

School Governing
Council Bylaws

2013

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Coffee County School System School Governing Council Bylaws

Article I Name

In keeping with the designation selected by the Coffee County Board of Education in its charter system application, the organization created through these bylaws shall be known as “school governing council” and shall be referred to variously as “council,” or “school governing council” hereinafter. Local school governing councils are identified in the charter approved by the Georgia Board of Education in May 2013 as “governing councils” and as “school governance teams.”

Article II Purpose

The purpose of the school governing council is to be an integral part of the school system’s governance structure in pursuit of an equitable and excellent educational opportunity for every student. The establishment of the council is intended to provide assistance to the board of education in developing and nurturing broad-based participation by the community and parents in the education of the children and youth who attend the school.

The board of education is constitutionally charged with the control and management of the school system and the principal is the school leader. The council will complement the board of education in bringing the community and the school closer together in a spirit of cooperation. Support will be provided to the principal in addressing issues, improving student academic performance, providing support for teachers and students, and increasing parental engagement in their children’s education.

Article III Commencement of Operation

The school governing council shall be operational effective July 1, 2013, replacing the current school council if one is in existence on that date. The council shall become the governing body of the school under the authority of the Coffee County Board of Education, with the guidance and direction of the school principal, and within the parameters established in the system charter.

Article IV Membership

The council shall be composed of ten (10) members, nine (9) of whom shall be voting members. The membership shall include:

- School principal who shall serve as a non-voting member;
- Three (3) parents/guardians of students enrolled in the school;
 - A parent/guardian is eligible to serve only when their child is enrolled in the school;
 - A parent/guardian who will have a child enrolled at the school for the following year will be eligible for election to serve on the council beginning July 1 of the year the student will first be enrolled in the school;
 - An employee of the school system may serve as a parent representative in the school in which his or her child is enrolled if such employee works at a different school;
 - A substitute teacher employed in the school may serve as a parent representative if the teacher has a child enrolled at the school;
 - School board members may not serve on the council;
 - Parent/guardian may serve on more than one council if otherwise qualified
- Two (2) certificated classroom teachers who are employed full-time at the school;
 - Includes all classes of teachers assigned full-time to the school
- One (1) certificated support staff member who is employed full-time at the school;
 - Includes assistant principal, counselor, media specialist, instructional coach, social worker and dean
- One (1) classified staff member who is employed full-time at the school;
 - Includes paraprofessional, secretary, registrar, bookkeeper, clerk, custodian, school nutrition, and school nurse
- Two (2) community members who reside in Coffee County and who are not formally associated with the school either as a parent/guardian or as an employee of the school system in any capacity;
 - One community member shall reside in the school attendance zone;
 - Shall be at least 18 years of age at time of election;
 - Shall be eligible to vote

Council members shall receive no remuneration to serve on the council or any committees that may be established from time to time.

Article V Election of Members

Elections for membership on the school governing council shall be held in the month of May in those years in which vacancies occur. The initial elections shall be conducted in May 2013. The principal shall provide public notice at least two (2) weeks prior to the meeting of each electing body.

There shall be four (4) electing bodies as enumerated below and eligible voters must be present to cast a ballot.

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

The electing body for the certificated classroom teacher members shall consist of all certificated classroom teachers employed in the school who are eligible to serve as a member of the council.

The electing body for the certificated support staff member shall consist of all certificated support staff members employed in the school who are eligible to serve as a member of the council.

The electing body for the classified staff member shall consist of all classified staff members employed in the school who are eligible to serve as a member of the council.

The four (4) elections recited above shall be conducted in the month of May and shall be chaired by the school principal. Nominations for each of the positions shall be accepted by the principal from members within each electing body prior to the meetings in which the elections occur. Nominations from the floor shall be accepted at the meeting of each electing body.

One vote shall be taken with elections being decided by plurality vote; however, in the event of a tie in the voting process, subsequent votes are required until the number of vacant positions is filled from the electing body. Members of each electing body must be present to vote. Each qualified voter may vote for the number of vacancies on the ballot (e.g., in the initial election, parent/guardian voters may cast three (3) votes for parent/guardian membership). The three highest vote recipients for parent/guardian membership shall be elected, the two highest vote recipients for certificated classroom teacher memberships shall be elected, the highest vote recipient for certificated support staff membership shall be elected, and the highest vote recipient for classified staff membership shall be elected.

