

SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM BYLAWS FOR BARD HIGH SCHOOL EARLY COLLEGE

1. Introduction

The School Leadership Team (SLT) will act as a communication and problem solving body to share, discuss and consolidate all issues and decision affecting our school Community. The SLT is a vehicle for developing school based policies and ensuring that resources are aligned to implement those policies. Further, the SLT is to serve as a conduit of communications and will advise on school wide policy and other issues as needed. The SLT is responsible for creating, reviewing, revising and distributing the school's Comprehensive Education Plan (CEP), including annual goals and objectives, and ensuring that the CEP is aligned with the school-based budget. . The Committee shall encourage and promote parent and teacher involvement in school activities, communicate to parents, guardians and staff information relevant to the education and well-being of their children, review and recommend contracts in order to carry out the educational aims of the school, to seek to improve pupil performance, and to take an active role in decisions concerning the education of the students of Bard HSEC. The Committee will serve in accordance with and be guided by the rules, rights, obligations, and responsibilities as stated in the Chancellor's regulation A-655.

Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) was created in 2001 as a collaboration between the New York City Department of Education and Bard College. Designed to offer motivated New York City public school students rigorous intellectual challenge, BHSEC admits ninth graders and prepares them to enter the early college program at the end of tenth grade. Students entering in ninth grade complete the required New York State regents Exams in the first two years at BHSEC. At the end of four years, they receive the Associate in Arts degree (A.A.) in the liberal arts and sciences from Bard College as well as a New York State Regents diploma.

Our student body is diverse in ethnic and economic background, in interests, and in prior school experiences. Students from the five boroughs of New York City are eligible to apply.

2. Implementation and Amendment of School Bylaws

The effective date of the new bylaws shall be Sept. 2nd, 2008. Bylaws must be submitted to the Borough Director for the Office for Family Engagement and Advocacy, annually, by October 31. .

The by-laws may be amended as long as the proposed amendment was presented in writing to the membership for debate and discussion at a previous meeting. The final draft must be printed in the PTA newsletter and posted on the PTA and staff electronic bulletin board at least fourteen days prior to the meeting at which time a vote will be held. Passage must be by consensus.

Amendments may be made at any time and there must be a formal review of the bylaws every two years. This review should be conducted by a subcommittee of the Committee, consisting of equal teacher and parent representation, and take into account any updates or revisions that have been made to the Chancellor's regulation A-655.

3. Team Membership

3.1 Team Members

The membership of the Committee is composed of:

1. The Parent-Teacher Association President (or one of the co-presidents) or designee.
2. One Parent representative of a child in grade nine.
3. One Parent representative of a child in grade ten
4. One Parent representative of a child in early college year one
5. One Parent representative of a child in early college year two
6. The school's Principal or designee.
7. One teacher representative/UFT representative or designee.
8. Three additional teacher representatives
9. One representative from Bard College
10. One student representative from grade nine
11. One student representative from grade ten.
12. One student representative from early college year one.
13. One student representative from early college year two.

In accordance with Chancellor's regulation A-655, the Committee must contain a minimum of 10 members and a maximum of 17 members, with equal representation of parents and faculty. The three mandatory Committee members are the principal, the PTA president, and the UFT representative, or their designees. Efforts will be made to ensure representatives reflect the ethnic, economic and racial diversity of the school's population. One teacher representative shall also be the UFT chapter leader or a designee.

3.2 Selection of Members

While the principal, the Bard College representative, UFT representative, and PTA president (or one of the co-presidents) are members based on their positions, parent, teachers, and student members must be selected by their constituencies. Student and teacher representatives shall be nominated and selected by the first SLT meeting to be held at the end of September "All elections must be advertised widely, with reasonable advance notice given.... A minimum of ten calendar days' notice is required prior to the PTA's election of its SLT parent members" as specified by Chancellor's regulation A-655. Efforts will be made to ensure representatives reflect the ethnic, economic and racial diversity of the school's population.

If any parent has a complaint about the way the elections were conducted, they must file the complaint with the appropriate superintendent within seven days of the election. Parents may appeal the decision of the superintendent to the Chancellor, but these appeals must be filed within three days of receiving the decision from the superintendent.

3.3 Term of Office

The principal, UFT chapter leader, the Bard College representative and PTA president (or one of the co-presidents) serve as long as they are in their positions. Term of office shall be one calendar year, from the date they are elected. There shall be no term limits.

According to Chancellor's regulation A-655, to be eligible to receive the annual remuneration of \$300, SLT members, including students and CBO representatives, must complete 30 hours of service on the SLT and attend a mandatory training session offered by the Office for Family Engagement and Advocacy. Team members who attend training but serve less than 30 hours may request remuneration on a pro-rata basis." Team members must keep records of their hours and submit them for processing to the Chairperson. Individual members can choose whether to accept this remuneration or waive it and donate the funds to be used by the school.

