

Dunbar Hill School Governing Council Code of Conduct

As a guide to performing their advisory duties, a School Governing Council member should:

1. To act honestly, in good faith and in the interest of the school as a whole.
2. Be an advocate of high quality free public education for all Connecticut children.
3. Uphold and enforce all laws, rules, regulations and court orders pertaining to public schools, and bring about any needed change only through legal and ethical means.
4. Help create public schools which meet the individual educational needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, gender, physical condition or social standing.
5. Work to help the community to understand the importance of proper support for public education.
6. Serve as a communication link between the community and the schools, working to ensure that the community is fully and accurately informed about the schools, and that the school staff understands the aspirations and desires of the community.
7. Recognize that a Council member's responsibility is **not** to "run the school", but to see that it is well-run through the implementation of effective policies.
8. Confine Council action to its advisory role as detailed in statute, Board of Education policy and Council bylaws.
9. Arrive at conclusions and/or positions after fully discussing the issue at an open meeting, and abide by the principle of majority rule.
10. Recognize that authority rests only with the whole Council assembled in a meeting, and make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the Council.
11. Never use the Council for personal gain.
12. To understand that confidential information received in the course of Council responsibilities will remain the property of the person or group from which it was obtained. Council members must recognize that it is improper to disclose or allow information to be disclosed, unless disclosure has been authorized by that person or group, or the person from whom the information was provided, or if it is required by law. Regardless, confidential matters pertaining to schools that, if disclosed, might needlessly injure individuals or schools must remain confidential.

13. Help to ensure that the best administrative personnel available are appointed to all positions in the school.
14. Refer all complaints through the proper "chain of command" within the school and system.
15. Council members must declare any conflict of interest when it arises.
16. Council members will actively participate in subcommittees and meetings. If members are unable to attend a meeting, they are requested to notify the Secretary of the Council prior to the meeting.
17. Members of the school community should feel welcome to attend Council meetings as observers, except when the meeting is not open to the public. Meetings should be "closed" when the majority of Council members vote to do so because the issue under discussion is sensitive and requires confidentiality as permitted under the Freedom of Information Act or for the reporting back of a principal selection panel process.

Dunbar Hill School Governance Council: Bylaws

1) Membership

- a) Members of the Council shall include:
 - Seven (7) parents or guardians of students currently enrolled at the school as voting members.
 - Parents nominated for Council membership must have a child enrolled in the school for the current school year (or for the next school year in the case of May/June elections) to be included on the ballot.
- b) Five (5) staff at the school as voting members.
- c) Two (2) community leaders within the school District as voting members.
- d) One (1) Principal of the school or his/her designee as a non-voting member.

2) Term of Office/Tenure

- Voting members shall serve for a term of one or two years. No voting member of the Council shall serve more than two terms, with a maximum of four years.
- The term of office for all Council members shall begin as of Fall of the new school year
- In order to avoid having the terms of all Council members expire at the same time, the first elections shall create staggered terms of office. • Regular elections will continue each school year.

3) Resignation

- a) Any Council member may withdraw from the Council by delivering to the Principal or the Chairperson or Secretary of the Council a written resignation, or by giving verbal resignation during a regular meeting of the Council. Such verbal or written notice of the resignation shall be recorded in the official meeting minutes.

4) Removal

- a) Any member of the Council, who is no longer active, excluding the Principal, may be removed by an affirmative vote of a majority of the Council's voting members at a regular or called meeting of the Council. A member of the Council shall be deemed to be inactive if the member has missed three (3) unexcused meetings of the Council. The Council shall determine the effective date of the removal. Furthermore, any member of the Council who has violated the Council's "Code of Conduct" may be removed from the Council. Such removal shall be by an affirmative vote of membership of the Council at any regular or called meeting of the Council.

5) Compensation

- a) Council members shall not receive any remuneration to serve on the Council or its committees.

6) Vacancy

- a) The office of Council member shall be automatically vacated:
 - If a member resigns,
 - If a member is removed by action of the Council,
 - If a member no longer meets the qualifications for membership specified by these bylaws.
- b) Any vacancy on the Council will be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term utilizing the election process. An election within the electing body for a replacement to fill the remainder of an unexpired term shall be held within thirty (30) days of the date of the resignation, removal, or disqualification; unless there are sixty (60) days or less remaining in the term in which case the vacancy will remain unfilled until a replacement is selected by normal election/appointment processes as stated in these Bylaws.