It shall be the responsibility of the assistant superintendent for operations and facilities (or other designee of the Superintendent) to provide voting ballots to the school principal to be used in the election of parent/guardian members, certificated classroom teacher members, certificated support staff member, and classified staff member

elections. Ballots shall be printed in English and other languages, if needed, to ensure that those voting clearly understand the ballot.

It shall be the responsibility of the principal to ensure that only those qualified to cast a ballot in any election are allowed to vote.

The principal shall be a non-voting member of the council by virtue of the office held.

The principal shall nominate two (2) residents of Coffee County for membership on the council, one of whom must reside in the school's attendance area. The nominations shall be made at the first meeting of the council in the 2013-14 school year and at subsequent meetings if nominees are rejected or when vacancies occur. The seven (7) council members elected to membership shall accept or reject the principal's nominations. In the event of rejection of any nominee, the principal shall submit additional recommendations until the two positions are filled.

Article VI Term of Office

The term of office of all council members shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30. Members shall serve a term of three (3) years and terms shall be staggered to ensure greater continuity in the work of the council. The principal shall serve as a non-voting member during the individual's entire tenure as principal. All elected members of the council may be re-elected for subsequent terms and appointed members may be re-appointed for subsequent terms, if eligible.

At the initial elections to be conducted in May 2013, the parent/guardian receiving the third highest vote total shall serve a term of two (2) years; the certificated classroom teacher receiving the second highest vote total shall serve a two-year term; the certificated support staff member shall serve a two-year term; and one (1) of the two community members shall serve a two-year term as recommended by the principal.

Article VII Council Vacancies

Vacancies on the council occur at the end of the term of office of members, when members are no longer eligible to serve, when members resign, and when members are removed from office by the council. In the event of a vacancy in an elected position, a special election shall be held within sixty (60) days of the date that the vacancy occurred unless there are ninety (90) days or less remaining in the term in which case the vacancy shall remain unfilled until a replacement is elected in the next regular election cycle. When vacancies in appointed positions occur, the principal shall recommend a replacement at the next regular meeting of the council.

Council members shall resign when they no longer meet the eligibility requirements specified in Article IV of the bylaws and may resign at any time they no longer wish to serve on the council. Letters of resignation shall be submitted to the school principal or

to the council chair. Verbal notice of resignation may be given during a meeting of the council. Such resignation shall be recorded in the official meeting minutes.

Any member may be removed from the council when deemed to be inactive by a 2/3 vote of the voting council members in a regular or called meeting. A member is deemed to be inactive if the member has three consecutive unexcused absences from meetings of the council.

Article VIII Officers and Duties

The officers of the council shall be chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. These positions shall be filled through election by the voting members of the council. The initial slate of officers shall be elected immediately following the council's approval of the principal's recommendation on community members has been accepted by the council. The principal shall serve temporarily as chair until officers have been elected. Officers of the council shall hold office concurrently with their term of membership on the council.

The chairperson shall have the following duties:

- Confirms the agenda for each council meeting in coordination with the principal;
- Presides at all meetings of the council ensuring they begin and end on time;
- Ensures that all meetings of the council conform to the open meetings act including affidavit required when executive sessions occur;
- Ensures that parliamentary procedure is followed in all actions of the council; and
- Acts and speaks on behalf of the council in meetings with the principal and system level staff.

The vice-chairperson shall have the following duties:

- Performs the duties and exercises the authority of the chairperson in the absence or disability of the chairperson.

The secretary shall have the following duties:

- Acts as clerk of the council and is responsible for recording all votes and minutes of all proceedings in a book 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 other duties as may be prescribed by the council or the chairperson.

Article IX Meetings

All meetings of the council shall be held at the school and in a location determined by the principal with the exception of meetings in which council training occurs. Those meetings may be held at any location designated by the superintendent or his designee.

The council shall conduct regular meetings monthly during the school year. Additional meetings may be called by the chairperson, the principal, or at the request of a majority of the members of the council.

The secretary or principal shall be responsible for notifying, in writing, the legal organ and the superintendent at least three (3) days in advance of any and all meetings of the council. Notice of meetings shall be sent by e-mail, fax, or mail to council members at least seven (7) days prior to a meeting of the council. The superintendent may waive the seven (7) day requirement. The council is subject to O.C.G.A § 50-14-1 *et seq.*, relating to open and public meetings, in the same manner as local boards of education.

A regularly scheduled meeting which does not have a quorum of the members present does not have to be rescheduled.

