

# Guidelines for the Edison Parent Council

## 1. Purpose/Mission

- 1.1 The Parent Council is a group of Edison parents who:
  - 1.1.1 Serve as ambassadors, fostering communication and a sense of community among all parents;
  - 1.1.2 Support parent and community volunteerism at the school;
  - 1.1.3 Coordinate projects and initiatives that contribute to the school;
  - 1.1.4 Advocate to the 4j district, regional and state policymakers, the needs of elementary children at Edison and throughout Oregon.
- 1.2 Edison Parent Council serves the school community through:
  - 1.2.1 Fundraising,
  - 1.2.2 Community Building,
  - 1.2.3 Advising,
  - 1.2.4 Enrichment

## 2. Membership

- 2.1 All parents and primary caregivers with children attending Edison are eligible to be members of Parent Council.
- 2.2 Members are encouraged to attend a majority of the monthly meetings and be actively engaged in Parent Council-sponsored activities through volunteer leadership or support.
- 2.3 To be a voting member, members must attend a minimum of three meetings per school year and be actively engaged in Parent Council-sponsored activities through volunteer leadership or support. If a vote takes place within the first three months of the school year, a member may vote if they met attendance and service thresholds from the previous school year.
- 2.4 Members are encouraged to participate in Parent Council each year. There is no upper limit to the number of years a member can participate. It is the goal for at least 50% of the membership to continue the following year.
- 2.5 Number of Members: Ideally, the Parent Council will have at least 15-20 members.
- 2.6 Balance of Members: The membership of Parent Council will ideally include: parents with children at various grade levels; parents from active committee groups, such as Site Council and fundraising/community event coordinators, as well as parents with experience with various programs, such as special education, TAG, and after school care.
- 2.7 Diversity: The Parent Council will aim to reflect the diversity within the school, including members that are from (a) both genders; (b) families of various structures (single parents, gay and lesbian parents, grandparents taking on the parenting role, etc.); (c) families including people of various races, cultures, ethnicities, national origins, and disabilities; and (d) families of various socio-economic statuses.
- 2.8 Communication: Members foster communication with other Edison parents by listening to others' ideas and bringing ideas and input to meetings. Members also share information from the meetings with other parents. To further promote communication, members may be listed in the Parent Council

newsletter, Edison Parent Council or Edison Elementary website, or any other paper, email or web-based publication for the school.

### **3. Recruitment of New Members**

- 3.1 Recruitment efforts are designed to be inclusive. Efforts to recruit new members may include any or all of the following: Parent Council newsletter articles, posters at the school entrance or Parent Council board, word-of-mouth, email, or any other web-based communication.
- 3.2 An announcement or presentation will be made by one or more Officers at the beginning of the new school year, and during relevant Kindergarten and new parent/family orientations to inform and encourage involvement in Parent Council.
- 3.3 Ideally, new members participate in the first Parent Council meeting of the year in which they learn about the (a) role of Parent Council members; (b) meeting processes; (c) budget; (d) responsibility grid; (e) status of current projects, initiatives, and committees; (f) guidelines for the amount of time members generally contribute; and (g) Council goals for the year.
- 3.4 New members added at other times in the school year will be oriented by one or more Officers.

### **4. Roles of the Executive Committee Officers**

- 4.1 The Executive Committee consists of five Officers: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Volunteer Coordinator. All terms are one year; the Vice President will normally serve a one-year term as President immediately after serving as Vice President for one year.
- 4.2 The President oversees Parent Council activities and volunteers, sets meeting agendas in consultation with the Executive Committee and principal, leads monthly Parent Council meetings, tracks calendar dates for all parent-led events, follows up with event coordinators, recruits event coordinators and Parent Council officers, and acts as an ambassador for the Edison parent community. The President and Vice President share the responsibility of leading the group and coordinating meetings. They are expected to work as a team, focusing on meeting the objectives and overall purpose of the group. They enforce group agreements and ground rules delineated in this document. They work to make the group experience as effective and successful as possible.
- 4.3 The Vice President provides support to the President in all functions listed above, leads Parent Council meetings when the President is absent, shares communication responsibility with the Secretary, and acts as an ambassador for the Edison parent community.
- 4.4 The Secretary works with the President and Vice President to develop and implement the Parent Council communication plan, shares communication responsibility with the Vice President or works with communication volunteers, and takes meeting minutes.
- 4.5 The Treasurer works with the President and Vice President to develop and implement the fundraising plan, tracks parent-generated funds raised and expended, helps recruit fundraising event coordinators, and aids the President and Vice President in oversight of fundraising event coordinators.
- 4.6 The Volunteer Coordinator works with other Officers and event coordinators to recruit event coordinators and other volunteers, working closely with Officers and volunteers who manage communication with the Edison parent community.

