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Muscota New School (PS 314)

School Leadership Team Bylaws

Article I

The name of the Team shall be the Muscota New School (PS314) Leadership Team herein referred to as The MNS Team or SLT.

Article II

MISSION STATEMENT

We at Muscota New School believe that all children come to school with a desire to make sense of the world. Our school provides a safe, nurturing environment in which all children can experiment, reflect, develop understandings, make connections and become active participants in their own learning. They work to accomplish this on a daily basis by engaging with their environment, by interacting with people and educational materials, through their own inquiry, and by following their own innate curiosity towards the goal of becoming lifelong learners. The focus of the school is on the learner, both adult and child, as we encourage everyone to use their minds well. The adults of the community (educators and families) develop and celebrate each person's strengths and talents.

The MNS is committed to mirroring the diversity of the community within our classrooms, both in student population and teaching staff.

In this respect, the School Leadership Team will uphold the mission statement of Muscota New School.

Article III

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The MNS and the School Leadership Team are committed to working with all stakeholders in the MNS to create an environment that cultivates critical thinking skills and a lifelong love of learning. The School Leadership Team will promote inclusiveness, encourage excellence, and support independence, exploration, and concern for community. The SLT will also promote collaboration at all levels, including families, teachers, administrators and community members.

The goals and objectives of the MNS Leadership Team are to:

1. Act in the best interest of MNS to preserve our most valuable foundations of collaboration, decision making, progressive education, and small school status.
2. Assure that each constituency is represented by a member of the SLT.
3. Disseminate information related to the roles and responsibilities of the SLT to core members.
4. Review, discuss, and help develop the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan.
5. Review and discuss budgetary matters with the principal as they relate to the Comprehensive Educational Plan.
6. Assure that the concerns and needs of all constituents are heard and addressed.
7. Function according to democratic principals.
8. Focus our efforts on establishing policies that contribute to the school's mission of providing relevant, meaningful, learner-centered education to a culturally/socio-economically diverse community.
9. As per Article V, section 4.3 the SLT will act as the appeal board when existing structures fail to resolve a conflict within the Muscota Community.

Article IV

TEAM COMPOSITION

Section 1: Team Eligibility/Membership

Six (6) members of the SLT shall be limited to parents, legally appointed guardians, or persons in parental relation to students currently enrolled in MNS. The balance of the team shall be limited to staff currently working at MNS.

- 1.1 The team will be composed of equal number of staff and parent representatives, not exceeding 12 members altogether: currently 6 staff members, and 6 parent members for a total of 12 members.
- 1.2 The Principal or his/her designee is a core member.
- 1.3 The UFT representative or his/her designee is a core member.
- 1.4 The PA President or his/her designee is a core member.
- 1.5 Teachers will be chosen by the MNS staff through consensus. When possible, teachers will be chosen to represent each MNS grade and/ or cohort configuration.
- 1.6 When possible, one parent will be chosen to represent each MNS grade configuration for a total of 5 parents (with the exception of the PA President).
- 1.7 All efforts will be made to represent all grade groups and out of classroom/collaborative staff.
- 1.8 The team may, by consensus, create a seat on the team for community based organizations.
- 1.9 The Team member representing a community based organization will not be counted in the parent to school staff balance, but will be counted in the total team count.
- 1.10 Recommendations for a community based team member will be done on an annual basis.
- 1.11 From this configuration, the Team's Chairperson will be selected **by consensus of the group.**
- 1.12 From this configuration a note taker will be selected by consensus of the group.
- 1.13 The team will make an effort to ensure that both parents and staff reflect the cultural diversity of the school community.
- 1.14 To ensure democratic balance, the Principal will not serve as Chair of the SLT.

Section 2: Length of Term

- 2.1 The length of term for team members (with the exception of core members) shall be two years, provided the team member(s) is eligible to serve in accordance with the Chancellor's Regulation A-655.
- 2.2 A Team member may run for a second consecutive term.
- 2.3 Team members may not serve for more than two consecutive terms.
- 2.4 If no other willing, eligible candidate is identified for a particular team constituent group, the member(s) may be elected for a third term, if the member is still eligible in accordance with Chancellor's regulations A-655.
- 2.5 Terms of non-core member parents shall be staggered to ensure continuity.

