

Morris Brandon School Council Bylaws

As Amended and Restated October 28, 2009

Article I: Name

A school council has been established in the Morris Brandon Elementary School on July 1, 2002. The name of this school council shall be the Morris Brandon School Council, hereinafter referred to as the school council, organized under the authority of state law (O.C.G.A. 20-2-85 – 20-2-86).

Article II: Purpose

The establishment of school councils is intended to help local boards of education by bringing parents and the community together with teachers and school administrators to create a better understanding of and mutual respect for each other's concerns and share ideas for school improvement. School councils shall represent the community of parents and businesses.

The members of the school council are accountable to the constituents they serve and shall:

1. Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
2. Regularly participate in school council meetings;
3. Participate in information and training programs;
4. Act as a link between the school council and the community;
5. Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community; and
6. Work to improve student achievement and performance.

Article III: School Council Authority

The school council shall advise and make recommendations to the principal, local board of education and local school superintendent on matters relating to school improvement and student achievement.

The school council shall participate in the selection of the school principal in accordance with the written policy of the local board of education.

The school council shall review and approve the school improvement plan.

The school council shall review school site budget and expenditure information, and site average class sizes by grade.

The school council has the authority to appoint committees, study groups, or task forces for such purposes as it deems helpful and may utilize existing or new school advisory groups.

The school council shall have the same immunity as the local board of education in all matters directly related to the functions of the school council.

Article IV: Role of the School Council

The school council provides advice and recommendations to the school principal and, when appropriate, the local board of education and local school superintendent, on any matter related to student achievement and school improvement, including but not limited to, the following:

1. School board policies;
2. School improvement plans;
3. Curriculum and assessments;
4. Report cards issued or audits of the school conducted by the Office of Student Achievement, if applicable;
5. Development of a school profile which shall contain data as identified by the school council to describe the academic performance, academic progress, services, awards, interventions, environment, and other such data as the school council deems appropriate;
6. School budget priorities, including school capital improvement plans;
7. School-community communication strategies;
8. Methods of involving parents and the community;
9. Extracurricular activities in the school;
10. School-based and community services;
11. Community use of school facilities;
12. Student discipline and attendance;
13. Reports from the principal regarding progress toward the school's student achievement goals, including progress within specific grade levels and subject areas and by school personnel; and
14. The method and specifications for the delivery of early intervention services or other appropriate services for underachieving students.

Article V: Membership

Membership on the school council shall be open to principals, teachers, parents, business representatives and other such members as the school council may specify in its bylaws. Members of the school council shall not receive compensation to serve on a school council. Members of the school council shall include:

1. A number of parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school, excluding employees who are parents or guardians, so that such parents or guardians make up a majority of the council at least two of whom shall be business persons;

2. At least two certificated teachers, excluding any personnel employed in administrative positions, who are employed at least four of the six school segments at the school;
3. The school principal; and
4. Other members as may be specified in the council bylaws.

Article VI: Terms

Subject to the paragraph below, council members shall generally be elected for two-year terms. Council members may serve more than one term.

In order to create and maintain staggered terms for each category (parents, teachers, businesspersons) of council members, election or appointment of a member to a one year term may be required.

Article VII: Elections

Elections shall take place in May. The term of office shall begin on June 1 and end on May 31.

The electing body for the parent members shall consist of all parents and guardians of students enrolled in the school and who will have a student enrolled in the school the following year.

The electing body for the teacher members shall consist of all certificated personnel eligible to serve as a teacher member of the school council.

The businesspersons shall be selected by the five nonbusinesspersons of the school council.

After providing notice in a conspicuous location at the school at least two weeks before the meeting of each electing body, the principal shall call a meeting of electing bodies during the month of May for the purpose of electing members of the school council. The principal may adopt procedures to conduct elections and will preside over the election process.

Article VIII: Vacancies

The position of a school council member shall be automatically vacated if:

1. A member resigns by delivering a written resignation to the school council;
2. A member no longer meets the qualifications specified by law; or
3. A member is removed by an action of the school council.

The school council may by a majority vote determine a position vacant if it finds that a member of the council is no longer active in the council due to inactivity.

If a business, parent, or teacher representative misses more than 3 meetings of the school council during a year, the chairperson of the school council shall contact the school council member and inquire as to his/her intent to remain active in the school council. The chairperson will report to the school council at its next meeting regarding the school council member's intention to remain active. The school council may determine by a majority vote whether to remove the school council member due to inactivity. The effective date will be determined by the school council.

