D. School board members are disqualified from serving on school councils but are allowed to vote as a parent from an electing body.
- E. There is no prohibition in the law for a person to serve on two or more school councils, where qualified.
- F. A parent of a student receiving a majority of educational services at a school other than their home school may be eligible to serve at that school.
- G. There is no requirement for the business-parent member's place of business to be located in Henry County or for their place of business to be a Partner-in-Education with the school.

Teacher Members

Membership shall include two certificated teachers, excluding any personnel employed in administrative positions, who are employed at the school at least four of the six segments of the school day.

- A. Teacher is defined as a regular classroom teacher, media personnel, or counselor.
- B. Teachers who have resigned but are currently employed are eligible to vote and be elected as a teacher representative. Upon the effective date of the resignation, the teacher is disqualified to vote or hold office on the council.

Principal Member

The school principal is automatically appointed to the council. No election is required. The principal holds office by virtue of his/her position as the designated leader of the school.

Term of Office

The term of office of all elected council members shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30. Members of the council shall serve for a term of two years with the exception of when a one-year term is filled for the purpose of creating or maintaining staggered membership. Council members may serve more than one term.

**ARTICLE V
ELECTION OF SCHOOL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

Public Notice

The principal shall call a meeting of electing bodies in the month of May, July, or August each year for the purpose of selecting members of the school council. Public notice of elections shall be accomplished by posting the election date, time and location in the school office and on the school website at least two weeks in advance. Additionally, public notice shall be posted in the county legal organ.

- A. The principal or council secretary will submit written notification of the date, time and location of council elections to the Office of the Superintendent at least three weeks in advance. The superintendent's designee will submit such notice to the county legal organ.
- B. It is the responsibility of the principal or council secretary to maintain a written record of compliance with this notification requirement.

Electing Bodies

The electing body for the parent members and the business-parent members shall consist of all parents/guardians eligible to serve as a parent member of the school council.

The electing body for the teacher members shall consist of all certificated personnel eligible to serve as a teacher member of the school council.

Election Procedures

- A. The principal shall accept nominations from the electing body prior to the election.
- B. The election of school council members shall be based on the plurality method of election.
- C. One vote shall be taken with the two highest vote recipients being elected to serve on the school council.
- D. Where two individuals tie with the highest number of votes, both shall serve on the council, provided two council positions are open. If only one position on the council is open, then subsequent votes are required until one single individual emerges with the highest vote.
- E. Individuals must be present and qualified to vote. Proxies are not allowed.
- F. A candidate does not have to be present at the time of the vote to be elected to the school council.
- G. The principal shall document that all votes are counted and recorded in the presence of a witness.

ARTICLE VI VACANCY ON COUNCIL

Any member may withdraw from the council by delivering to the council a written resignation and submitting a copy to the principal or council secretary. Should the council determine that a member is no longer active in the council, the council may, by a majority vote of the council, withdraw such person's membership status, effective as of a date determined by the council.

The office of school council member shall be automatically vacated if a member resigns, if the person holding the office is removed as a member by an action of the council, or if a member no longer meets the qualifications specified by law.

An election within the electing body for a replacement to fill the remainder of an unexpired term shall be held within 30 days, unless there are 90 calendar days or less remaining in the term, in which case the vacancy shall remain unfilled until the next scheduled election.

ARTICLE VII OFFICERS AND DUTIES

The officers of the council shall be a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. Officers shall be appointed by resolution of the council at the first meeting following the election of school council members.

Chairperson

The chairperson must be a parent member or a business-parent member of the council and shall have the following duties pertaining to school council activities:

- A. Perform all of the duties required by law and the bylaws of the council.
- B. Speak for and represent the council in all school council matters before the board of education.
- C. Develop the agenda for each meeting of the council in collaboration with the principal after taking into consideration the suggestions of council members and the urgency of school matters.

Vice-Chairperson

The vice chairperson shall, in the absence or disability of the chairperson, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the chairperson and shall perform such other duties as may be imposed upon him or her by the council.

Secretary

The secretary shall act as clerk of the council, responsible for recording all votes and minutes of all proceedings in the books to be kept for that purpose. The secretary shall give or cause to be given notice of all meetings of the council and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the council or the chairperson, under whose supervision the secretary shall be.

