

“John Doe Middle” School School Advisory Council Bylaws

Article I. General

- A. The provisions of Florida law and rules of the Manatee County School Board, now existing or hereafter adopted, governing School Advisory Councils, are incorporated by reference.
- B. To the extent that an inconsistency exists now or in the future between these guidelines and any rule or regulation of the Manatee County School Board or any Florida law concerning School Advisory Councils, such rule, regulation, or law shall control.

Comment: Nice addition to bylaws!

Article II. Name

The official name of this body shall be “John Doe Middle” School Advisory Council. In these bylaws, the “John Doe” Middle School Advisory Council may be referred to as the “council” or “SAC.”

Comment: Often schools add here a statement at the end of the sentence: “and shall be referred to as council or SAC in these bylaws” – it allows a SAC to make less lengthy names throughout the bylaws.

Article II. Purpose

The purpose of the School Advisory Council is to enhance school site decision making, to serve in an advisory capacity to the principal regarding school improvement, to assisting the preparation and evaluation of the school improvement plan, and to provide input on the budget and use of school improvement funds pursuant to Florida Statute 229.58.

Article IV. Membership Responsibilities

The School Advisory Council shall:

1. Review the results of any needs assessments conducted at the school.
2. Assist in the development of the school improvement plan and provide recommendations on specific components of the plan, such as the goals of the school, indicators of school and student progress, strategies, and evaluation procedures to measure student performance. The school advisory council shall be the final decision-making body at the school relating to school improvement.
3. Report progress in meeting the goals of the school improvement plan. A mid-year review and end-of-year report shall affirm the satisfactory implementation of the plan.
4. Make recommendations on the accumulation and reporting of data this is beneficial to parents.
5. Assist the principal as requested in preparing the school’s annual budget funds.
6. Determine the use of school improvement funds (Lottery dollars).
7. Act as a liaison between the school and the community.
8. Identify other duties and functions of the School Advisory Council.

Comment: How will the SAC assist the Principal? He may not request any assistance which would be illegal according to law. Will it be through a presentation? A meeting? A committee report?

Article V. Composition

The Council shall include the school principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, parents, and business and community representatives. The composition shall be as follows:

1. Membership shall be representative of the ethnic, racial and economic community served by the school,
2. A majority of members shall be persons that are not employed at the school,
3. Teachers shall be defined as any person on the instructional salary scale
4. Education support employee shall refer to any person on the classified salary schedule employed by the school for twenty or more hours during a normal working week.
5. The Council shall consist of a minimum of 10 members.

Comment: The SAC has reflected decision to eliminate students from SAC – now make bylaws consistent with this.

The Council shall be comprised, at a minimum, of the following: Teachers (2), Administrators (1), Support employees (1), Parents (4), and business/community members (2)

Comment: Note totals of paragraph below; $2+1+1+4+2=10$...this is a minimum so it allows flexibility to grow if membership can support membership composition requirements without revising the bylaws.

Article VI. Selection of Members, School Board Approval, Vacancies, Membership Term and Attendance.

A. Selection of Members

1. Teachers, education support employees, and parents shall be elected by their respective peer groups in a fair and equitable manner as set forth in these guidelines:
 - a) Teachers shall elect teachers. Nominations will be accepted from the teachers in the school, and a ballot will be created using those who have been nominated and have accepted. All teachers will receive a ballot in their mailbox and will be asked to select one or more of those nominated to fill the vacancy(s). Ballots will be totaled by administration. The teacher(s) with the most votes will be placed on the SAC roster.
 - b) Nominations shall be requested from all support staff. The names of those nominated shall be placed on a ballot and all support staff shall vote for their choice with the majority of votes deciding the new support staff member for SAC.
 - c) Parent shall elect parents. Nominations for new parent members will be generated by teachers, support staff, and through solicitation at parent functions such as back to school night. New parents wishing to serve will be listed in the first copy of the monthly newsletter and set home to families. Parents may then vote either in writing or with a phone call to the grade level AP.
2. Business and community members shall be selected by the School Advisory Council after reviewing a list of nominees presented by the school principal or any SAC member.
3. The school principal is a required member by law.

