

## **Dixon Middle School Community Council**

In Utah the annual distribution from the permanent fund, where revenue from school trust lands

is deposited, is distributed to every public school in the state through the School LAND Trust

Program. Site-based committees prepare plans, approved by local school boards that identify

an academic need and a proposed solution using the annual dividend. The Purpose of Dixon Middle School Community Council is wisely expending School LAND Trust Program money for the improvement of students' education through collaboration among parents and guardians, school employees, and the local school board.

### **Rules of Order and Procedure**

To promote ethical behavior and civil discourse each council member shall:

- Attend council meetings on time and prepared
- Make decisions with the needs of students as the main objective
- Listen to and value diverse opinions
- Be sure the opinions of those you represent are included in discussions
- Expect accountability and be prepared to be accountable
- Act with integrity

### **Rules of Procedure:**

- All meetings are open to the public and the public is welcome to attend
- Public comments will be included as a standing agenda item at the beginning of each meeting. Members of the public will be granted up to 5 minutes each to present to the council (or up to 10 minutes per group on the same issue) with no more than 15 minutes of each meeting devoted to public comments. Issues discussed during public comment will not be voted on at that meeting but may be discussed by the council and brought to a vote in subsequent meetings, if needed.
- The agenda of each upcoming meeting with draft minutes of the prior meeting will be made available to all council members and to the public at least one week in advance.
- Minutes will be kept of all meetings, prepared in draft format for approval at the next scheduled meeting and posted on the school website in draft format one week after each meeting and in final form one week after the meeting in which they are approved.
- Dixon School Community Council will have 10 members, with a minimum majority of 2 parent members.
- The council will prepare a timeline for the school year that includes due dates for all required reporting and other activities that the council agrees to assume or participate in. The timeline will assist in preparation of agendas to be sure the council accomplishes their work in a timely manner.

- The chair of the committee must be a parent member.
- The chair conducts the meeting, makes assignments and requests reports on assignments. In the absence of the chair, the vice-chair shall conduct meetings.
- Meetings shall be conducted and action taken according to very simplified rules of parliamentary procedure as required in 53A-1a-108.1(9)(i). Items on the agenda take priority over other discussions coming before the council. Action of the council will be taken by motions and voting. The motions and voting are recorded in minutes.
- A motion (or an action to be taken by the council) is stated as a motion. Someone else on the council “seconds” the motion indicating that at least one other person on the council feels the motion is worthy of discussion. Then the council members may provide input and discussion as called upon by the chair. When discussion seems complete the chair may call for a vote on the motion. Or when a member of the council “calls the previous question” ( a motion to end discussion of the first motion), a second is required and then, without discussion the chair calls for a vote that must pass by 2/3. If the vote on the previous question fails the council goes back to discussing the first motion. If the motion to call the previous question passes, the chair directly calls for a vote on the first motion. A vote to call the previous question is usually used to move business along. (See chart for more Parliamentary Procedure information.)
- Items may only be voted on if they are noted as action items in the agenda for that meeting.
- Since items needing action require a quorum (majority) be present to vote if a Community Council Member misses more than 2 meetings, that member can be dismissed and a new member of the council will be nominated and invited to fill the position.

### **Dixon Middle School Community Council Elections**

- The Elections for Dixon Middle School Community Council will be held in September and before October 15th of each year and must remain the same for at least four years. (2011-2015)
- A notice to parents will go out at least 10 days prior to the election that includes the open positions, how to file, and when and where the election will be held.
- If there is not a contested race, the school need not hold an election.
- When more candidates file for parent positions or staff positions than there are vacancies, the school must hold a formal election. (R277-491-3(F))