Principal

The school principal shall have the following duties pertaining to school council activities:

- A. Cause to be created a school council by convening the appropriate bodies to select school council members; setting the initial agenda, meeting time, and location; and notifying all school council members of the same.
- B. Perform all duties required by law and bylaws of the council.
- C. Communicate all council requests for information and assistance to the superintendent’s designee and inform the council of responses to such requests.
- D. Develop the school improvement plan and school operation plan, and submit such plans to the school council for its review, comments, recommendations, and approval.
- E. Aid in the development of the agenda for each meeting of the council after taking into consideration suggestions of council members and the urgency of school matters.

**ARTICLE VIII
REMUNERATION**

Members of the council shall not receive remuneration to serve on the council or its committees.

**ARTICLE IX
IMMUNITY**

The school council shall have the same immunity as the board of education in all matters directly related to the functions of the council.

**ARTICLE X
MEETING NOTICE AND LOCATION**

School councils shall be subject to Chapter 14 of Title 50, relating to open and public meetings, in the same manner as the board of education.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

Meetings shall be held in accordance with a regular schedule. The council shall meet at least eight times annually. It is recommended that council meetings be held in September, October, November, January, February, March, April, and May. Councils may meet before, during, or after normal school hours. Additional meetings may be called by the chairperson or at the request of a majority of the members of the council. All meetings of the council shall be held at the school or at a location determined by a majority vote of the council.

Meeting Notice

Notice by mail shall be sent to school council members at least seven days prior to a meeting of the council.

Public notice of the regular meeting schedule for the school year, including the date, time and place of such meetings, shall be accomplished by posting the schedule in the school office and on the school website at least one week in advance. Additionally, notice of the regular meeting schedule shall be posted in the county legal organ.

- A. Nothing in these bylaws shall preclude the council from canceling or postponing any regularly scheduled meeting.
- B. Because the law requires notice by mail to be sent to school council members at least seven days prior to a meeting of the council, there can be no emergency meetings of the council.
- C. The principal or council secretary will submit written notification of the council meeting schedule for the year to the Office of the Superintendent at least two weeks in advance of the first scheduled meeting. The superintendent's designee will submit such notice to the county legal organ.
- D. It is the responsibility of the principal or council secretary to maintain a written record of compliance with this notification requirement.

ARTICLE XI

QUORUM AND VOTING REQUIREMENT

A quorum comprised of a majority of council members must be present in order to conduct official council business. At all meetings of the council every question shall be determined by a majority vote of members present, representing a quorum. Each member of the council is authorized to exercise one vote. Proxy votes are not allowed. Voting members must be present to vote.

ARTICLE XII

MEETING AGENDAS AND MINUTES

School councils shall be subject to Chapter 14 of Title 50, relating to open and public meetings, and shall be subject to Chapter 18 of Title 50, relating to the inspection of public records, in the same manner as the board of education.

Meeting Agenda

The meeting agenda shall be available upon request and shall be posted in the school office and on the school website as far in advance of the meeting as reasonably possible. At all meetings of the council every question will be determined by a majority vote of members present, representing a quorum. Failure to include on the agenda an item which becomes necessary to address during a meeting shall not preclude considering and acting upon such item.

Open Meetings and Executive Session

All meetings of the school council shall be open to the public. The school council shall not engage in business that would require a meeting in executive session.

Meeting Minutes

A summary of the subjects acted on and those members present shall be made available for public inspection at the school office within two working days following each council meeting. The minutes of the council shall be provided to the council members and made available for public inspection at the school office within 20 days following each council meeting.

At a minimum, the minutes will include the names of the members present at the meeting, a description of each motion or proposal made, the identity of the person making and seconding the motion or proposal, and the name of each person voting for or against the motion or proposal.

ARTICLE XIII
PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Roberts Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the governing parliamentary authority for school councils in all cases applicable but not inconsistent with these bylaws.

ARTICLE XIV
COMMITTEES, STUDY GROUPS AND TASK FORCES

The council may appoint committees, study groups, or task forces for such purposes as it deems helpful and may utilize existing or new school advisory groups.

ARTICLE XV
BOARD OF EDUCATION AND SCHOOL COUNCIL
OPERATIONAL AGREEMENTS

The superintendent or designee shall provide all information not specifically made confidential by law, including budget information, to the council as requested. The superintendent or designee shall also attend council meetings, if requested by the council, for the purpose of responding to questions from members of the council. Council requests for information from the central administration should be reflected by a motion and second, and should be submitted to the superintendent's designee.