Section 3: Duties of Membership

Team members are responsible for reviewing and helping to develop the school's Comprehensive Education Plan in a manner that supports collaboration, by sharing their ideas and concerns, listening to the ideas and concerns of others, and working on constructive solutions that meet the needs of all students in the school. Team members are also responsible for:

- 3.1 Regular and punctual attendance at SLT meetings.
- 3.2 Participation in team professional development, if applicable and if funding permits.
- 3.3 Acting as liaisons to the constituents represented on the team.
- 3.4 Acting on constructive recommendations that serve the school community in an unbiased and fair manner in consultation with the entire SLT.

Article V **TEAM MEETINGS**

Section 1: Schedule of meetings

- 1.1 The Team shall meet once a month throughout the school year.
- 1.2 The meetings shall be conducted in an MNS classroom.
- 1.3 The schedule of monthly meetings shall be determined at the first meeting of the school year and distributed to all members.

Section 2: Special Meetings

- 2.1 Anyone on the SLT can request a special meeting and must do so through the SLT Chairperson.
- 2.2 A request for a special meeting can be made to the SLT Chairperson once all other avenues of resolution have been exhausted.
- 2.3 The special meeting shall be called by the Chairperson or his/her designee.
- 2.4 When a special meeting is determined to be necessary, members will be notified by the Chairperson as soon as possible, ideally 1 week in advance.
- 2.5 Business will be conducted if quorum is met.
- 2.6 Decisions will be made by consensus, see article VII, section 1, 1.1, "Decision Making Process."

Section 3: Agenda Items/Order of Business

- 3.1 Agenda items for the year shall be outlined by the team by the second official meeting and then by consensus of the team. Additional New Business items will be introduced and prioritized at the end of each regularly scheduled meeting.
- 3.2 Unless voted otherwise for a specific meeting, the order of business shall be as follows:
 - ❖ Call to order

- ❖ Reading and approval of Minutes
- ❖ Principal's Report
- ❖ PA Report
- ❖ Old Business
- ❖ New Business
- ❖ Adjournment

3.3 Any requests by Team members for suggested topics should be submitted to the Chair in writing and introduced to the SLT as soon as possible.

3.4 Agendas will be submitted to the SLT members at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting.

Section 4: Observers and Guest Speakers

4.1 All Team meetings are open to observers.

4.2 Non SLT members are encouraged to bring issues/concerns to their constituent representative on the SLT first. The SLT constituent representative will then make a request through the Chair for the issue of concern to be placed on the agenda. (see Article V, section 3.3) Concerns may also be brought to the Chair of the SLT.

4.3 Non-team members wishing to speak must contact the SLT Chair and request a place on the agenda at least one week prior to the SLT meeting. Letters to the Chair must clearly state the reason for the request, describe the situation, and include all resolutions/suggestions made.

Section 5: Quorum

5.1 In order for official business to be conducted, a simple majority, which includes representation of 7 members, shall constitute a quorum. Included in this number will be 2 Core members or their designees.

5.2 Each constituency shall be responsible for ensuring that its group is adequately represented at the meeting.

Section 6: Minutes

6.1 A note taker shall be elected by consensus by the members of the Team.

6.2 The minutes shall be typed and emailed to the Chairperson for distribution to the Team members. Hard copies of the minutes will be distributed at the next meeting.

6.3 Minutes will be emailed to group members. However there will be no cross conversations regarding minutes or SLT business via email.

6.4 Minutes approved by the SLT will be the only recognized official minutes of the School Leadership Team meetings.

Article VI

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF CORE TEAM MEMBERS

Section 1: Role of the Chair:

- 1.1 Represent the Team as Team contact person.
- 1.2 Ensure that all agenda items are addressed and time limits respected.
- 1.3 Coordinate the dissemination of information to all Team members.
- 1.4 Serve as the facilitator of Team discussions.
- 1.5 Interface with the Principal and Team Members regarding the functioning of the School Leadership Team.
- 1.6 Ensure that meeting processes are respectfully followed by all SLT members.
- 1.7 Ensure that members maintain their focus on educational issues and secure all records of the team.
- 1.8 In the case of an emergency, the chair may appoint a designee to represent him or herself for a particular meeting.