- Elections are overseen by the principal, or designee, and are conducted by means of secret ballots. Ballots for parent elections are deposited in a secure ballot box. Parents elect parent members and the staff elects staff members. (53A-1a-108(5)(a-b))
- Results of the elections shall be maintained for three years and made available to the public upon request. ( 53A-1a-108(5)(d))
- There are no term limits for parent/guardians. They may serve if they have a child attending the school during at least one year of the two-year term.
- Dixon Middle School Community Council will consist of 10 members and members' terms are to be staggered so that approximately half of the council is up for election each year. The council must have at least two more parent/guardian members than school staff members, including the principal.
- After the council is seated, the council elects a chair and vice-chair. The chair is a parent member and the vice-chair may be a parent member or an employee member.
- The principal notifies the local board of the membership of the SCC by submitting the Membership Form online each fall as part of fall reporting for the School LAND Trust Program. (53A-1a-108(5)(g))

### **Notifications to Parents – Mandatory Information for School Websites**

Prior to November 16th of each year, the principal will post the following on the school website and in the school office:

- Names and contact information (direct email, phone or both) for each member of the council
- Proposed school community council meeting schedule for the year
- A summary of the implementation of the School LAND Trust Program Plan completed in the prior school year. This includes accomplishments and how the money was spent.
- Dixon Middle School Community Council will publish agendas and minutes on the school website and post meeting notification on the school door and make minutes available in the office to all parents who do not have internet access with the understanding that School LAND Trust Program funds are not to be used to provide parent notifications.
- Rules of Procedure and Timelines must also be available on the school website throughout the year.

### **Local School Boards Provide Annual Training**

- Local school boards shall provide annual training for school community council members including training for council officers on their responsibilities.
- They are to be trained about the requirements in law (two School Community Council sections,

the School LAND Trust Program section and the School Improvement Plan section) and resources available to them on the School LAND Trust website.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Dixon Middle School Community Council**

- The Council reviews UPASS testing data and other reliable data to determine the needs of the students. (53A-1a-108.5 (1))
- The Council creates a school improvement plan (SIP). (53A-1a-108(3)(a)(i) )
- The Council assists in the creation of a professional development plan. (53A-1a-108(3)(a)(iii) )
- The Council creates and submits the online School LAND Trust Plan, an academic subset of the SIP. (53A-1a-108(3)(a)(ii))
- The Council appoints subcommittees or task forces as desired that may include participants other than elected SCC members (parents, staff, students, community members, etc.). (53A-1a-108(6))
- The Council advises school and district administration and the local school board on local and district school issues. (53A-1a-108(3)(iv))
- Upon request of the local school board, the Council provides information to assist the local board in resolving issues of local concern. The Council is encouraged to advise and inform the local board members.(R277-491-6(G))
- The Council provides ongoing support in implementation of approved plans. (53A-1a-108.5(7), (53A-16-101.5(5)(d)), (53A-3-701(1) , (53A-1-606.5(3))
- The Council shall encourage participation on the Community Council, including recruiting potential applicants to apply for open positions on the council. (R277-491-7(B))
- Dixon Middle School Community Council also assumes the responsibilities relating to school safety.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Dixon Middle School Community Council Officers**

Responsibilities of the chair may be delegated to members of the council, as reasonable and needed. The chair is responsible to be sure delegated assignments are completed. The principal supports the officers in completing the requirements in the law and board rule.

- Prepare School Community Council Agendas, honor agendas and time constraints. Items needing action must be included on the agenda and a quorum (majority) of the council must be present to vote.

- Conduct School Community Council Meetings, encouraging participation by all members.
- Assure minutes are kept, taking special care to assure motions and votes are accurately recorded. Votes on approval of the School LAND Trust plan need to be kept by the number voting for, against and absent. Minutes are prepared for posting on the school website.
- Prepare a yearly timeline that includes all required (and other) tasks to assist in preparation of each agenda, assuring councils have the necessary lead time to complete responsibilities, including the following:
  - review of school data, assessments (as they are made available) and demographic information
  - review of current plan implementation, preparation, amending and voting on required new plans, before they are submitted to the local school board
  - tasks related to member elections, filling vacant positions after an election, and election of officers
- Provide opportunities for increased involvement of parents and school employees by encouraging issues of concern to be heard and considered by the council, to include non-elected parents and staff on task forces and subcommittees, as needed, and provide input to administration and the local school board of needs and issues of the school and school community.
- Encourage and model collaboration.
- Establish clear, written procedures and timelines consistent with Utah law, board rules, and local board policies about member and officer elections and other procedures councils are responsible for, including rules outlining parliamentary order and procedure, ethical behavior and civil discourse.