### **5. Transition of Leadership**

- 5.1 It is recommended that the Vice President become the President after one year of service. Site Council Representatives use staggered two-year terms.

5.1.1 Parent Council votes for Parent Council Officers and Site Council Representatives as outlined in this document.

5.2 The office of the President will have at least one year's membership in Parent Council prior to serving as President. The candidate must have attended the majority of Parent Council meetings. It is recommended that the other the Officers of the Executive Committee should have similar qualifications.

5.3 Site Council Representatives must have at least one-year's membership in Parent Council. The candidate must have attended the majority of Parent Council meetings.

5.4 In February, Parent Council begins considering the transition of leadership. This is the time when Site Council leadership changes are also considered. It is recommended that these processes be coordinated so that parent leaders are well placed in both Councils.

5.5 By the May meeting, the Parent Council will elect new Officers for Parent Council and a new Representative for Site Council by Parent Council through a closed paper ballot. The new terms for both Councils will begin on the last day of school of the year following the election.

## 6. **Decision-Making**

6.1 The Responsibility Grid outlines which group (Site Council, Principal, Certified Staff, Classified Staff, Parent Council and Students) has responsibility for specific decisions.

6.2 The Parent Council strives to reach consensus where differences of opinion are acknowledged and discussed. If consensus cannot be achieved, a vote with an agreed upon majority will convey the decision of the group. Generally, a majority of 80% of attendees is required to carry a motion.

6.3 Consensus is where:

6.3.1 All members have an opportunity for input.

6.3.2 All members feel heard and understood.

6.3.3 All members agree the proposal is acceptable (i.e. it is something all members can "live with").

6.4 Surveying/polling is recommended to confirm consensus. In some cases, where consensus is not clear, show of hands, paper ballot, or electronic survey may be used to reach a decision.

6.5 It is critical that the Parent Council understands the responsibility grid and the decision making process before an agenda topic is discussed.

6.6 No member or officer, without the vote of the Parent Council, will in any way or manner commit the Council to any policy or action.

6.7 The guidelines in this document are reviewed annually by Parent Council. The guidelines can be changed according to the decision-making guidelines.

## 7. **Meeting Management**

7.1 Meeting Schedules:

7.1.1 Parent Council will strive to have monthly meetings that occur on a consistent day, time and place to better support the Council's purpose.

7.1.2 Additional Parent Council meetings can be called by the President and Vice President. These meetings should have specific and clear objectives.

7.2 Agendas

- 7.2.1 Each meeting will have an agenda.
- 7.2.2 Members can suggest agenda topics up to a specific time and date before the monthly meeting takes place.
- 7.2.3 Agenda topics should include: Topic, Objective, Lead Person, and Time Requested.
- 7.2.4 The Executive Committee and Principal work together to develop the final agenda and have it available to the group before the meeting.
- 7.3 There are no formal quorum requirements. The President and Vice President determine if there are not enough members present to make decisions.
- 7.4 All Edison parents and caregivers are welcome to attend Parent Council meetings.
- 7.5 It is suggested that each spring, a portion of a meeting is reserved for a goal setting process in which the Council determines goals, projects and committees for the following school year.

## 8. **Committees**

- 8.1 A majority of the “work” of the Parent Council is done by committee, outside of the monthly meetings of the full Council. Committees work in conjunction with the Principal, who is welcome to be a member of all committees. Regardless of whether or not the Principal is an active member of a committee, the committee maintains regular communication with the Principal and one or more Officers.
- 8.2 It is recommended that committees also include parents who are not members of Parent Council to broaden input and spread out the workload.
- 8.3 All committees should have a coordinator or co-coordinators for that committee.
- 8.4 At Parent Council meetings, committees report on their progress and ask for full Council input on major issues. Occasionally, committees may need to implement decisions quickly. This is permitted, as long as there is approval of the Principal and discussion with an appropriate Parent Council Officer.
- 8.5 Committees document their decisions and keep good records for the events they plan, to aid future committees.

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Revised and approved February 2015.

Approved as written February 2016.