Comment: IMPORTANT. HOW DO YOU APPOINT? The law says the SAC must represent the school community. What if the election does not provide the balance? You must have some way of allowing appointees. The law requires school board to appoint if not balanced. Business and community members are implied to be people without children in the school. I recommend that this not be used solely as a way to balance – add appointees which can be a parent of a minority & low income and not be a business person...

HOW IS THE MINIMUM DECIDED? The principal decides? The officers & principal? Many bylaws call for officers and an executive board which is the officers and principal. This executive board can decide by a stated date the minimum openings for each peer group allowing for compliance with membership composition.

Comment: **TROUBLE HERE!** Teachers and staff have no business at all here – possible legal action. Nominations should only be done by parents (just like the non-member nomination for co-chair decision by the Manatee SB attorney which nullified the election). Eliminate "by teachers, support staff and" to read "Nominations for new parent members will be generated through solicitation....."

B. School Board Approval:

1. The principal shall submit the list of School Advisory Council members to the Superintendent or designee for review and submission to the Board for approval each school fiscal year. The membership list shall include:
 - a) The name of each council member.
 - b) The peer group represented.
 - c) A description of how membership reflects the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the council.
 - d) The number and percent of school-based and non-school-based members.
 - e) A description of how members were selected for each peer group.

Comment: HOW LONG IS VOTING OPEN? 2 weeks? By the Oct. SAC meeting? To have AP's take a vote may be contested. AP's are not SAC members and may be subject to problems – how do they prove how a person voted via phone? This should be deleted to reflect parents voting in writing or perhaps in person at a specific SAC meeting.

2. The principal shall also submit a revised list -to the Superintendent for School Board approval when vacancies occur and are filled. A line shall be drawn through the name of the member to be replaced and the name of the new member will be recorded above it. Revisions in other data that result from the member change will also be noted.

C. Vacancies

D. Membership Term:

Members shall serve a minimum of one year. New members will begin their term at the first regularly scheduled SAC meeting on the second Tuesday in October. Exiting members will end their term on the second Tuesday in September of the following year.

F. Attendance:

1. Attendance records will be maintained as part of the meeting minutes.
2. Absences are excused by notifying the SAC chair or principal prior to the meeting.
3. Two consecutive unexcused absences
4. A formal letter from the SAC chairperson informing the member that our records indicate that they have missed two consecutive noticed meetings
 - a) The member will be allowed to challenge this letter and will examine the minutes from each meeting to see if their attendance was overlooked.
 - b) The member will provide, in writing, a rationale for having missed one or both of the meetings.
 - c) The SAC will review the written statement and if acceptable, the absence will be excused.
 - d) If no written verification is provided, or if the rationale is not acceptable to the SAC, the member will receive written notice of termination from the SAC chairperson.
 - e) The vacancy created by this termination will then be filled following the procedures outlined previously.

Comment: The Bylaws submitted to me omit #C. and go from B to D. The Article title reflects vacancies which are addressed in this section but not in itself. Either renumber and omit vacancies or address vacancies.

Comment: The way I read the bylaws is that you have no SAC members for voting at the September SAC meeting. Wording should be added/changed to reflect who is a member at that Sept. meeting. Perhaps that the term ends IMMEDIATELY AFTER the second Tuesday of September SAC meeting.

Article VII. Officers

A. Officers:

There shall be a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson or Co-Chairperson and a Recording Secretary nominated and selected at the first School Advisory Council meeting of the regular school year.

B. Duties:

1. The Chairperson, vice chairperson or co-chairperson shall preside at all School Advisory Council meetings, schedule meetings, prepare agendas in collaboration with the principal, advertise the agenda and voting items to the school community at least 72 hours in advance of each scheduled meeting, and disseminate pertinent information to all members.
2. The Recording Secretary shall keep a proper record of all meetings of the School Advisory Council, including a record of attendance. The Secretary shall maintain and have available to all members at all meetings current copies of the Bylaws, previous minutes, and other pertinent papers. The Secretary shall also keep an accurate list of names, addresses, and telephone numbers of all members, indicating the status of such members (i.e. teacher, parent, etc.) and the expiration date of each member's term. The Recording Secretary shall notify all members of School Advisory Council meetings. Posting minutes.

