

School Council By-Laws

Maurice Bowling Middle School

Revised 2024-2025



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ARTICLE I. PURPOSE To provide the council with a set of operational guidelines with which to function effectively.

ARTICLE II. MISSION & VISION

Owen County Schools Mission- Our mission at Owen County Schools is to provide opportunities and resources where all students will develop perseverance and a passion for life-long learning in a safe and supportive educational environment.

Owen County Schools Vision-

Owen County *students/staff* will:

- Respect Others
- Experience Learning
- Build Relationships
- Expect Excellence
- Lead
- Seek Opportunities

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

A. COMPOSITION

1. The school council shall consist of the principal, three teacher members, and two parent members. The principal shall serve as the chairperson.
2. If the school's total minority enrollment reaches 8 percent or more minority students enrolled as of the preceding October 1, and there is no minority elected in the initial elections, a special election shall be conducted by the principal to elect a minority parent to serve on the school council.
3. In the event a special election is needed, the teachers shall elect a minority teacher from the school's staff. If there are no minority teachers on staff at the school, the teachers shall elect a non-minority teacher to represent the interests of the minority students in the school. (If a minority teacher exists on the staff, but does not wish to serve, the position remains vacant.)
4. Bowling Middle School council membership shall be as follows:
 - Principal (chairperson)
 - 3 Teachers
 - 2 Parents

B. REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

1. All Members: No one may serve on the school council who has a business interest in the school as designated by KRS 45A.340. New members (those with less than one year of

service) must complete six (6) hours of training from a Kentucky Department of Education endorsed trainer. Experienced members (those with no more than one year of service) must complete three (3) hours of training from a Kentucky Department of Education endorsed training provider each year.

2. Duties of council members include:
 - Knowing and adhering to the mission, philosophy, and goals of Maurice Bowling Middle School
 - Attending all council meetings, both regular and special
 - Encouraging and requesting opinions from their constituencies
 - Supporting, promoting, and communicating council decisions
 - Seeking information independently and as needed about issues brought before the school council, and bringing that information to the council
3. The council will prepare a written request for training, and the board/school will fund required training as needed.
4. Leave of absence: If a SBDM member has a leave of absence beyond 8 weeks, the chairperson can appoint a substitute replacement member until the SBDM can return to council.
5. Teacher Members: Teacher council members must possess certification required for their position as a basis for employment in Kentucky public schools. Itinerant teachers may nominate, serve, and vote in our school. Counselors may serve as teacher council members. Principals or assistant principals may not serve as teacher council members, nor vote in teacher elections.
6. Parent Members: The legal definition of parent (KRS 160.345 1.c.) allows biological parents, stepparents, foster parents, or persons who have court ordered legal custody to be nominated or to vote. According to the law, parents who are nominated or who wish to vote must have a child “pre-registered to attend” the school next year. If a child is in grade 4 this year and will attend our school next year, the parents of that child would be eligible to be nominated, or vote in the election for the next year’s school council. Parents of 8th graders who are exiting our school should participate in the elections for the high school council. To ensure that parents of incoming students are notified each year, the middle school secretary shall send a notice by email to the elementary school secretary to be sent home with 4th grade students in time for parents to have an opportunity to nominate, vote, or serve.

Parent council members cannot be employed in or be related to someone who is employed in the school or in the district administrative offices. An Attorney General’s Opinion (OAG 90-102) says that “relative” as used in this section should have the same definition found in KRS 160.180 and KRS 160.380 that applies to school boards. This means that a parent who is a “*father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife, son, daughter.*” of someone who works at the school or in the district administrative offices could not be a parent council member. Parent members cannot

be a board member or a board member's spouse, nor can they have a business interest in the school.

