

**Boston School  
School-Based Decision-Making By-Laws  
Revised August, 2010**

**Mission Statement**

Boston Elementary School strives to develop life-long learners in collaboration with the community.

**Vision Statement**

**Because Education Equals Success**

**Belief Statements**

- B** uilding relationships with students, staff, families, and community helps remove barriers to learning.
- E** veryone can be successful when effective, varied, and researched based instructional practices are utilized.
- L** earning occurs from access to all types of education.
- I** mplementing a balanced assessment practice provides meaningful feedback.
- E** xpectations influence achievement.
- V** isiting the school improvement plan and mission, vision, beliefs regularly helps maintain a focus on teaching and learning.
- I** mplementing a rigorous, intentional, and aligned curriculum
- N** urturing a safe school environment
- G** rowing leadership capacity throughout the school community supports a climate of collaboration.

**BY-LAWS**

**I. Purpose**

To provide the council with a set of operational guidelines with which to function effectively.

**II. Meetings**

**A. Regular Meetings**

1. The council shall have a designated meeting room, Boston School's SBDM conference room.
2. The council will determine the meeting date and time at its first regular meeting, annually.
3. Council meetings shall be open to the public and must comply with the requirements of the open meetings laws.

4. The length of each meeting will not exceed ninety (90) minutes. If all the items on the agenda have not been adequately discussed after 90 minutes, the council may decide by motion, second and majority vote to extend the length of the meeting or to place the remaining agenda items on the next month's agenda or on a special meeting agenda.

#### B. Special Meetings

1. A special meeting of the council may be called by the chairperson or by any two members of the council.
2. Any special meeting of the council must comply with the requirements of the open meeting laws.

### III. Agenda

- A. The chairperson will identify items and prepare an agenda. The secretary will copy and distribute the agenda and minutes to each council member and the public prior to each meeting. Major topics will be published in the paper with meeting notice.
- B. The council members will receive a tentative agenda at least one (1) week before the regularly scheduled meeting.
- C. For an item to be added to the agenda, the council chairperson shall receive written notification by the first Monday of each month.

### IV. Membership

#### A. Composition

1. The school council shall consist of the principal, three teachers and two parent members (as required by KRS 160.345). The principal will serve as the chairperson.
2. If the school reaches 8% or more minority student enrollment as of the preceding Oct. 1, and there is no minority elected in the initial election, a special election shall be conducted by the principal to elect a minority parent to serve on the council (as required by KRS 160.345).
3. In the event a special election is needed, a minority teacher from the school's staff shall be elected by the teachers. If there are no minority teachers on staff at the school, the teachers shall elect a non-minority teacher to represent the interests of the minority students in the school (as required by KRS 160.345).
4. If there is a minority teacher on staff and he/she does not wish to serve on the council, the seat shall remain vacant until filled by a minority teacher (as required by KRS 160.345).
5. Although there is no provision in KRS 160.345 for additional school council members, the school council does not wish to exclude any constituency in the school from participation in all council meetings. Therefore, the student council may designate a student council representative, and the support staff of the school (office, cafeteria, custodian, instructional assistant) may conduct an election for a support staff member to attend all council meetings as non-voting representatives.

#### B. Election of School Council Members

##### 1. Teachers

- a. Teachers must possess certification required for their position and be employees of the district and currently assigned to the school where they are elected as council members.
- b. Teachers may nominate themselves or another teacher,
- c. Prior to the second week of April, the principal shall inform the current teacher council representatives of the timelines for completion of the election process.
- d. The teacher council representatives shall designate an election date during the third week of April for the election of teacher representatives.

- e. The teacher council representatives shall prepare a ballot containing the names of all qualified teachers nominated.
- f. The teacher council representatives shall chair and oversee the meeting to elect teacher members to the council. The teacher council representatives and a non-council teacher representative will count the ballots to determine a majority vote.
- g. The election shall be by a simple majority vote (1/2 plus One) of all teachers assigned to the school.
- h. Absentee ballots will not be accepted. Members must be present for voting.
- i. All election materials are to be delivered to the principal the next business day after the election.