The board shall receive all recommendations and reports of the school council and shall have the authority to overturn any decision of the council, as follows:

- A. Public notice will be given to the community regarding the board's intent to consider school council reports and/or recommendations.
- B. Written notice will be given to the members of the school council at least seven days prior to such board meeting, along with a notice of intent to consider a council report and/or recommendation.
- C. The members of the school council will be afforded an opportunity to present information to the board in support of the council's report or recommendation.
- D. The board, having a majority of members present, will consider and take action on the council's report, recommendation, or decision.

ARTICLE XVI
SCOPE OF SCHOOL COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

School councils are advisory bodies. Councils shall provide advice and recommendations to the school principal and, where appropriate, to the superintendent and board of education on any matter related to student achievement and school improvement, including, but not limited to, the following:

- A. School board policies.
- B. School improvement plans.

- C. Curriculum and assessment.
- D. Report cards issued or audits of the school conducted by the Office of Student Achievement.
- E. Development of a school profile which shall contain data as identified by the council to describe the academic performance, academic progress, services, awards, interventions, environment, and other such data as the council deems appropriate.
- F. School budget priorities, including school capital improvement plans.
- G. School-community communication strategies.
- H. Methods of involving parents and the community.
- I. Extracurricular activities in the school.
- J. School-based and community services.
- K. Community use of school facilities.
- L. Student discipline and attendance.
- M. Reports from the school principal regarding progress toward the school's student achievement goals, including progress within specific grade levels and subject areas and by school personnel.
- N. The method and specifications for the delivery of early intervention services or other appropriate services for underachieving students.
- O. The selection of a school principal whenever a vacancy occurs. Refer to Henry County Board of Education Policy BBFA, Local School Councils, for guidance regarding the role of the school council in the principal selection process.

ARTICLE XVII
SCHOOL COUNCIL CODE OF ETHICS

The Henry County Board of Education desires for local school councils to operate in the most ethical and conscientious manner possible. To that end, each school council member agrees that he or she will:

Council Member Role and Responsibility

- A. Serve in an advisory capacity to the principal.
- B. Be accountable to their constituents.
- C. Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues.
- D. Regularly participate in council meetings.
- E. Participate in information and training programs.
- F. Act as a link between the school council and the community.
- G. Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community.
- H. Work to improve student achievement and performance.

Council Member Actions and Conduct

- I. Work with other council members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during the discussion and resolution of issues.

- J. Make decisions in accordance with the interests of the school as a whole, based on available facts and his or her independent judgment.
- K. Refrain from discussing any confidential matter pertaining to a student or staff member or any business that would require the council to meet in executive session.
- L. Foster positive and professional communication among council members, students, staff and the community.
- M. Use reasonable efforts to keep the principal informed of concerns or specific recommendations of any stakeholder group.
- N. Honor the chain of command and refer problems or complaints consistent with the chain of command.
- O. Refrain from undermining the authority of the principal or intrude into responsibilities that properly belong to the principal.
- P. Refrain from using the position of council member for personal or partisan gain or to benefit any person or entity over the interest of the school and school system.
- Q. Take no public or private action that will compromise the council, the school, or the school system.
- R. Ensure that all meetings adhere to legal requirements pertaining to open meetings and open records.
- S. Uphold all applicable laws, rules and regulations pertaining to the school and the school system, including but not limited to requirements for mandated reporting of child abuse or neglect.

ARTICLE XVIII

ADOPTION OF BYLAWS AND CODE OF ETHICS

The school council shall adopt the uniform bylaws and code of ethics included herein. The council may adopt an addendum to the uniform bylaws and code of ethics as it deems appropriate to conduct the business of the council; however, the addendum shall not be inconsistent with the language or intent contained in the uniform bylaws and code of ethics. The adoption of bylaws or changes thereto requires a two-thirds affirmative vote.

The adopted bylaws and code of ethics, and any addendum thereto, will be maintained by the principal or council secretary.

ARTICLE XIX

COUNCIL MEMBER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Annually, each school council member shall execute a signed document indicating that they have received and agree to comply with the school council bylaws and code of ethics, and with the Henry County School System requirements and procedures for reporting child abuse or neglect.