C. ELECTIONS

1. Parent Members: Parents conduct their own elections as per KRS 160.345. Annual elections shall be conducted each spring by the school's largest parent organization that is formed for the purpose of electing two parent council members. Parent elections may be by plurality vote (two parents with the highest number of votes) unless the parent organization requires a majority vote. A representative of the parent organization shall notify the principal in writing of the two parents elected within 24 hours of the final vote, and shall deliver all election materials to the principal the next business day after the election. Elections shall be held before the end of the school year in person/ electronically during awards night.
2. Teacher Members: Teachers conduct their own elections as per KRS 160.345. Bi-annual elections shall be conducted in the spring for the purpose of electing three teacher council members. Teacher members must be elected by a simple majority (one half plus one) of the number of teachers assigned to the school. The process that teachers may use to elect their representatives should address the following areas:
 - Nomination
 - Preparation of Ballot
 - Absentee Ballots
 - Procedures after First Round Ballots
 - Delivery of election materials to the principal the next day after the election
3. Term Limits: School council members can serve an unlimited number of terms as long as they continue to meet the eligibility requirements.

D. REMOVAL OF MEMBERS

1. According to KRS 156.132, the commissioner of education may recommend to the local board of education the removal of a school council member whom he or she has reason to believe is guilty of immorality, misconduct in office, incompetence, willful neglect of duty, or nonfeasance.
2. A member of a school council may be removed from the council for cause, after an opportunity for hearing before the local board, by a vote of 4/5 of the membership of the board of education after the recommendation for the commissioner of education pursuant to KRS 156.132. Written notices setting out the charges for removal shall be spread on the minutes of the board and given to the members of the school council. KRS 160.347

E. FILLING VACANCIES

If a member of the council resigns or is removed from office, another member shall be elected in a special election held not more than one month after the vacancy occurs. The person elected in the special election shall serve the remainder of the term until July 1, and be eligible for re-election. Council members elected to fill a vacancy will complete the acceptable training within 30 days of their election.

F. TERMS OF SERVICE

The term of parent shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30. Between the date of the elections and July 1, members-elect are expected to attend all council meetings. The term of the teacher shall begin on July 1 and continue a two year term. The two year term will end on June 30th.

ARTICLE IV. DUTIES OF OFFICERS, COUNCIL MEMBERS AND APPOINTED SECRETARY

A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Officers shall include Chair and Vice Chair.
2. The vice chair of the school council shall be elected each July by council members and shall serve for one year. Re-election is permitted.
3. If a vice chair leaves his or her position, the council shall conduct a vote at that meeting to fill the position with another council member.
4. A motion to seek an alternative model allowing a council member other than the principal to serve as chair may be made by any council member at any regular meeting. A majority vote of the full council is required before an alternative model can be sought by the school council. A faculty vote must then be conducted, and the motion must pass by 2/3 in order to proceed with the model.

B. CHAIR

The principal shall be the chairperson of the school council. Duties of the chair include:

1. Conducting school council meetings
2. Compiling and distributing the agenda for council meetings
3. Serving as official custodian of council records (maintaining minutes of meetings and forwarding a copy to the superintendent after approval of the minutes by the council)
4. Stating when a consensus is reached for the record
5. Coordinating standing and ad hoc committees and monitoring committee progress
6. Carrying out any additional responsibilities as stated in these by-laws
7. Maintaining a file of all correspondence addressed to the school council (these records may only be discarded after having been brought to two council meetings)
8. Other duties as described in these by-laws

C. VICE-CHAIR

Duties if the vice-chair shall include:

1. Presiding over council meetings in the absence of the chair. If a principal vacancy occurs, the superintendent will become the chair of the council, and not the vice Chair.

D. SECRETARY

The council secretary shall be appointed by the principal to keep minutes of all council meetings and to maintain council records. The SBDM secretary will receive a \$500.00 stipend for keeping accurate detailed accounts of all records.