## 2. Parents

- a. Parent council members shall be a parent, stepparent, foster parent or person who has court ordered legal custody of a student currently enrolled or registered in the school and shall not be a relative of a school employee. Relative shall mean father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter, aunt, uncle, son in-law, daughter in-law, father in-law or mother in-law.
- b. Prior to the second week of April, the principal shall inform the PTA president of the timelines for completion of the election process.
- c. Parents may nominate themselves or another parent.
- d. During the second week in April, the PTA president shall accept written nominations for parent representatives.
- e. The president of the PTA shall designate an election date during the third week in April for the election of parent representatives.
- f. The PTA shall provide notice of this meeting to all parents.
- g. The PTA shall prepare a ballot containing the names of all qualified parents nominated.
- h. The election of the parent council members shall be by a plurality vote ( two parents will the highest number of votes) vote of the qualified parents. A qualified parent is defined as parents of students currently enrolled or pre-registered to attend the school during the term of office.
- i. Parent council members shall complete a criminal background check prior to accepting a position on the council.

## C. Terms of Council Members

- 1. Terms of teacher council members shall be for two consecutive years and shall begin July 1 and end on June 30 of the second year.
- 2. Terms of parent council members shall be for one year and shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30 of the current school year.
- 3. Members must complete training within 30 days after beginning of the service year. Experienced council members must complete three (3) hours of training. New council members must complete six (6) hours of training.

## D. Eligibility for Re-election

- 1. Teacher and parent council members may be re-elected at the end of their designated terms as long as they continue to meet eligibility requirements.

#### E. Vacancies

1. Council vacancies shall be filled at a special called election and shall follow the guidelines set forth in the by-laws for the election of council members.
2. A vacancy is created when a teacher is no longer assigned to the school, a parent no longer has a child enrolled in the school, a member has missed three meetings of the council during any one year without council approval or a member resigns.

#### V. Removal of Members

- A. According to KRS 156.132, the commissioner of education may recommend removal of a school council member whom he/she has reason to believe is guilty of immorality, misconduct in office, incompetence, willful neglect of duty or nonfeasance.
- B. A member of a school council may be removed from the council for cause, after an opportunity for hearing before the local board, by a vote of 4/5 of the membership of the board of education after the recommendation of the commissioner of education pursuant to KRS 156.132. Written notices setting out the charges for removal shall be spread on the minutes of the board and given to the members of the school council (KRS 160.347)

#### VI. Council Officers and Member Duties

##### A. Chairperson

1. The principal shall be the chairperson of the school council (as required by KRS 160.345).
2. Duties of the chair include:
  - a. Conducting school council meetings
  - b. Serving as official custodian of council records
  - c. Stating when a consensus is present for the record
  - d. Coordinating standing and ad hoc committees and monitoring committee progress
  - e. Carrying out any additional responsibilities /duties as stated in these by-laws
  - f. Maintaining a file of all correspondence to the school council (these records may only be discarded after having been brought to two (2) council meetings)
  - g. Other duties as described in the by-laws.

##### B. Vice-Chairperson

1. The vice chairperson shall be elected by the council members during the first official council meeting of the current term. The chairperson will accept not more than two (2) nominations. The council will elect, by consensus, a vice chairperson.
2. Duties of the vice chairperson include:
  - a. Preside over council meetings in the event the chair is absent.
  - b. Call a special meeting of the council in the event a principal vacancy occurs
  - c. Conduct meetings necessary for the principal hiring process to take place

##### C. Secretary

1. The chairperson shall appoint a secretary, and it cannot be council member.
2. Duties of the secretary shall include:
  - a. Record minutes of meetings
  - b. Prepare and distribute minutes to school staff and parent members
  - c. Prepare and post any policy changes in the SBDM manual
  - d. Advertise SBDM meetings in the local media

- e. Other duties at the discretion of the chairperson

#### D. Members

1. Duties of council members include:
  - a. Knowing and adhering to the mission, philosophy and goals of Boston School
  - b. Attending all council meetings, both regular and special
  - c. Encouraging and representing opinions from their constituencies
  - d. Supporting, promoting and communicating council decisions
  - e. Seeking information independently and as needed about issues brought before the school council and bringing that information to the school council.

#### VII. Record Keeping

##### A. Permanent Records

1. The council's secretary shall compile minutes in a notebook/binder for each school year to be kept on permanent file at Boston Elementary School.

