



Constitution of the School Advisory Council

PREAMBLE

The School Advisory Council, in accordance with the Board of Education, recognizes that active and engaged organized family advisory groups strengthen both schools and communities, improve school climate, provide opportunities for effective family involvement in school decision-making, and improve student achievement.

ARTICLE I: NAME OF COUNCIL

The name of this Council is the CAPA School Advisory Council, hereinafter referred to as the SAC.

ARTICLE II: OBJECTIVES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

An effective and successful SAC will comply with all of the following objectives and responsibilities:

- a. Meet monthly or at least every other month.
- b. Review the school budget and provide input on discretionary spending.
- c. Review school-based policies. For example, policies governing school culture and climate, school safety, discipline, truancy, extracurricular activities, family member engagement, and student support.
- d. Play a major role in strengthening effective school-community relations, improving communication between school and home, encouraging community input, and sharing information on advisory work and decisions with the larger school community.
- e. Play an active role in supporting, promoting, and recommending school-based programs and initiatives.
- f. Examine data on the effectiveness of school-based programs and services and periodically inform Action Plan strategies and recommendations to ensure continued progress toward school goals.
- g. Receive mandatory community-based trainings from the School District at least but not limited to once a year on a series of topics (including sessions on budgeting, interpreting school data, meaningful engagement, and more).
- h. Collaborate with the Principal and school staff to develop and implement a mission and develop, implement, and annually revise a vision (Articles I and II in the Bylaws) for the school and an action plan for school improvement and effective family engagement practices.
- i. Complete beginning and end of year SAC self-assessments which reflect goals, activities, and achievements.
- j. Coordinate elections for family and community SAC members.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

All functions concerning the above objectives and responsibilities will be vested in the members of the SAC. The SAC membership will be made up of family members, the school principal, teachers or other school-based staff, students (at the middle school and high school level), and community members.

SECTION A: SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The principal will always be an automatic member of the SAC. The principal will be accountable for developing and implementing the Action Plan and Budget in partnership with the SAC and staff. The principal will collaborate with the School Advisory Council to identify school improvement priorities and review the Action Plan and Budget. Specific duties of the principal are as follows:

1. Coordinate the Application Process and, if need be, the Election Process for all SAC seats in the first year of the SAC.
2. Ensure that elections for family and community members are conducted in accordance with the SAC Bylaws and/or other school guidelines. The principal will act alone in this process in the first year, and with the SAC Application and Election Commission in all following years.
3. Develop a process whereby students elect student representatives to the SAC each year.
4. Develop a process whereby school staff will elect staff representatives to the SAC each year.
5. Distribute election results directly to students and via the school's School Messenger, post them on the school's website, and include them in a newsletter, if those mechanisms exist.
6. Review any proposed changes or adjustments to the school's Action Plan and Budget throughout the year.
7. Address any concerns raised by members of the SAC throughout the year.

The Principal will comply with all duties of the SAC listed above.

SECTION B: PARENTS/FAMILY MEMBERS

Parents/family members are identified as individuals whose children currently attend the school, or the primary caregiver(s) with whom the child resides (legal, custodial, grandparent, foster parent). The term "parent" includes, in addition to a natural parent, a legal guardian or other person standing in as a primary caregiver (such as a grandparent or stepparent with whom the child lives).

With the exception of non-instructional paraprofessional staff members, school-based staff are not permitted to apply to the SAC as parent/family members.

Parents/family members will comply with all duties of the SAC listed above.

SECTION C: STAFF

Along with compliance with all duties of the SAC listed above, teachers and other school staff will contribute practical knowledge about curriculum and instructional strategies, school operations and support services, as well as the school's history and culture.



Staff members will comply with all duties of the SAC listed above.

SECTION D: COMMUNITY MEMBERS

Community members are identified as individuals who have an interest in the school's welfare, namely individuals residing in the school's geographic area (catchment area), individuals owning, operating or working in a business or organization within the school's community (catchment area), and/or alumni of the school.

Community members will comply with all duties of the SAC listed above.

SECTION E: STUDENTS

Students will bring a different kind of practical experience to the SAC since they are direct recipients of school services. They will offer a range of opinions often distinct from adult perspectives.

A SAC should not have more than 1 representative from the senior (graduating) class in any given year. Elementary School (Kindergarten through grade 6) SACs are not required to include student members.

Student members will comply with all duties of the SAC listed above.

SECTION F: VOLUNTEER PAPERWORK

If SAC members will be responsible for a child's welfare or will have direct contact with students on a regular and repeated basis, and/or have unsupervised contact with students, they must get clearances so that they comply with the School District of Philadelphia's volunteer policy by submitting a Volunteer Packet to the school office.