Section 2: Role of the Principal:

- 2.1 The principal is the instructional and administrative leader of the school.
- 2.2 As the instructional leader of the school the principal ensures that curriculum design and implementation across grades and disciplines follows New York City and State standards and expectations.
- 2.3 The Principal is responsible for providing the team with information about Department of Education initiatives and directives, budgetary updates, hiring committee updates, all other relevant committee updates, and MNS program initiatives.

Section 3: Role of Parent Association President:

- 3.1 It is the role of the Parent Association President to bring parent concerns and issues to the SLT.
- 3.2 It is the PA President's responsibility to keep the parent body informed as to decision-making arrived at by the SLT.
- 3.3 The PA president is responsible for providing the team with information about Department of Education parent initiatives and directives, PA budgetary updates, all relevant committee updates, and MNS parent program initiatives.

Section 4: Role of the UFT Representative or Designee:

- 4.1 Responsible for dissemination of information to his/her constituency.
- 4.2 Responsible for ensuring that SLT decision-making is in compliance/aligned with UFT contract.

Article VII

DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES

Section 1: Decision making methods of the team.

1.1 Team recommendations shall be made to the Community Superintendent by consensus. The consensus process is finding a creative solution that synthesizes the ideas and concerns put forward by all members of the team. The decision will be one that the entire team can “live with.” The steps to follow for consensus are:

- Proposal put forward (orally and in writing)
- Through discussion, the Facilitator (Chair) assists the team in clarifying issues and ensuring all participants have a voice in the discussion
- Any modifications or amendments to the original proposal are made through earnest discussion (orally and in writing)
- Facilitator asks if there are any objections or reservations
- Facilitator allows time for reflection
- If there are no objections or reservation raised, final version of the proposal should be articulated (orally and in writing)
- All members shall participate in the go-around.
- Call for consensus, which is defined as reaching a decision that all members of the SLT can “live with.”

1.2 If the Team is at an impasse, the issue shall be tabled until the next meeting.

1.3 When consensus cannot be reached by the Team, SLT will seek assistance from the DLT, then the Superintendent.

1.4 Training in conflict resolution shall be made available, if necessary.

Article VIII

COMMITTEES

Section 1: Ad Hoc Committees:

Ad hoc committees may be formed at the discretion of the SLT.

1.2 The duties of the committee shall be decided by the SLT through consensus.

1.3 The duration of the committee shall be decided by the SLT through consensus.

1.4 Membership of the Ad hoc committee must include one MNS staff member.

1.5 Ad Hoc committees are to report to the SLT as deemed necessary.

Article IX

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Section 1: Attendance of members will be recorded by the note taker within all SLT minutes at every meeting.

Section 2: Any member who fails to attend (3) SLT regularly scheduled or additional Emergency SLT meetings will be notified in writing by the Chairperson of the SLT.

2.1 The member shall be removed from office by recommendation of the SLT or from a member and two-thirds vote of the membership present.

2.2 The Teams notice and agenda must cite that a vote will be taken by the membership as a disciplinary action against an SLT member.

Section 5: Team members who behave in a manner that is disruptive and undermines the work of the Team will be removed by consensus by the remaining Team members.

Section 7: The member shall be officially notified in writing by the team of its decision.

Section 8: The letter shall be signed by the Chairperson and shall be sent registered return receipt mail delivery to ensure proper notification and receipt.

Recommendation for the removal of a Team member will be followed by a special meeting to be held within 10 days of the Chair's receipt of the recommendation.

This will be a Special Meeting. Decisions regarding removal of a team member will be made through **consensus of the membership present.**

Article X

AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Review of the By-Laws shall be done at least once every three years.

Section 2: By-Laws may be amended by consensus at any regularly scheduled meeting provided. All Team members are notified that a by-law amendment has been placed on the agenda. A copy of the proposed amendment is sent to all members of the District Leadership Team one week prior to the meeting.

Section 3. Relationship to New York State law and Chancellor's Regulations.

3.1: Nothing in these by-laws may be in opposition to the laws of the State and City of New York or with the Agreement Entered in by the Board of Education and/or the Chancellor's Regulations A-655.