The chairperson and the principal shall develop an agenda for each meeting of the council after taking into consideration suggestions of council members and the urgency of school matters. An item may be added to the agenda at the request of three or more council members. The agenda shall be available to the public upon request, and the chairperson shall cause to be posted the agenda at the meeting site as far in advance of the meetings as reasonably possible.

A majority of the nine (9) voting council members shall be necessary to constitute a quorum for the transaction of any 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. Council members must be present to vote. There shall be no representation by proxy of any members of the council at any meeting.

The secretary shall be responsible for recording all votes and minutes of all meetings. The minutes shall include the names of the members present and a description of each motion or proposal made. In recording votes, the minutes shall state the name of each person voting for or against a proposal if a roll-call vote is taken. In all other votes, it shall be presumed that the action taken was approved by each person in attendance unless the minutes reflect the name of the person or persons voting against the proposal or abstaining. The secretary shall provide a copy of the minutes to each council member at the next regularly scheduled council meeting.

Minutes shall be made available to the public at the school office. A draft version of the minutes shall be available at the school office within two working days after the meeting in which they were recorded.

A copy of the council meeting minutes and a copy of any affidavit executed (executive session) shall be forwarded to the assistant superintendent for operations and facilities (or other superintendent designee) within three working days.

All meetings of the council shall be open to the public unless specifically exempt in the Open Meetings Act. If a meeting or portion thereof is closed to the public, all council members present shall sign the affidavit required by the Act.

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

Article X Council Training

The training program provided for the council presupposes that the best decisions at all levels are informed decisions. The program includes components that provide the information needed by the council to make sound decisions within its realm of autonomy and sound recommendations in areas in which it is an active participant. The initial training program includes nine modules that may be delivered in a variety of formats.

Module 1 relating to the functioning of the council shall be provided as part of the organizational meeting of the council in July 2013. Modules 2 and 8 shall be presented at the council's second meeting of the year. Modules 3, 4, 7, 5, 6, and 9 shall be presented in that order at the third through the eighth meeting of the council in year one of the council's existence. In succeeding years, the modules shall be provided for new members and/or repeated for current members. Additional modules may be added at the request of the council.

Training program components:

| Module | Topics |
|---------------|--|
| Module 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bylaws for local school governing council• Roles, relationships, & responsibilities of the council, principal & school staff, superintendent & system staff, Coffee County Board of Education• Conduct of council meetings – agenda, minutes, open meetings statute, parliamentary procedure, dissemination of council actions |
| Module 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent and community engagement strategies |
| Module 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School improvement plan & school system strategic plan• Student performance data – history and projected increases for charter term |

| | |
|----------|--|
| Module 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational programs – local, state, & federal • Coffee County School System curriculum overview (Common Core & Pathways) |
| Module 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education funding – Federal funding, QBE funding formula, & local property tax • Budget development & implementation |
| Module 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel earnings, allocations, & processes for employment & termination • Professional learning program |
| Module 7 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student assessment – College & Career Ready Performance Index • Coffee County School System Student Assessment Program |
| Module 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School operations – daily management of the school – safety, conduct, support services – Value of the classified staff at the school |
| Module 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education delivery options – use of technology in the classroom & beyond |

Article XI Council Responsibilities

The school governing council is entrusted with the responsibility of governing the actions of the council, providing input and making recommendations to the principal, the superintendent, and the board of education. The council is authorized to make decisions regarding various aspects of the school program as indicated below.

The responsibilities of the council are enumerated under six broad headings:

Budget

The council participates in the development of all budgets which the school is charged with preparing. These include but are not limited to:

- General fund budget
- Title I budget
- School activities budgets
- Other special revenue fund budgets

The council approves all school level budgets prior to their submission to the system for consideration and final adoption by the board of education. The board of education approves and adopts all budgets.

Human Resources Allocation

The council reviews the school staffing plan with the principal annually and provides input relative to organization of staff.

The council recommends staffing for enrichment programs that have been planned, developed, and recommended by the council.

The council is authorized to establish volunteer programs for the school, recruit volunteers, and structure the program in conjunction with the school principal.

Personnel Decisions

The council participates in the development of the process for principal selection and evaluation as deemed appropriate by the superintendent.

School Improvement Plans and Goals

The council participates in establishing school goals.

The council participates in development of the annual school improvement plan.

The council approves the annual school improvement plan.

The council monitors the school's performance in implementing the annual school improvement plan.

Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

The council provides evaluative input periodically on the school's success in implementing the curriculum effectively.