An election within the electing body for a replacement to fill the remainder of an unexpired term shall be held within 30 days, unless there are 90 calendar days or less remaining in the term in which case the vacancy shall remain unfilled.

Article IX: Meetings

All meetings of the council shall be open to the public. The school council shall meet at least four times annually in a location determined by the chairperson. The council shall also meet at the call of the chairperson, or at the request of a majority of the members of the school council.

Notice by mail or email shall be sent to school council members at least seven days prior to a meeting and shall include the date, time and location of the meeting. School councils shall be subject to the Open Meetings Act in the same manner as local boards of education.

The school council secretary shall be responsible for providing notice of the meeting on the sign in front of the school and in the school newspaper at least twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting.

A quorum must be present in order to conduct official school council business. A quorum is comprised of a majority of school council members. Unless otherwise specified herein, every question shall be determined by a majority vote of members present. Each member of the school council is authorized to exercise one vote. Proxy votes are not allowed. Members must be present in order to vote.

Article X: Minutes

School councils shall be subject to the Open Records Act, relating to the inspection of public records, in the same manner as local boards of education. The minutes shall be provided to the school council members, each of whom shall receive a copy of such minutes, within 20 days following each school council meeting. The official minutes shall be open to public inspection once approved by the school council immediately following the next regular meeting of the school council.

Minutes at a minimum shall include the names of the school council members present at the meeting, a description of each motion or other proposal made, and a record of all votes. In the case of a roll-call vote, the name of each school council member voting for or against a proposal or abstaining shall be recorded. 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 persons voting against the proposal or abstaining.

Article XI: Officers of the School Council

The officers of the school council shall be a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. Officers of the school council shall be elected at the first meeting of the school council following the election of school council members. The term of the officers of the school council shall be two years, except as provided in Article VI hereof.

A parent member shall be the chairperson of the school council. The chairperson shall develop the agenda for all meetings, preside at all meetings of the school council, and perform such other duties as required by law or as shall be requested by the school council.

The vice chairperson shall, in the absence of the chairperson, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the chairperson and shall perform such other duties as shall be requested by the school council.

The secretary shall act as the clerk of the school council, record all votes and minutes of all proceedings, give notice of all meetings of the school council, and shall perform such other duties as may be required by law or as shall be requested by the school council.

Article XII: Duties of the Principal

The school principal shall have the following duties pertaining to school councils:

1. Cause to be created a school council by convening the appropriate bodies to select school council members; setting the initial agenda, meeting time, and location; and notifying all school council members of the same;
2. Perform all of the duties required by law and the bylaws of the council;
3. Communicate all school council requests for information and assistance to the local school superintendent and inform the school council of responses or actions of the local school superintendent;
4. Develop the school improvement plan and school operation plan and submit the plans to the school council for its review, comments, recommendations, and approval;
5. Aid in the development of the 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.

Article XIII: Board of Education Responsibilities

The local board of education shall provide all information not specifically made confidential by law, including but not limited to, school site budget and expenditure information and site average class sizes by grade, to the school council as requested or as required by state law or state board rule.

The local board shall designate an employee of the school system to attend school council meetings as requested by a school council for the purpose of responding to questions the school council may have concerning information provided to it by the local board or actions taken by the local board. The central administration shall respond to requests for information from a school council.

The local board of education shall receive and consider all recommendations of the school council, including the annual report, as follows:

1. Public notice shall be given to the community of the local board's intent to consider school council reports or recommendations;
2. Written notice shall be given to the members of the school council at least seven days prior to such local board meeting, along with a notice of intent to consider a school council report or recommendation;
3. The members of the school council shall be afforded an opportunity to present information in support of the school council's report or recommendation; and
4. The local board of education shall respond to each recommendation of the school council within 60 calendar days after being notified in writing of the recommendation.

The local board of education shall provide a training program to assist schools in forming a school council and to assist school council members in the performance of their duties. Such program shall address the organization of school councils; their purpose and responsibilities; applicable laws, rules regulations and meeting procedures; important state and local school system program requirements; and a model school council organization plan.

Additional training programs shall be offered to school council members annually.

Article XIV: Bylaws

The school council shall adopt the bylaws as it deems appropriate to conduct the business of the school council. The adoption of bylaws or changes thereto requires five affirmative votes.

Article XV: Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the governing parliamentary authority for school councils in all cases applicable but not inconsistent with these bylaws.