

# SAINT PAUL OPEN SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL BY-LAWS

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## ARTICLE I – NAME

**Section 1.01** The name of this organization shall be the St. Paul Open School Site Council, hereafter referred to as the Site Council or Council.

## ARTICLE II – MISSION

**Section 2.01** Pursuant to District guidelines and policies, the Site Council will ensure that the Open School's mission and the Council's By-laws are attained. St. Paul Open School mission statement:

We are a K-12 community encouraging and engaged in individual growth and self-directed learning from each other and the world around us.

**Section 2.02** The purpose of the St. Paul Open School's Site Council is to form and articulate the philosophy of the school, including its mission, policies, and goals, and

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provide high-level direction and review of school practices and operations for consistency with the philosophy.

The Council is an advocate with the district administration and Board of Education. The Council provides/serves as a forum for discussion of issues related to the Open School.

**Section 2.03** The decision-making role of the Site Council will respect the role and defined authority of the principal and will evolve with the support and participation of the school's principal, staff and parents.

## **ARTICLE III – MEMBERS**

**Section 3.01** The Site Council's membership will comply with Minnesota State Law and District guidelines.

**Section 3.02** Membership in the Council is comprised of 11 students, at least one of whom must be the representative of the official student government; 5 parent representatives, at least two of whom must be persons of color; 4 Open School staff members (2 SLC and 2 ELC); the principal; the union representative of the Open School staff; and may include 1 community representative.

The membership of the Council shall reflect, to the extent practical, the various ages, sex and racial groups that make up the school community.

Alternates are also elected, up to one alternate for each student, staff and parent representative.

Each member has one vote, and is to vote his/her conscience for the good of the school. Alternates will be entitled to vote at Council meetings, in the absence of a representative from their constituency.

**Section 3.03** Site Council members are expected to regularly attend Site Council meetings, arrange for an alternate, or name a proxy for voting purposes.

## **ARTICLE IV – TERMS OF OFFICE**

**Section 4.01** The students, staff and parents have separate elections for representatives to the Council. The community representative is elected by 2/3 vote of the members of the Council.

**Section 4.02** Terms of the members are from October to October. Student and parent representatives serve two-year terms, with half the representatives elected each year. The Hmong Parent representative will serve a two year term. The term of staff representatives is for one year.

**Section 4.03** There is no maximum limit to length of service on the Council. But when a member's term expires, he/she must be re-elected/re-selected by the regular process.

## **ARTICLE V – PROCESS FOR SELECTION OF MEMBERS**

**Section 5.01** The selection process will be announced annually, publicized and overseen by the Site Council. Selection shall be made in October of each year to fill open positions.

**Section 5.02** People may nominate themselves or be nominated through a mailing, conference or community meeting.

Parents: Candidates submit a brief description of why they want to be a member the of Council. A ballot with these descriptions is sent home through the newsletter. Parents are asked to return the ballot to their student's advisor. The candidates will be asked to speak at the first Open House and ballots will be available. Two attempts will be made to get the ballots back; either through a mailing, conference or community meeting.

Staff: Four staff members and two alternates representing ELC and SLC staff will be selected. Also, the staff members will include a teachers union representative and those who receive a stipulated stipend

Students: Advisories will send to the Chair of Student Government the names of students interested in serving. If more than 11 are interested, an election will take place.

Community Member: May be nominated by any member of the Site Council.

## **ARTICLE VI – VACANCIES**

**Section 6.01** A voluntary resignation or three consecutive absences of a Council member determine vacancies. After two consecutive absences, the member shall receive a phone call and written notice from a Council Co-Chair.

**Section 6.02** In the event of a vacancy on the Council, the members of that constituent group shall meet and select someone to fill the vacancy until the next annual election/selection. At that time a member shall be elected/selected for the balance of the expired term.

## **ARTICLE VII – OFFICERS**

**Section 7.01** The following officers are elected by the Council from its membership to serve one year terms: Chair, Co-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer.

The Council may combine the offices of Secretary and Treasurer if a majority of the Council members agree. The Chair appoints committee members, calls and chairs Council meetings and serves as chief spokesperson for the Council. The Secretary takes the minutes of the meetings, records the Votes, determines if a quorum exists, and maintains all records of the Council. The treasurer maintains records of moneys.

**Section 7.02** Officers will be elected annually by the new Site Council membership, following its election/selection process.

## **ARTICLE VIII – QUORUM**

**Section 8.01** At each meeting, the presence of at least fifty- percent (50%) + 1 of the Council's members/alternates shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **ARTICLE IX – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Section 9.01** The officers of the Council and the principal constitute the executive committee. If a constituent group, students, staff, or parents, is not represented among the officers, additional members may be added to the executive committee by vote of the Council. If a member is unable to attend a meeting of the executive committee, that member may send another Council member as proxy.

**Section 9.02** The executive committee acts upon urgent matters which cannot wait until the next meeting of the Council. Anyone can submit an item to the executive committee to be included in the agenda.