ARTICLE V. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

A. REGULAR MEETINGS

1. The regular monthly meeting of the Bowling Middle School Council shall be set at the first meeting of each new year and held regularly. Council meetings shall be open to the public. Meetings will be determined by the council in the July SBDM Meeting. The regular monthly meetings will be held at Maurice Bowling Middle School in an available meeting space.
2. The council will comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Law to the public unless the council goes into closed session.
3. The principal shall provide the council's regular meeting schedule for the year in July by email, and post meeting schedule in the foyer.
4. The principal shall notify staff in advance of each council meeting by email and include the time, place and agenda items.
5. The principal shall provide information to all council members in advance of each council meeting including the agenda and consent items for council review.
6. The principal shall notify the public by notice posted in the school foyer at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

B. SPECIAL MEETINGS

1. If the council needs to meet between regular meetings, or if the regular meeting is rescheduled, the chairperson or a majority of the school council members may call a special meeting. The following steps must be completed by the chairperson when a special meeting is called:

- Written Notice: Contents. The chairperson shall prepare and sign a written notice that states the date, time, and place of the special meeting and the agenda for each meeting. Only the items on the agenda may be discussed.
 - Delivery of Notice: The chairperson shall arrange for the notice to be delivered to each council member and to any media organization that has requested notice of council meetings. The delivery can be by hand, FAX machine, email, or mail but the notice must be received by the members at least twenty-four hours prior to the time of the meeting
 - Posting of Notice: The notice for the special meeting shall announce to teachers the time and the reason for the special called meeting during announcements at least 24 hours prior to the meeting
2. In addition to these requirements, the principal shall announce to teachers the time and the reason for the special called meeting during announcements at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

ARTICLE VI. CONDUCTING MEETINGS

A. QUORUM

A quorum of the school council shall be a majority (one-half plus one) of the council members. No council business shall be discussed or conducted unless a quorum of council members is present.

B. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

Council meetings are open to the public and all interested persons can attend, except for those portions that are conducted as closed sessions

C. CLOSED SESSIONS

Definition: A closed session is a portion of a regular or special meeting of the council during which the council members meet in private. The council may meet in closed session for the following reasons:

to discuss proposed or pending litigation by or against a council member [KRS 61.810(1)(c)]; or to discuss candidates for a principal vacancy or conduct consultation in filling other vacancies [KRS61.810(1) (f); to review the schools emergency plan. Before a closed session can be conducted, the following steps must be taken:

1. Announcement: Contents. An announcement of the general nature of the subject to be discussed and the specific section of the law that allows the conduct of the closed session must be announced in the open meeting and recorded in council minutes.
2. Motion: The motion to go into closed session must be made, passed by a majority of council members present, and recorded in council minutes.
3. Closed Session: During the closed session, only the business stated in the announcement can be discussed, and no action may be taken. No minutes are to be taken in a closed

session. If the council secretary is not a council member, the secretary shall not enter the closed session. Details discussed in the closed session shall not be discussed outside the closed session.

4. Decision: After full discussion of the issue in closed session, the council must return to open session where it may take any official action on the matter. Any action taken must be recorded in council minutes.

D. MATERIALS PRESENT AT COUNCIL MEETINGS

The chairperson shall bring all necessary items for the meeting. This includes access to all items submitted on the agenda, all correspondences addressed to the council that has been received, monthly financial reports, and any additional materials. Council members are responsible to keep track of all required items for meetings.

E. AGENDA

1. Anyone may submit items for inclusion on the agenda to the chairperson/principal by the Monday prior to a regularly scheduled council meeting. The principal shall maintain a complete file of these items.
2. The chairperson shall prepare an agenda for each council meeting, including items submitted in writing for inclusion to the public, staff, parents, or other council members and other items he or she believes should be on the agenda. The chairperson may declare an item received as not within the school council authority
3. The chairperson shall include a consent agenda with information for each meeting
4. Each agenda shall include the following items:
 - Item 1: Setting of the final agenda for the current meeting
 - Item 2: Review and approval of previous meeting minutes
 - Item 3: An opportunity during the course of the meeting for school or community persons to address the school council
 - Item 4: Committee Reports to the School Council
5. At the special called meeting, only the items listed on the notice of meeting can be discussed and no new item can be introduced for discussion or inclusion on the agenda

F. DISCUSSION OF AGENDA ITEMS

1. The school council shall discuss each agenda item before a decision is made. Each council member shall be given the opportunity to express his or her opinion on the item.
2. Other persons attending the meeting may be recognized by the chairperson and may address the council as the chair calls upon them to speak.
3. If a significant number of persons wishes to contribute to the discussion on a particular item, the chair may require a sign-in sheet, and set limits on the number of persons who will speak to the issue, and a time limit for each.