3.4 Expectations for SLT committee Members

All committee members shall act solely for the best interests of the children of Bard HSEC, shall attend meetings regularly, and participate in staff, parent and SLT development and information seeking activities, including an SLT training session administered by the School Support Organization (SSO) at the beginning of the academic year. It is the responsibility of all committee members to be diligent in sharing relevant information in a timely manner with their constituents. They must allow their constituents easy access to, and contact with, their committee representatives in a systematic fashion. They shall relay promptly to the committee the opinions and concerns of their various constituents as accurately and responsibly as possible.

Members understand that meetings are confidential, and that comments made within the meetings are not to be repeated outside the meetings. Once minutes have been approved by the Committee, the minutes are made available upon request to any faculty or parent through the permanent record, which is kept by the Parent Coordinator and the PTA.

3.5 Attendance and Removal of Team Members

Attendance must be taken at all meetings and published as part of the minutes. If one of the mandatory members of the Committee (i.e. the principal, UFT chapter leader, and PTA president) cannot be in attendance for a meeting, they must designate someone to represent them at the meeting. Committee members may be removed for poor attendance e.g. unexcused absence from three team meetings in a year. Representatives accused of misconduct or neglect of duty may be removed only after a constituent vote to appoint an investigative committee, prefer charges, and conduct a hearing. The investigative committee shall report its findings to their membership. The constituent membership shall decide by a two-thirds vote of the members to remove or absolve.

3.6 Filling of Vacancies

Vacancies on the team will be filled through elections by the appropriate constituencies, as determined by the individual constituents.

4. Team Operations

4.1 Consensus Decision Making

Leadership team decisions will be made by consensus, which is defined by The American Heritage Dictionary, as an opinion or position reached by a group as a whole or by majority will. According to Chancellor's regulation A-655, the Committee "must develop methods for engaging in collaborative problem solving and solution seeking that will lead to

consensus-based decisions and, when necessary, effective conflict resolution strategies.” If this effort to reach a consensus fails, the team should request help from the Borough Director’s office. If the issues remain unresolved after this step, Committee members may send a written request for assistance to the District Leadership Team.

4.2 SLT Committee Meetings

To the extent possible, there shall be monthly Committee meetings scheduled each school year. Meetings will be scheduled to meet the needs (or at the convenience) of the majority of the membership: therefore the times will be based on an annual survey of the members, to be discussed at the first meeting of the SLT to be scheduled at the end of September. Meetings are to be held at the school, unless extenuating circumstances prevent this. A tentative schedule of meetings and events shall be distributed by the Committee to the PTA newsletter for inclusion in the school calendar, to all constituents, and posted on the PTA and staff bulletin board, be it electronic or physical, by the first Friday of November. To the extent possible, meetings will be announced in advance and open to the community for observation. Any member of the Committee shall have the right to call a closed executive session.

Special meetings &/or closed executive sessions may be called by any one member of the SLT, or by the Principal, in writing to the Committee, for specified business. No other business may be discussed or acted on. When a special meeting is called, a notice shall be posted with a minimum of three days notice. Special Meetings require that every Committee member be notified and notices to be posted on the PTA and staff bulletin boards. The notice shall include date, place and time. Minutes of special meetings must be available in written form, posted, and approved at the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting.

4.3 SLT Committee Officers

At the first meeting of the year, a Chair and recording secretary will be chosen. The Chair and recording secretary should be comprised of one staff member and one parent member of the committee. Committee meetings will be chaired on a rotating basis. The chair will be responsible for coordinating the agenda. The Chair alternates between staff and parents; the recording secretary chairs the following meeting. The minute taker must post the draft minutes and a provisional agenda and date for the following meeting at least 10 days prior to the next meeting. . After a final version of the minutes is approved at the following meeting, the recording secretary shall file an archival copy with the Parent Coordinator, as well as the PTA. An appropriate location for archival files shall be determined and maintained at the school, by the Parent Coordinator. If the assigned person is not able to attend a meeting that they are scheduled to chair or record, they must arrange for a suitable (staff for staff; parent for parent) substitute. In the event that, in the opinion of the chair, discussion of an item is unmanageable and unproductive, the chair will have the option to table that agenda item, or ask that an investigative subcommittee be formed, and move on.

4.4 Quorum

The quorum necessary for SLT action shall be a minimum of seven team members. The Committee may make consensus decisions only when the principal or a designee, the UFT chapter leader or a designee, and the PTA president or a designee, are all present at the meeting. Written designation assignments shall be attached to the archival minutes. If consensus cannot be reached, the Committee should contact the Borough Director for the Office for Family

Engagement and Advocacy for assistance, and if this fails to resolve the issue, Committee members may make a written request to the District Leadership Team.