With assistance from the school administration, the chair shall:

- Assure that all meetings are open to the public and encourage participation by parents and school employees.
- Assure training is provided to the council about their responsibilities, understanding assessments, mission and goals of the district and school, and resources available on the School LAND Trust website.
- On behalf of the council, provide ongoing support for implementation of approved school action plans.
- Provide notice to parents by posting the following information on the school website, in the

school office and to parents without access to the internet. Posting of election information is encouraged.

- o At least one week prior to council meetings - Agenda and draft minutes of the prior meeting.
- By November 16th of each year – Meeting schedule of council meetings for the year,  
List of school community council members: including contact email and/or phone numbers,  
Summary of the School LAND Trust Program Final Report each fall for the prior year, A  
statement about the opportunity for parents to serve on the school community council and  
make decisions about the School LAND Trust Program funding, Funding amounts for each  
year from the School LAND Trust Program (link to School LAND Trust website SCHOOL Funding page), Rules of Order and Procedure.
- Work with the principal to provide notice of the election at least 10 days in advance to parents and staff of council positions that are up for election, how to apply, the date, time and location of the election. The election may be conducted in the spring if it is completed prior to the last week of the school year OR near the beginning of the school year. The time of the election should be consistent for at least four years. If the council chooses to hold the election in the spring, all parents who would vote if the election were held in the fall are encouraged to file, run and vote.

### **The School Principal and his/her Role on the School Community Council**

The school principal is the Chief Executive Officer and instructional leader of the school. He or she is responsible for providing clear expectations for faculty and other school employees, to create an atmosphere of trust and enthusiasm, to provide opportunities for employees to succeed and grow, and to reward excellence and progress toward excellence. In addition, as managers, principals are expected to assure the legal compliance of school processes, to be accountable for all fiscal matters, and to manage human and other resources while creating a safe, creative, and productive school. They encourage participation from students, staff, parents, and the community as they work toward having a successful school of which all can be proud. Principals are responsible to the district administration and have many specific responsibilities and timelines related to school community councils but may not act as chair, vice-chair or co-chair.

### **Duties and Responsibilities for the Dixon Middle School Principal in his/her Role as a School Community Council Member**

- Have a working knowledge of R277-491 School Community Councils and R277-477 Distribution of Funds from the Interest and Dividend Account (School LAND Trust Funds) and Administration of the School LAND Trust Program.
- Provide notice of the annual School Community Council (SCC) elections, oversee the elections and provide an assurance that the elections, and subsequent appointments of unfilled positions, were conducted according to the law.
- Make copies of the School Mission Statement, and any district policies and timelines applicable to school community councils, available to the SCC. Encourage councils to support the goals in the School Mission Statement in school plans the council is responsible for.
- Make assessments of stakeholders, school and community.
- Insure that data is collected, evaluated, and utilized by the school and the SCC in their decision making process.
- Insure that the law pertaining to use of the school's share of the proceeds from the permanent fund are followed.
- Provide meaningful time for faculty and community in-service.
- Provide tools and dates for effective assessment.
- Be a model for collaboration.
- Build and nurture school partnerships with the community.
- Support the council in discussing issues of interest that are not inconsistent with Utah law, board rule or district policy.
- Complete the forms, assurances and reports required for school plans the school community council is responsible for.
- Assist the school community council chair in completing the requirements of the chair outlined in board rules.
- Work with the council chair to assure that required school website information is posted according to required timelines.

### **Parent Members of Community Councils**

Parents act as the primary advocates for all children. By working as a group and understanding the legal responsibilities that lie with the principal, parents ensure the representation of various viewpoints and values within the community.