##### B. Temporary Records

1. The chairperson or designee will distribute a copy of the minutes of the most recent meeting to be posted outside the school office and in the teachers' workroom. A copy of the minutes will be sent via email to each faculty member, the president of the PTA, each member of the school council and the superintendent.

#### VIII. Committees

##### A. Use of committees

Standing and ad hoc committees are established and encouraged from all stakeholders including certified and classified staff, parents, students, and community members. The council chairperson shall allocate a period of time at each meeting for reports of committee activities and shall serve the council as a resource for gathering data and information and making recommendations to the school council.

##### B. Subcommittee Structure and Process

###### 1. Standing Committees

Each of the following committees shall be a standing committee with membership open to all faculty and parents.

- a. Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment
- b. Culture & Climate
- c. Leadership

###### 2. Other Committees

The council, as needed, may create & dissolve ad hoc committees.

###### 3. Membership

- a. A faculty member may not be required to serve on more than two (2) committees, and council members not more than one (1) committee in addition to the SBDM council.
- b. Any parent who has a child enrolled in the school may serve on any or all committees.
- c. Any other interested community member may serve on any or all committees.
- d. Committee members will be given an opportunity to choose one of the three standing committees through a sign-up process.

4. Election of Chairperson
  - a. At the beginning of each school year, the committees will meet and elect their respective chairperson. All faculty and eligible parents, at the meeting, will have a vote.
  - b. A teacher or parent representative to the SBDM council shall not serve as a chairperson of a standing committee.
  - c. No faculty member or parent may serve as the chairperson of more than one committee except when there is no other eligible person to serve.
  - d. Duties / Responsibilities
    1. Prepare an agenda in conjunction with the principal
    2. Purpose all recommendations to the SBDM council according to the timelines.
    3. Oversee the evidence collection and completion of I & I forms for associated Comprehensive School Improvement Plan strategies/activities.
    4. Oversee the preparation of all documents
    5. Chairperson or designee is responsible for providing a monthly report to the SBDM council on progress of SIP and committee charges.
5. Election of Secretary
  - a. At the beginning of each school year, the committee will meet and elect their respective secretaries. All faculty and eligible parents, at the meeting, will have a vote.
  - b. Duties / Responsibilities
    1. Take minutes at committee meetings (to include members present)
    2. Prepare and disseminate minutes after the meeting (email or hard copy)
    3. Send notice of special meeting to the newspaper (other than regular meetings)
6. Meetings
  - a. The committee shall determine a specific monthly meeting date and time. The committee may call additional meetings as required to meet committee charges and timelines.
  - b. The committee shall be open to all members of the faculty, all parents and any member of the public.
  - c. Dates and times for committee meetings shall be posted for the public one week in advance of the scheduled regular meeting.
  - d. The committee's secretary shall be responsible for providing minutes to the principal and all committee members within one week of the meeting.
7. Process
  - a. SBDM Committees' Charges and Timelines
    - i. The principal will provide to the SBDM council a draft copy of the committee charges and timelines by the September regular meeting, annually.
    - ii. Collectively, the SBDM Council will review, discuss and approve the committee charges and timelines.
  - b. Committee Recommendation
    1. The committee chairperson shall propose all recommendations to the SBDM council. Once a recommendation from a standing committee is presented to the council, a member of the council may call a meeting of the committee of the whole (all interested faculty and parents of the PTA) to discuss the issue. Any recommended changes shall be referred to the

committee of origin for consideration. The committee of origin will, again, submit the proposal with any changes to the council who will then act upon the proposal.

c. Non-committee Recommendation

1. When the council, an individual or group outside the committee structure originates a proposal, the council will address the proposal.

IX. Conduct of Meetings

A. Quorum

1. A quorum shall consist of at least two (2) teacher members, one (1) parent member and the chair or vice chairperson.

B. Voting

All business and decisions will relate to the school's mission to improve the instructional program and/or further the goals of the school's improvement plan process. Decisions will be made by reaching a consensus. If after two (2) meetings a consensus cannot be reached, a vote can be taken. A simple majority of all members must then agree on any decision made. No proposed policy may be approved by the council at the same meeting at which it was initially proposed for study.