4.5 Subcommittees

Subcommittees will be formed on an as needed basis to assist the SLT and to reach out to additional constituencies within the school and the community. Subcommittee members will be selected by solicitation to the entire school community for volunteers, as approved by the Committee. Each subcommittee must include at least one member of the SLT. All recommendations of subcommittees are subject to the approval of the leadership team.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Core Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the SLT are the development and implementation of the school's comprehensive educational plan (CEP), as aligned with the school-based budget. According to Chancellor's regulation A-655, "the principal shall consult with the Committee in developing the school-based budget.... The principal shall provide a report from the DOE Galaxy budgeting system within a reasonable period of time after the school receives it. The school-based budget provides the fiscal parameters within which the SLT will develop the goals and objectives to meet the needs of students and the school's educational program. The principal makes the final determination on the CEP and the school-based budget." . The Committee will act as a communication and problem solving body to share, discuss and consolidate all issues and decision affecting the school community. The SLT's goal is to serve as a conduit of communications and to advise on school wide policy and other issues as needed. Decisions will be made with the primary objective of benefiting the students and the school community.

5.2 Other Responsibilities

The SLT will deal with other topics which relate to the Committee's core responsibilities, which are appropriate for discussion and decision making, and which the members of the committee believe to be appropriate and relevant to their mission.

The Committee must be consulted regarding the facilities plan, repairs in the school and the purchasing of equipment, supplies and programs.

When funds are allocated by the District, Region or Central to support the Committee, decisions about the use of these funds will be made by a consensus of the team. Funds will be spent with the objective of benefiting the children and the school community, of improving the committee's knowledge and/or abilities, and reaching out to include a larger portion of the school community. They will not be spent with the objective of financially enriching individual team members.

5.3 Evaluation

As part of the comprehensive educational planning process, the Committee will review pupil achievement data in doing the needs assessment and in evaluating the implementation of the plan. The SLT recognizes that test scores and grades do not necessarily comprise the entire results required to evaluate success. The team may also request to meet with members of the School Support Organization twice a year for help in evaluating the mission and goals of the SLT.

5.4 Limitations

The Committee may not discuss the evaluation and/or rating of staff members or deal with problems involving individual staff, students or parents. The Committee is not responsible for the hiring and firing of school staff.

The Committee may not make decisions in an area over which it has no authority or which would:

- Violate the Memorandum of Understanding between Bard College and the Department of Education
- Violate confidentiality rights of staff, parents or students
- Violate a collective bargaining agreement
- Violate any city, state or federal law or regulation or violate Board of Education or District policy
- Entail a commitment to any expenditure for which funds are not available
- Affect other schools or organizations which are not a party to the agreement
- Bard College and The PTA of Bard HSEC are 501(c)(3) corporations and in the event of a conflict between these by-laws and the regulations governing the 501(c)(3) status, the 501(c)(3) regulations shall govern.

6. Communication

6.1 Within School Community

The Committee must keep the school community well informed about its activities. The minute taker must post the draft minutes and a provisional agenda and date for the following meeting at least 10 days prior to the following meeting. After a final version of the minutes are approved at the following meeting, they shall be posted on the PTA and staff bulletin boards, be they electronic or physical, and kept permanently in a binder or folder in the school's archives and in the PTA's archives.

It is the responsibility of the members of the school community to make themselves aware of the business of the school and of the SLT by regularly attending meetings, and/or referring to the electronic bulletin board, the PTA list serve, and the PTA newsletter. It is the responsibility of the Committee to be diligent in sharing relevant information in a timely manner, with the entire school community and one another, and in allowing all the members of the school community easy access to and contact with the committee in a systematic fashion.

6.2 Attendance and Participation or Non-Team Members

Committee meetings are open to any member of the school community for observation. The SLT may, to be inclusive and to seek additional viewpoints and expertise, invite non-committee members to participate in meetings. The PTA should elect parent alternates for each grade level at the same time they elect permanent members and who are encouraged to attend the meetings in a non-voting capacity.

6.3 With the Borough Director

The Committee will provide to the Borough Director for the Office of Family Engagement and Advocacy its bylaws and Committee members by Oct. 31st of each year. If consensus cannot be reached by the Committee, the members should use the Borough Director for the Office of Engagement and Advocacy as a reference to help resolve this issue.

7. Conflict and Impasse Resolution

The SLT will attempt to resolve conflicts among Committee members over any particular issue. The Committee may table it for discussion at a later meeting, appoint or establish a subcommittee to do research and report back, bring in experts on the topic under discussion, bring in a facilitator, from the School Support Organization or Borough Director for the Office of Family Engagement and Advocacy's Office, or arrange for training in consensus decision making. Committee members are committed to reaching consensus and will actively and with good will engage in all responsible attempts to arrive at agreement. Decisions must be made with the primary objective of benefiting the children of the school community. If these methods fail, members can make a written appeal to the District Leadership Team.

8. Robert's Rules of Order

"Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised," shall be the guide for the Committee in determining questions of parliamentary procedure not expressly provided in the by-laws or by resolution of the membership. However, such rules of order shall not be determinative if the majority of the membership present and voting decides otherwise.

Approved: June 16, 2008

Next Bylaw Review Due By: June 15, 2010