Parent engagement is a key element to student achievement and student progress. Parents have at least a two-member majority of a school community council, and are often the driving force. Parents will serve as chair and may serve as vice-chair. It is important that parents on the council understand the responsibilities of the council,

and are able to collaborate well with the other members of the council to effect meaningful school improvement for all children.

### **Duties and Responsibilities for Parent Members of the Dixon Middle School Community Council**

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of school community councils and the importance of participation as an elected parent member. Recognize that the primary responsibility of the school community council is to improve student academic performance.
- Understand how to be elected a member of the school community council to represent the parents of students at the school.
- Participate in training about council responsibilities, collaboration, student and school assessments, how to participate in preparing and editing school action plans, school trust lands that provide revenue to schools to implement the School LAND Trust Plan, and the law that directs the money to be spent on the greatest academic need.
- Know where to find additional help and clarification, as needed.
- Attend school community council meetings and actively participate.
- Serve as an officer on the council, or nominate good candidates to fill those roles.
- Represent the needs of all students at the school and promote goals and activities of school parent groups and families in the school community.
- Encourage parent input into school community council issues and decisions and encourage parent involvement in task forces and sub-committees, including requests made of councils by the local school district.
- Collaborate with the council and sub-committees and/or task forces, utilizing the skills and expertise each individual can offer, to bring about the best result for the students.
- Be well informed and seek answers to questions and concerns before a vote is called for.
- Encourage the council to establish written procedures for parent notifications, elections and other council tasks and responsibilities, including rules outlining parliamentary order and procedure, ethical behavior and civil discourse.
- Celebrate successes towards achieving council goals with the parents. Be forthcoming about issues of concern and plans to make improvements. Actively promote school priorities in the community.
- Provide support and encourage ongoing training for newly elected parent members.



## **School Employee Members of School Community Councils**

Teachers, counselors and school staff members are responsible for the academic and well being of students in their charge. They evaluate student skills and knowledge, and design and implement instruction best suited for each child. They work as partners with local, state, and federal entities to determine academic goals, but are generally in charge of decisions related to methods of instruction. They are also partners with other personnel to manage school functions, extracurricular activities, and classroom resources. When most effective, the various school employees combine their efforts in teams and avoid isolation. They welcome the viewpoints of parents to take input and show respect to them. They are responsible to the school principal.

## **Duties and Responsibilities for Dixon Middle School Employee Members of the School Community Council**

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of school community councils. Recognize that the primary responsibility of the school community council is to improve student academic performance.
- Understand and follow the required procedures for becoming elected to represent faculty on the school community council. Employee members may serve as vice-chair of the council.
- Participate in training about council responsibilities, collaboration, student and school assessments, how to participate in preparing and editing school action plans, school trust lands that provide revenue to schools to implement the School LAND Trust Plan, and the law that directs the money to be spent on the greatest academic need.
- Know where to find additional help and clarification, as needed.
- Attend school community council meetings and actively participate.
- Represent the needs of all students at the school and promote school goals among faculty. Offer support for district priorities in preparing school action plans.
- Encourage faculty input into school community council priorities, issues and decisions, including requests made of councils by the local school district.
- Encourage data based decision making.
- Keep the council informed of successful academic programs and their evidences of success as they make decisions about action plans. Share special expertise of faculty that might support the academic goals established by the school community council.
- Collaborate with the council and sub-committees and/or task forces, utilizing the skills and expertise each individual can offer, to bring about the best result for the students.

- Encourage the council to establish written procedures for parent notifications, elections and other council tasks and responsibilities, including rules outlining parliamentary order and procedure, ethical behavior and civil discourse.
- Be well informed and seek answers to questions and concerns before a vote is called for.
- Ensure that the required school plans are delivered to the local school board on time.
- Keep the faculty informed about successes towards achieving school/council goals. Be forthcoming about issues of concern and plans to make improvements. Provide support and encourage ongoing training for newly elected faculty members.

*Information from this document was gathered from [schoolandtrust.org](http://schoolandtrust.org) with modifications made specific for Dixon Middle School Community Council.*