7) Selection Process

- a) The parent/guardian members (7) of the Council shall be elected by the parents or guardians of students attending the school. Each household with a student attending the school will have one vote.
- b) The staff members (5) of the Council shall be elected by the staff of the school.
- c) The community leaders (2) of the Council shall be elected by the parent/guardian members and teacher members of the Council. d) The school Principal may enlist an **election committee** to assist in conducting the election.
- e) The committee would:
 - Schedule dates,
 - Post announcements,
 - Collect nominations,
 - Set up, administer in, and oversee the election process, and • Formally announce the results.

8) Call for Nominations for Parents and Teachers

- a) A call for nominations should be sent to all parents or guardians in the school to nominate themselves or other parents or guardians for the seven available positions on the Council. Every effort shall be made to provide nomination and election material in a language they understand.
- b) A parent is a person who is the natural, adoptive or stepparent of a child enrolled in the school and includes those people acting as legal guardian or register custodian of the child, such as grandparents.
- c) A call for nominations should also be sent to all teachers to nominate themselves or others for the five positions on the Council. (The staff at a given school shall be responsible for selecting their representatives to the

Council. A nomination process should be conducted followed by a ballot. d) The election committee shall verify that those nominated are eligible and willing to serve.

9) Voting/Ballots

- a) The ballot for the parent election should be distributed to each household. Each household of students enrolled in the school for the current school year (or for the next school year in the case of May/June elections) will receive one ballot.
- b) If more than one family resides at the same location, each family should be sent their own ballot.
- c) A household can cast a vote for each open parent seat on the Council. In the first election, all seven seats are open.
- d) The ballot for the teacher election shall be distributed to all teachers. The ballot for the parent election shall be distributed through a reliable distribution method. (Voting procedures that will maximize participation shall be determined by the election committee.)
- e) To ensure maximum participation, parents and staff should be given sufficient time and multiple opportunities to cast their ballot – whether through dropping the ballot off at the school office or another community location or through the U.S. mail.

10) Results

- a) Immediately following the election, ballots should be counted by one parent and one staff and verified by the administrator.
- b) The Principal should announce the results and post the new membership of the council on the school's website.

11) Community Members

- a) After the parent and staff members are elected by their representative groups, they shall then elect the community members who will serve on the Council.
- b) A community member shall be anyone who resides in the school district or has a business or civic interest in the area. The parent and staff representatives shall determine a process for soliciting interest from community members.

12) Principal

- a) The Principal shall participate directly as a nonvoting member of the Council or name a designee to the Council.
- b) The role of the Principal in terms of authority and responsibility for school management is not changed by the institution of this Council. Ultimately, the Principal is responsible and accountable to the Superintendent of Schools.

13) Officers: Responsibilities/Election

- a) The officers of the school site Council shall be a Chairperson or Co Chairpersons, Secretary, and other officers the Council may deem desirable.
- i) The **Chairperson/Co-Chairpersons** shall:
- Prepare an agenda for each meeting and publically post the agenda at the school site and on the school's website 72 hours in advance of each meeting of the School Governance Council.
 - Preside at all meetings of the Council.
 - Sign all letters, reports and other communications of the Council. • Perform all duties incident to the office of the Chairperson. • Have other such duties as are prescribed by the Council.
- ii) The **Secretary** shall:
- Act as clerk of the Council.
 - Keep minutes of all regular and special meetings of the school site Council, including attendance, summary reports, and all votes in a book to be kept for that purpose.
 - Transmit true and correct copies of the minutes of such meetings to members of the Council through e-mail.
 - Provide all notices in accordance with these bylaws. (give or cause to be given notice of all meetings of the Council.)
 - Be custodian of the records of the Council.
 - Keep a register of the names, addresses and telephone numbers of each member of the Council and others with whom the Council has regular dealings, as furnished by those persons.
 - Perform other such duties as are assigned by the Chairperson or the Council.
 - The officers of the Council shall be elected at a meeting of the Council following the annual election of Council members, as needed. The Principal shall conduct the process of election of officers, as needed.

14) Duties of Council Members

- a) **All Committee Members:** The members of the Council are accountable to their constituents and shall:
- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues.
 - Regularly attend and participate in Council meetings.
 - Participate in information and training programs, as needed. • Act as a link between the Council and the community.
 - Encourage participation of parents and others in the school community.
- b) **Staff:**
- School staff Council members are responsible for soliciting input from the faculty and support staff with respect to issues of concern to the Council.

