Bylaws: Montessori Borealis Public School Site Council

Purpose: The purpose of the Montessori Borealis Public School Site Council is to provide a forum for sharing the perspectives of the entire Montessori Borealis community through the participation of parents, teachers, and administrators, and providing each of those parties with a role in the decision-making process.

This set of bylaws is to establish a set of rules and procedures under which the Montessori Borealis Public School Site Council will function.

Scope and Responsibility: In accordance with JSD Board policy 8140, items within the scope of the council's authority include:

- **Communications with parents, district administrators, and the school board**: *Provide a forum for parent input into the school's decision making processes. Communicate with parents about school policies and potential decisions. Acts as a spokesperson for the Montessori Borealis Public when responding to questions or concerns from district administrators or school board members;*
- **Program growth and priorities**: *Makes recommendations to district administration and school board regarding the school's desires for growth (or not) and the relative priority of different alternatives;*
- **Public relations and enrollment**: *Works with district staff on the school's publicity and recruitment; works with district administration on enrollment issues;*
- **Facilities and transportation**: *Represents Montessori Borealis Public in discussion with other schools, district administration, and school board regarding facility or transportation issues;*
- **Allocation of specialist time**: *Provides input into decision-making regarding the allocation of specialists and classes;*
- **Coordination with other schools and programs**: *Works with parents, site councils, and staff at other schools to address areas of concern or improve relations;*
- **Program enhancements**: *Evaluates existing or potential educational programs (such as Discovery Foundation, Art, or DARE) and makes recommendations about their potential use at the school;*
- **Calendar and School schedules**: *Provides input to district regarding proposed calendar and schedule changes and applicable administrator regarding changes to the school's daily schedule;*
- **School safety issues**: *Receives input from parents, students, and staff regarding safety issues; makes recommendations for improvements;*
- **School wide student assessment**: *Reviews summary student assessment reports and discusses potential changes to improve student achievement*
- **Hiring new professional staff**: *Assists principle/administrator in interviewing applicants for*

teaching or other professional positions. Note: The site council's responsibility does not include participating in the day-to-day management of the school or its classrooms.

Membership: The Montessori Borealis Public School Site Council strives for diversity; membership should be representative of the demographics of the school. The site council shall consist of 10 members. All members (other than the principal, the public member, and the AMP student) must be either the parent of a child currently attending Montessori Borealis Public School, or must be a teacher or other staff person working with the Montessori students. The member spots are allocated as follows:

1) The principal
2) One JESS (classified, non-teacher) staff member
3) Two teachers; one of which is designated as a JEA employee
4) Four parents; one of which is serving as a representative of SEAFOM (designated by SEAFOM Board)
5) One student currently enrolled in the adolescent program-Advisory, non-voting member
6) One member of the public, who is not otherwise affiliated with the Montessori community:
    a. Examples of potential public members might include current Harborview, Yaakoosge, or DZ Site Council members, or leaders of a community or group that is currently underrepresented in the school.
7) Other Montessori parent(s) or staff if needed to bring the total to 10. Note: The spots for the public member and the minority representative will remain open until filled.

A parent may be counted in more than one of the above categories, as applicable. In accordance with board policy 8140, no more than four of the members may be school employees. Note: The Principal is included among this four.

Teacher members of the site council are elected by the full and part-time employees of the Montessori Borealis Public School.

The SEAFOM representative is chosen by the SEAFOM board or membership.

The adolescent student member is voted on by the students in the adolescent program.

The public member may be recruited by any member of the Montessori Community. In the event that more than one person is interested in becoming the public member, the Principal will select a member from among the interested people.

If more parent members apply for site council than the number of openings, the current site council will vote to select parents' representatives; interested parents may be asked to submit a nomination form to indicate their interest.

Elections of members for a school year occur in the spring of the previous school year or in the fall of the current school year.

Officers: At the first meeting each fall, the site council shall elect a President and a Secretary, whose duties are as follows:

President:

- Develop the meeting agenda, with input from parents, Montessori teachers, and the principal.
- Run each meeting, making sure that discussions stay on topic and each member has an opportunity for input, and helping to facilitate consensus.
- Serve as a contact person for district staff wishing to bring an item to the attention of the site council.

Secretary:

- Publicize the date, time, and location to each meeting to parents via email, a note sent home with students, or another method as approved by the site council.
- Publish and make available to parents the meeting agenda, at least two days before each meeting.
- Make notes of meetings discussions and decisions, and publish minutes in a format and location accessible to parents.

Term of Office: Members other than the Principal and the adolescent student are elected to office for a term of two years, and may be reelected for additional terms.

The adolescent student representative serves a one-year term. The student representative member shall serve in an advisory capacity only.

If a member leaves the site council during the school year, the other parent or teacher members (as applicable), the SEAFOM board (for the SEAFOM representative), or the AMP students (for the student representative) may select a replacement to serve for the remainder of the school year. A new member will be elected at the next spring election. If a member leaves at the end of a school year, but before completing their term of office, the spot shall be filled during the regular spring election.

In both cases, the newly elected member will serve a two year term, unless the site council votes to have the spot filled for a one-year term, in order to avoid having a disproportionate number of members' terms expiring at the same time.

A parent member whose child leaves (or graduates from) the Montessori program and who no longer has a child in the program must resign their site council position as a parent representative. However, that person may continue to serve as a public member for the remainder of their term (if unexpired) as a community member, provided a public member position is vacant. A teacher or staff representative who is no longer employed by the district to work with Montessori students must resign their position at the time their work with Montessori students ends. A former teacher or staff representative may be eligible to serve as a public member, and may continue to serve as a public member for the remainder of their term if a public member position is vacant at the time of his or her resignation.

Quorum: For the purposes of making decisions at a site council meeting, a quorum is met when a

minimum of 5 site council members are present, including at least 2 parents and 2 school staff (including the Principal).

Decision-making: Whenever possible, site council decisions shall be made by consensus. Where consensus is impossible, decision may be made by majority vote. When making a decision, members will:

- Define the issue or issues to be decided
- Seek out the thoughts and recommendations of those individuals who are most familiar with the issue
- Provide all interested parties and opportunity to be heard
- Discuss possible solutions to the problem or issue
- Come to a consensus as to the best solution
- Communicate the decision to the relevant individuals and groups
- Support the decision once it's made

It may be appropriate to designate a subcommittee of the site council to investigate an issue and recommend a solution (or solutions) before a decision is made by the council as a whole. Such subcommittees should be selected at a site council meeting, and should be representative of the membership.

Meeting dates and times: The site council will meet at least monthly, at a regular meeting time and place determined by the site council at its initial fall meeting. The initial fall meeting will be scheduled by the site council the previous spring. Additional meetings may be necessary to discuss particular urgent topics. Such additional meetings will be publicly announced ahead of time.

Meetings are open to the public. Where space permits, non-members who are attending meetings will be invited to sit at the table with members and participate in discussions, though they may not vote on issues.

Expectations of Site Council Members: Site Council members are expected to:

- Attend site council meetings and notify the site council president if unable to attend
- Prepare for meetings by reading the agenda and any materials sent out ahead of time, and making an effort to gather other information they feel is important or relevant
- Come to meetings in a spirit of cooperation, open-mindedness, commitment, a supportive attitude, and with no pre-arranged decisions and/or agreements
- Consider the interest of the Montessori Borealis Public School as a whole rather than a personal agenda

Amendment Process: Recommendations for amending the Site Council Bylaws will follow the same process as all other issues brought before the Site Council.