The council provides instructional support through volunteer initiatives such as mentoring programs and after school programs that enrich the curriculum.

The council plans educational field trips in conjunction with school leadership and staff and provides support for activities in keeping with established school system policies.

School Operations

The council devises and implements strategies to increase parental involvement in the education of their children

The council devises and implements strategies to increase community engagement and support for the school including innovations that are responsive to community needs.

The council engages in school safety reviews and participates in development of school safety plans.

The council may develop proposed school dress codes with input from school faculty and staff and parents/guardians.

The council participates in preparation of the student handbook to ensure students have information they need to navigate successfully the school's requirements.

General Responsibilities of Principal, Local School Governing Council, Superintendent and System Staff, and Coffee County Board of Education

| Areas | Principal | Local School Governing Council | Superintendent and System Staff | Coffee County Board of Education |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Budget (includes material, supply, & equipment requirements – regular & special programs) | Recommends school's annual budget for use of discretionary funds authorized by Coffee BOE | Approves school's annual budget for use of discretionary funds | Establishes budget process Reviews & approves school's annual budget Incorporates school's budget into system budget | Provides oversight for budget process Approves annual budget for school system |
| Human Resource Allocation | Recommends school staffing, proposes exceptions to staffing guidelines & non-traditional staffing for enrichment programs | Provides input on principal's staffing plans and non-traditional staffing for enrichment programs | Develops enrollment projections Develops personnel allocation guidelines & allocates staff | Approves enrollment projections & proposed staffing requirements |
| Personnel Decisions | Recommends personnel for employment Evaluates personnel assigned to school Recommends termination of personnel | Participates in developing the process for principal selection & evaluation as deemed appropriate by the superintendent. | Recruits, screens & recommends personnel for employment & assignment Provides professional development Recommends termination | Hires, evaluates & terminates superintendent Employs all other personnel on recommendation of superintendent |
| School Improvement Plans (SIP) & Goals | Organizes & directs goal setting & SIP development Recommends SIP | Participates in establishing school goals & in development of SIP Approves SIP Monitors performance | Reviews & approves school goals and SIPs Evaluates school performance | Holds superintendent, staff & schools accountable for ensuring high reliability organization & satisfactory performance |
| Curriculum, Assessment, & Instruction | Ensures effective implementation of curriculum & assessment program Ensures highly reliable & effective instruction in every classroom | Provides support for school & teachers through volunteer initiatives such as mentoring, after-school programs, curriculum enrichment | Provides expertise in all curriculum areas Establishes database & interpretation of student assessment results Monitors teacher & leader performance | Approves system curriculum & assessment program & provides oversight of implementation Monitors student & staff performance |
| School Operations | Creates organization structure that results in a highly reliable school with low variability in performance in all areas | Develops proposed innovations that are responsive to community needs Recommends options to improve school operations | Assesses proposed innovations & makes recommendation Provides support & expertise in all areas of school operations | Provides resources & establishes policies that support a high level of school autonomy in school operations |

The council does not have the authority to legally bind the school system or to contract or assume debts or obligations on behalf of the school or the school system or to create policy. Additionally, the council shall not incorporate or form any other business entity.

Article XII Accountability

The members of the council are accountable to the community, to the students, to the school, and to the school system. The council members shall:

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
- Regularly participate in council meetings;
- Participate in information and training programs provided by the school system;
- Act as a link between the council and the community;
- Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community; and
- Work to support continuous improvement in student achievement and performance.

To the extent allowed by law, the school governing council shall have the same immunity as the Coffee County Board of Education and school officials and employees in all matters directly related to the functions of the council.

Article XIII School System Support

Organizationally, the school governing council's primary relationship is with the Coffee County Board of Education through its chief executive officer, the superintendent. The chairperson of the council and the principal shall meet on a regularly scheduled basis with representatives of all other school governing councils and with system staff and the superintendent to discuss issues of concern, solicit views of council members about the effectiveness of the governance structure, and to consider changes which may lead to greater effectiveness on the part of the councils and the school system.

The assistant superintendent for operations and facilities is designated as the system contact person to provide support and assistance to the school governing council. The assistant superintendent is responsible for assisting the principal in the formation of the council and response to or forwarding of inquiries from the council to the superintendent and board of education.

Article XIV Amendments

Upon the superintendent's recommendation, the Coffee County Board of Education may amend or repeal these bylaws or adopt new bylaws within the parameters then existing in the system charter.

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