C. Term of Office

Comment: Do officers have to be members? Your bylaws are silent on this. What if the SAC nominates a non-member? Sometimes no SAC member will volunteer to be secretary and a person in the audience will agree to be secretary – but they are not a member....

Comment: When is the first meeting? The Sept. meeting with the old members or the Oct. meeting with new members? This needs more definition. You refer to it above so add it here for ease of use – your October meeting is the first regularly scheduled meeting of the year.

Comment: What is "collaboration" – even meetings via phone between 2 members are "public meetings" and must conform to Sunshine Law with public notice, public meeting place, and minutes. Be careful here.

Comment: This is a lot of duties for a Recording Secretary. Sound like the committee should divide duties so at least a co-chair or vice president notifies members and posts members. Sometimes Secretary position is really dumped on.

1. Each officer shall serve a term of one year.
2. Vacancies occurring during a term shall be filled at the first meeting after the vacancy occurs using the voting procedures described in these bylaws.

Article VIII. Membership Voting

Each elected School Advisory Council member shall have one vote. A member must cast his or her vote in person. No vote by proxy or by alternates is permitted; however, an absent member may send a non-participating representative to observe a meeting for the purpose of delivering a report to the absent member's constituency group. Decisions of the SAC shall be by consensus when a quorum - a majority of council members are present. If consensus cannot be achieved, decisions shall be determined by a majority vote of the members present.

Article IX. Meetings

The School Advisory Council will adhere to the following guidelines for meeting:

1. Meeting dates, times, and locations will be mutually agreed upon by members.
2. Meetings will be scheduled at times to support maximum attendance by members of the school community.
3. Meeting notices, including agendas, will be posted in the teacher lounges, mail room and parent newsletter 72 hours prior to the scheduled meeting. A copy of the notices will be maintained with the records of meetings.
4. When a matter is scheduled to come before the School Advisory Council for a vote, a written notice shall be given to each SAC member at least three days prior to the meeting. A copy of the notice will be maintained with the records of the meeting.
5. All meetings will be open and public and subject to the "Sunshine Law".
6. Each meeting shall all require the presence of a quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the membership.
7. Minutes from all regularly scheduled meetings will be recorded and maintained in the Principal's office. The past and current records of all meetings of the School Advisory Council will be available to the public at all times. The record of each meeting will be submitted to the School Board office in care of the Office of School Improvement.
8. The School Advisory Council shall be in compliance with Florida's Government-in-the Sunshine Law and Public Records Law.
9. Meetings shall be conducted according to "Robert's Rules of Order Revised."

Comment: Great idea to have a copy for records!

Comment: These ideas are really separate (It was one #5: the first sentence refers to Sunshine Law and the second sentence refers to quorums. I separated them into different bullets or numbers and added 'subject to Sunshine Law'. (Public meetings) Sunshine law requires public input at meetings.

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Article X. Committees

Committees will be formed and guided by the Bylaws of the School Advisory Council. All committees will function as advisory committees unless the School Advisory Council and principal delegate decision making to them.

1. Standing Committee(s)
Bylaws Committee: This committee shall be responsible for drafting revisions to the bylaws when necessary and for presenting the revisions to School Advisory Council for approval.
2. Special Committees
The School Advisory Council may create other committees to address specific needs. The existence of such committees shall terminate upon completion of the specified task.

Comment: This could easily be used for the creation of a nomination committee. Perhaps wording should be added to allow for non SAC members to be on this committee.

Article XI. Amendments

The Bylaws shall be reviewed annually and revised as deemed necessary. The School Advisory Council must approve changes. Any changes to the Bylaws shall be presented to SAC one month prior to a vote being taken.

Approved by the "John Doe" Middle School Advisory Council this 8th day of October 2002.

Signed by _____

Date: _____

Comment: One month is a long time to fix a problem. Bylaws are not revised unless there is a problem. Why wait weeks and weeks? A 7-14 day period to review the changes could be sufficient.

No bylaws are perfect and may need to be changed quickly to conform to district policy or law that changes.