## **ARTICLE X – POWERS AND DUTIES**

**Section 10.01** The Council forms and maintains a strategic plan for the Open School consistent with the school's mission and goals. The plan contains specific objectives and plans for achieving those objectives, and the Council monitors progress toward those objectives.

**Section 10.02** The Council reviews school policies and practices for consistency with the strategic plan and the mission of the school.

**Section 10.03** As the Site Based Shared Decision Making Council for Open School, the Council may address issues such as staffing, curriculum, budgeting, school climate, scheduling, plant planning and maintenance evaluation, community and parent involvement, and enrollment, as described by the current District 625 policies regarding Site Based Decision Making. The council may decide to take an active role in these areas or to delegate these responsibilities to the school administration. If the Council decides to take an active role, it may delegate its responsibilities to committees or to individuals.

**Section 10.04** The Council recommends the approval or disapproval of the School Continuous Improvement Plans (SCIP).

**Section 10.05** The Council recommends the approval or disapproval of the school budgets which support the SCIPs.

**Section 10.06** Each council member is expected to be on one of the standing committees.

## ARTICLE XI – COMMITTEES

**Section 11.01** Committee membership is open to anyone. The committee should keep a list of active members and other interested persons. The committee should chose a chair or regular convener from among its members.

**Section 11.02** Committees will receive a written charge from the Site Council or Executive Committee, and may seek to have that charge amended at anytime. The Council's charge will include naming a convener for the first committee meeting.

**Section 11.03** Committees should meet at a regular time in order to have continuity and to be accessible to potential members. Meeting schedules should be published in the Newsletter. The name and phone number of the committee chair or convener should be included for contact by interested community members.

**Section 11.04** A brief summary of the committee work should be sent to the Council to be included in the monthly minutes.

**Section 11.05** Committees should send written reports of considerations, recommendations, etc. to the Council whenever, necessary or suitable for a final decision. Committees are authorized to introduce agenda items or motions at any time, but submitting these in advance to the Executive Committee is preferred.

## ARTICLE XII – MEETINGS

**Section 12.01** All Site Council meetings are open to everyone, as stated in the Site Based Improvement Agreement. Guests will agree to follow the Council's ground rules.

**Section 12.02** At the meeting of the Site Council that follows the annual election/selection, meeting dates shall be established for the succeeding year. Dates will be published in each school newsletter and posted on the Site Council Bulletin Board.

**Section 12.03** Special meetings may be called at the discretion of an administrator, the Co. Chairs, or three or more Council members. Members will be notified, when possible, ten days in advance of the meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the Council members calling the special meeting to notify all members and to provide the agenda.

**Section 12.04** Agendas 1.) The Co-Chairs and Principal are responsible for preparing agendas for regular scheduled meetings. 2.) Any Council member may suggest an agenda item by the due date established by the Council for submitting items. 3.) Agendas will be approved by the Council at the beginning of each meeting.

**Section 12.05** Anyone (staff member, student, parent, community member) may present an issue to the Council in writing. For each issue, the Co-Chairs and Principal will decide if it is a Council issue and/or it needs referral to an individual (e.g. Principal) or to another school committee or group. The Council can create a task force to address an issue not covered by existing committees. The issue's sponsor can be invited to discuss the issue

with the Council. All people who submit issues will receive a response and be told to whom their issue was referred.

## **ARTICLE XIII – COMMUNICATION**

**Section 13.01** Members of the Site Council will ensure that there is two-way communication about Council activities with the people they directly or indirectly represent.

**Section 13.02** The Site Council will regularly evaluate its communication with the school community.

**Section 13.03** The Site Council will Use a variety of communication strategies, including but not limited to the following. 1) A Site Council Bulletin Board, 2) The school at-large will receive general Council information through the school newsletter, 3) All staff will receive agendas before meetings. Parents will receive agendas through the Bulletin Board and the newsletter, if possible. Copies will also be available in the office. 4) Minutes will go to all staff. Minutes or a summary will be in the school newsletter and on the Site Council Bulletin Board. 5) A Site Council Action Plan (who will do what by when) will be recorded at each meeting and distributed to Council

## **ARTICLE XIV – PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE & DECISION MAKING**

**Section 14.01** The Council determines its own procedures.

**Section 14.02** Decisions will be made by consensus. If the Council determines that consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken. A percentage vote necessary for an issue to pass will be a simple majority.

**Section 14.03** The Site Council shall adhere to rules, regulation and policies of the Board of Education and District, the laws of local, State and Federal Government, and contractual agreement, unless an exemption has been granted from such rule, regulation, policy or agreement by the appropriate parties' agencies.

## **ARTICLE XV – AMENDMENTS TO THE BY-LAWS**

**Section 15.01** These By-Laws shall be adopted or amended/changed at any time by consensus of two-thirds (66%) of the full Site Council membership.

**Section 15.02** These By-Laws shall be reviewed annually for amendments/changes.

**Section 15.03** By-Laws changes will be published 1 Council meeting before a vote is taken.