ITEM 1: IF THE SAC MEMBER HAS LIVED IN PENNSYLVANIA FOR 10 YEARS:

- a. Volunteer Code of Conduct (\$0)
 - o www.philasd.org/face/volunteer
- b. PA Child Abuse Clearance (\$0)
 - o <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/Home>
- c. PA State Criminal Record Check (\$0)
 - o <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
- d. Signed disclaimer affirming no criminal charges in other states that would prohibit selection as a volunteer (\$0)
 - o www.philasd.org/face/volunteer
- e. Certificate of Volunteer Orientation Completion (\$0)
 - o <https://www.philasd.org/face/volunteer/complete-the-volunteer-orientation/>



ITEM 2: IF THE SAC MEMBER HAS NOT LIVED IN PENNSYLVANIA FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS:

- a. Volunteer Code of Conduct (\$0)
 - o www.philasd.org/face/volunteer
- b. PA Child Abuse Clearance (\$0)
 - o <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/CWIS/Public/Home>
- c. PA State Criminal Record Check (\$0)
 - o <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
- d. FBI Background Check with Fingerprints (\$22.60)
 - o <https://uenroll.identogo.com/> (Volunteer Service Code **1KG6Y3**)
- e. Certificate of Volunteer Orientation Completion (\$0)
 - o <https://www.philasd.org/face/volunteer/complete-the-volunteer-orientation/>

ARTICLE IV: APPLICATION AND ELECTION PROCEDURE

The SAC Election Procedures shall abide by democratic principles whereby the fairness and integrity of the democratic process are maintained. Members of the SAC shall be selected in a democratic manner that is outlined in the SAC Bylaws.

The school principal will commission all elections in the first year of the SAC. In all future years after the first year, the Application and Election Procedure for the parent/family and community seats on the SAC shall be coordinated by the SAC itself, which may choose to delegate this task to a specially appointed "Application and Election Commission," according to the SAC Bylaws.

Elections for the SAC will be held in the previous spring of each school year in order to have a functioning SAC by the beginning of the next school year. Schools establishing first year SACs will complete their Application and Election Procedure by December of the first implementation year and hold their first SAC meeting in January of the first implementation year.

SECTION A: APPLICATIONS

There will be a wide solicitation for applicants who are qualified to serve on the SAC while promoting diversity in representation. This Application Process will be outlined in the SAC Bylaws. The opportunity to apply for the SAC Elections will be made public in a timely manner in order to reach and represent all school-community stakeholders. In order for a candidate to complete the Application Process, they must fill out and submit an online application.



SECTION B: ELECTIONS

If there are more applications than available seats on the SAC, SAC members will be elected by votes from their representative groups (parents by parents, students by students, staff by staff) with the exception of the community members. Community members will be elected by the SAC once elections are finalized. The Application and Election Procedure will be made public to the school community in order to ensure a transparent Election Process. The date and time of elections will be made public to the school community in order to solicit as many votes as possible to ensure a well-represented constituency. The Election Process will be outlined in the SAC Bylaws.

SECTION C: ANNOUNCEMENT OF ELECTED MEMBERS

A public announcement of the election results should be made to the school community. The principal should distribute results directly to students, staff, families, and community members according to the announcement process outlined in the SAC Bylaws.

SECTION D: SPECIAL ELECTIONS

Special elections can be held if there are vacant positions or if the integrity of the election procedures has been challenged.

SECTION E: TERM LIMITS

For new SACs, member terms will last from the time of the first SAC meeting to June of the next school year. For example, members who are part of SACs created in the 2020-2021 school year will remain SAC members through the 2021-2022 school year.

These SACs will have gone through elections in the Spring 2020 or Fall 2020, and new SAC members will then be elected for the 2021-2022 school year. In these elections, applicants will have to indicate whether they would like to run for 1- or 2-year terms. This will ensure that there is a staggered election and transition process, eliminating the possibility of a SAC with all brand-new members.

ARTICLE V: SAC LEADERSHIP ROLES

SECTION A: ELIGIBILITY

Only elected members of the SAC will be eligible to serve in a leadership role. The officers of the SAC will be elected at the first SAC meeting of the year by majority vote of the SAC members and will serve until the next year's first SAC meeting, when each successor will be properly elected. Each member holding a leadership role is permitted to run for the same role every year. The leadership election process will be outlined in the SAC Bylaws.

SECTION B: ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ITEM 1: FACILITATOR



- a. The SAC Facilitator will guide discussion during SAC meetings by keeping members focused on the meeting agenda and discussing all items within the meeting timeframe.
- b. The Facilitator prepares the agenda for each meeting and ensures that items are aligned with the vision of the SAC.
- c. If there are disputes or disagreements during SAC meetings, the Facilitator will act as a neutral mediator and resolve intra-SAC conflicts.
- d. At the end of discussion, the Facilitator will call for and facilitate a vote if a decision must be made.
- e. The Facilitator may act as the liaison between the SAC and other parent/family groups in the school (Home and School Association, Friends Of group, etc.) to ensure that all groups understand each other's goals and can collectively improve the school.