C. Closed Session

1. Definition – A closed session is a portion of a regular or special meeting of the council during which the council members meet in private. They may meet in closed session for the following reasons:
  - a. To discuss proposed or pending litigation by or against the council (KRS 61.810[1][c])
  - b. To discuss candidates for a principal vacancy or conduct consultation in filling other vacancies (KRS 61.810[1][f]).

2. Steps for Closed Session

Before a closed session can be conducted the following steps must be taken:

- a. Announcement Contents: An announcement of the general nature of the subject to be discussed and the specific section of the law that allows the conduct of the closed session must be announced in the open meeting and recorded in council minutes.
- b. Motion: A motion to go into closed session must be made, passed by a majority of the council members present and recorded in the council minutes.
- c. Closed Session: During the closed session, only the business stated in the announcement can be discussed and no action may be taken. No minutes are to be taken in closed session. The secretary may not enter the closed session. Details discussed in the closed session shall not be discussed outside the closed session.
- d. Decision: After full discussion of the issue in closed session, by motion the council must return to open session. During open session, the council may take any official action on the matter. Any action taken must be recorded in the council minutes.

D. Council Members' Responsibilities

1. The chairperson shall provide each member of the council with a binder that consists of copies of the council's by-laws, policies, Comprehensive School Improvement Plan, agendas, minutes, correspondence and additional documents.

2. The council secretary and all council members shall maintain his/her binder that contains copies of the council's by-laws, policies, annual budget, monthly spending reports, agendas and minutes. Upon leaving the council, the member shall turn in their binder with associated documents to the council chairperson.

#### E. Agenda

1. Anyone may submit items for inclusion on the agenda to the chairperson in writing by the Monday prior to a regularly scheduled council meeting. The principal shall maintain a complete file of these items.
2. The chairperson shall prepare a preliminary agenda for each regular council meeting, including items submitted in writing by the public, staff, parents, other council members and other items he/she believes should be on the agenda. The chairperson may declare an item received as not within the school council authority.
3. Each agenda shall include the following items:
  - a Call to Order
  - b Approve Agenda
  - c Approve Minutes of Last Meeting
  - d Budgets
  - e Committee Reports
  - f Audience Comments
  - g Discussion Items
  - h Action Items
  - i Identify Agenda Items for Next Meeting
  - j Adjourn
4. The preliminary agenda shall be distributed to all staff members, school or community persons who submitted items in writing for inclusion prior to the meeting. All staff members will also receive a copy of the agenda. A copy of the preliminary agenda will be mailed/faxed/emailed to the local news media.
5. Setting of the final agenda shall be the first order of business conducted at each regular council meeting. Council members may introduce issues for inclusion at this time. The agenda shall be approved by motion, second and consensus of the council. At a special called meeting, only the items listed on the notice of meeting can be discussed, and no new items can be introduced for discussion or inclusion on the agenda.

#### X. Communications

##### A. Open Communications

1. There shall be open communication between the school council, PTA, faculty and community.
2. All minutes of the school council meetings shall be made public and available to members of the largest parent teacher organization, as well as, to the faculty. The procedures to ensure public knowledge will consist of posting minutes in the entrance way, teachers workroom, through email and school website.
3. Suggestions or concerns may be voiced to council members, called into the office or given to the principal

##### B. Council Information

1. Each group comprising the educational community (principal, teachers, other professional staff, parents, school support staff, students, etc.) shall be regularly informed about council tasks and given a chance to offer perceptions, ideas, concerns and opinions related to those tasks.

XI. Amendments

The council may amend these by-laws annually or as needed. These by-laws may be amended after a first and second reading at two consecutive council meetings by consensus vote of the school council.

XII. Appeals of School Council Decisions

A. Request

For a person to appeal a decision of the council or file a grievance, he/she must first request in writing an opportunity to be heard and shall include information about the grievance issue.

B. Schedule

The council shall schedule a hearing within thirty (30) working days from the date that request is received.

C. Hearing

The person appealing may be represented by legal council and may call witnesses as long as testimony is germane to the issue.

D. Decision

The council shall consider the merits of the complaint, make a decision and respond in writing to the complaint.

E. Report

A copy of the written grievance or appeal, and a written reply by the council shall be provided to the superintendent within ten (10) working days of the council's decision.