- Staff members of the Council shall report to faculty and support staff.
- c) **Principal:**
- The Principal is responsible for keeping the Council informed of all relevant school information.
 - He/She shall take the lead role in promoting new programs at the school. The Principal shall seek the active participation of the Council in those areas listed under “Council Responsibilities.”

15) Committees, Study Groups, Task Forces

- a) The Council may appoint committees, study groups, or task forces for such purposes as it deems helpful/necessary in order to carry out the responsibilities of the Council enumerated in these bylaws. No such committee, study group or task force may exercise the authority of the Council.

16) Selection of Subcommittee Members

- a) The Chairperson/Co-Chairpersons of the subcommittee and members of the subcommittees will be appointed by the Council Chairperson/Co Chairpersons, subject to the ratification of the Council.
The Council may establish and abolish sub-committees of its own membership to perform duties as shall be prescribed by Council. At least one member representing teachers and one member representing parents shall make up the subcommittee. No subcommittee may exercise the authority of the Council.

17) Quorum

- a) A majority of the members of the committee shall constitute a quorum, unless otherwise determined by the Council. The act of a majority of the members present shall be the act of the committee, provided a quorum is in attendance.

18) Committee Rules

- a) Each committee may adopt rules for its own government consistent with these bylaws or rules adopted by the Council or Board of Education policies.
- b) All committees of the Council shall follow the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act as required by statute.

19) Record Keeping

- a) All committees shall keep records of business conducted at meetings. The minutes will be kept on file in the Principal’s office and available at all times to the Council members. The minutes shall include the names of committee members in attendance, listing of topics discussed and committee recommendations.

20) Reporting Responsibilities

a) Committee Chairperson/Co-Chairpersons will present work plans and recommendations to the Council for approval. Each committee may make a report through its Chairperson at each regular meeting of the Council.

21) Mandatory Advisory Capacity Responsibilities by Statute

- a) School Governance Councils serve in an **advisory** capacity and shall assist the school administration in the areas listed below:
- analyze school achievement data and school needs as they relate to the school's improvement plan;
 - review the fiscal objectives of the school's draft budget and advise the Principal before the budget is submitted to the Superintendent;
 - participate in the hiring process of the school Principal or other administrators of the school by conducting interviews of candidates and reporting on such interviews to the Superintendent of Schools for the school district and the local and regional Board of Education;
 - advise the Principal in making programmatic and operational changes to improve the school's achievement;
 - develop and approve a written school parent involvement policy that outlines the role of parents and guardians, and work with school administrators in developing and approving a school compact for parents, legal guardians, and students that outlines the school's goals and academic focus;
 - identifying ways that parents and school personnel can build a partnership to improve student learning;
 - In addition to its statutory required responsibilities, the Council may: • advise in developing and reviewing the school improvement plan and advise the Principal before the report is submitted to the Superintendent of Schools;
 - work with the Principal to develop, conduct, and report the results of an annual survey of parents, guardians, and teachers on issues related to the school climate and conditions; and provide advice to the Principal on any other major policy matters affecting the school, except on matters relating to collective bargaining agreements between the teachers and the Board of Education.

22) Limitations Placed on the Advisory Function

- a) In addition to School Governance Councils' responsibilities, it is also important to recognize the limits of its advisory function. The duties of School Governance Councils do not entail activities

including, but not limited to:

- managing the school;
- supervising staff;
- entering into contracts or purchase agreements;
- discussing individual issues between teachers and students and/or parents;
- determining student eligibility for school admission; or
- determining class allocations or student assignments.

23) Meetings

- a) The Council shall meet a minimum of six (6) times per year. Special meetings of the Council may be called by the Chairperson, the Principal, or by a majority vote of the Council. The Council shall prescribe the time, place and dates of its regular meetings. The schedule of the regular meetings shall be posted in a manner available to the public on the school web site. The annual schedule of regular meetings shall be established at the Council's first meeting of the school year. All required notices of meetings shall be adhered to for all called meetings. The meetings of the Council are subject to the provisions of the Connecticut Freedom of Information Act, Connecticut General Statutes Section 1-200 et. seq.

24) Place of Meetings

All official meetings of the Council shall be held at Dunbar Hill School in a location determined by the Principal.