ITEM 2: ORGANIZER

- a. The SAC Organizer will conduct community outreach for the SAC.
- b. The Organizer will recruit new members, particularly parents/family members and community members, by developing outreach materials and/or downloading outreach materials from www.philasd.org/sac.
- c. The Organizer will work closely with the School Principal during the Application and Election Procedure by facilitating the Application Process and creating and disseminating ballots to parents in the event that an election needs to take place.
- d. During the Election Process, the Organizer will make phone calls to applicants (including parents/family members, staff, students, and community members) to confirm their place on the ballot.
- e. The Organizer will also utilize outreach materials and practices to communicate the purpose of the SAC to non-members and lead efforts to promote the SAC at events in the school and community, including events such as Back to School Night, new parent orientations, civic association/community-wide events, etc.
- f. The Organizer may act as the liaison between the SAC and external partners or organizations, such as faith-based partners, civic associations, businesses, etc. The Organizer may build relationships with these groups and can solicit in-kind donations/resources.

ITEM 3: SECRETARY

- a. The SAC Secretary will work with the principal and the SAC Facilitator to print and distribute all materials for SAC meetings (sign in sheets, agendas, etc.)
- b. The SAC Secretary will submit all required documents to the Office of Family and Community Engagement. These documents are the meeting agendas, meeting sign in sheets, and the SAC leadership roles, once they have been appointed by the SAC.
- c. The SAC Secretary will ensure that all documents have been submitted properly and

on time so that the SAC meets the SAC criteria outlined by the School District of Philadelphia Office of Family and Community Engagement.

- d. The SAC Secretary can take minutes during all SAC meetings if they choose to do so.

ARTICLE VI: QUORUM

The SAC will acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the SAC when making decisions. A quorum must exist during all decision-making by the SAC. A SAC meeting that fulfills quorum is one that has at least 51% of members in attendance. All votes made without quorum are void and must be re-voted upon at the next meeting that there is quorum.

ARTICLE VII: DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

In the potentiality that a member of the SAC is not in compliance with the SAC Objectives and Responsibilities (Article II) and/or misses more than 40% of meetings, the member will be eligible for termination of membership. A breach of any of the responsibilities listed in Article II and any concerns with attendance will be addressed by the SAC Secretary. The SAC Secretary will issue an official warning of Breach of Membership.

If membership breaches persist after the warning is given, the SAC member in question will then attend a hearing at the next SAC meeting (only SAC members may be present for this hearing. All visitors will be asked to leave when all other business not related to the Breach of Membership Hearing is finished). At the hearing, the member in question will present their case, or an explanation for the Breach of Membership. The member in question will then be asked to leave. The remaining SAC members will discuss the member in question's case and must come to a unanimous decision on whether or not the membership will be terminated. If the SAC decides to terminate the member's SAC membership, the SAC Secretary must immediately notify the Office of Family and Community Engagement of the change in membership via the SAC Membership Update Form.

ARTICLE VIII: ROLE OF THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

SECTION A: THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

The School District of Philadelphia will support active and engaged SACs by:

1. Developing policies and procedures that support the effectiveness of SACs.
2. Maintaining educational materials and resources to assist SACs in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities.
3. Providing community-based trainings, workshops, and/or conferences to SACs (including sessions on budgeting, interpreting school data, understanding the School Progress Report, meaningful engagement, and more).
4. Providing annual mandatory trainings to principals and school-based staff on developing SACs in their schools (including recruitment strategies, roles and responsibilities of the SAC, and supports available to them).
5. The Board of Education will invite SAC leadership from each school to an annual Summit to collect input and keep the Commission informed with regard to school specific issues and



initiatives.

SECTION B: THE OFFICE OF FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The School District’s Office of Family and Community Engagement will support active and engaged SACs by:

1. Supporting SAC performance and reporting summary information to the Superintendent and/or designee.
2. Maintaining a copy of active SAC membership for each District school.
3. Advising on conflicts within SACs in regards to membership, election of SAC members, and adherence to the SAC Bylaws in a fair and transparent manner.
4. Facilitating resolutions to disputes within the SAC which cannot be resolved internally at the school level at the request of the school principal.

ARTICLE IX: AMENDMENTS TO THE BYLAWS

Because the Constitution outlines policies implemented by the School District of Philadelphia, SACs will not amend the Constitution. SACs will have the opportunity to develop, implement, and amend their own SAC Bylaws.

Amendments to the SAC Bylaws must be submitted to the SAC Facilitator at least one week before the meeting in which the vote on the amendment will take place. The SAC member who submits an amendment must be present for the vote on the amendment, and must answer questions and comments on the proposed amendment before the SAC votes.

SIGNATURES OF SAC MEMBERS

1. _____ **Date:** _____

2. _____ **Date:** _____

3. _____ **Date:** _____

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