4. Any agenda item may be referred to a standing or ad hoc committee for further study as deemed necessary by the council.

G. DECISION MAKING PROCESS

1. Unless otherwise specified by these by-laws, the school council shall use parliamentary procedures as specified by Robert's Rules of Order.
2. All business and decisions of the school council will relate to the schools mission and purpose to improve the instructional program and/or further the goals in the school's improvement plan.
3. No proposed policy may be approved by the school council at the same meeting at which it was initially proposed for study.
4. All decisions and policies officially adopted by the Bowling Middles School Council will be reported to the board of education and superintendent through submission of approved council minutes to the SBDM district coordinator.
5. The school council will make decisions by consensus except as otherwise designated in the by-laws using the following guidelines:
 - A motion and a second are made.
 - After discussion of an item, the chair or any member may state the consensus of the group in one or two sentences.
 - The chair will ask whether any member disagrees with the statement.
 - If all members agree, the decision will be recorded as a unanimous decision in the council minutes.
 - If a member disagrees, the discussion will continue until a suggestion of consensus is made that draws no disagreement, or until the third suggestion of consensus fails.

H. ALTERNATIVE TO CONSENSUS

When a third suggestion of consensus fails, the council may by majority vote determine to:

1. Vote to send the issue back to a committee
2. Form an ad hoc committee to study the issue further (the motion on this vote shall include a regular meeting date when the council will hear from the committee), or
3. Decide the issue by majority vote of the council

I. CRITERIA FOR MAJORITY VOTE

A vote must occur when going into closed session or the selection of a principal. All other situations will use a consensus decision making process. A majority vote of the council shall be taken after consensus fails three times if the issue meets the following criteria:

1. The issue involves the number of persons to be employed in each job classification, the textbooks to be purchased, or the budget for purchase of student support services.
2. The issue is whether to continue to meet for longer than 90 minutes.
3. The federal or state government or the district board of education has set a deadline by which the school council must make a final decision and that deadline will occur before the next regular council meeting.
4. The members of the council cannot agree by consensus to decide the issue at a special meeting and a majority of the council members wish to decide the issue by a majority vote. When the above exceptions do not apply and consensus cannot be reached, the issue may be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting or special meeting and the decision may be made at that meeting by majority vote of the council. When voting, any abstention is counted with the majority vote.

ARTICLE VII. MINUTES AND OTHER COUNCIL RECORDS

A. MINUTES KEPT AND APPROVED

1. Minutes shall be kept by the secretary at each council/committee meeting.
2. The minutes shall reflect an accurate record of actions and votes taken at a council meeting. Minutes shall show the words of the motion or suggestion of consensus, and the majority vote or unanimous support.
3. If the action taken was the adoption of a policy, the entire text of the policy shall be attached to the copy of the minutes kept on file in the library of public inspection and filed in the council's policy manual.
4. The minutes of the school council shall not be official until they are reviewed and approved by the council.
5. A preliminary copy of the approved minutes for all council meetings will be provided to SBDM members in written form within 72 hours of the adjournment of the meeting.
6. If the council receives an Open Record Request, the council has 5 business days to respond to the request.
7. An official copy of the minutes to the superintendent/BOE and SBDM District Coordinator, and keep an official copy on file in the school. A copy of the official minutes will be forwarded via email by the secretary.

B. COUNCIL RECORDS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION

The following are official documents that must be kept on file for public inspection in the library:

1. School Council Minutes and Agenda
2. Committee Minutes and Agendas
3. Comprehensive Improvement Plan (including Targets for Gap Reduction)
4. School Council Policies and By-Laws

5. School Council Budget Documents not in the School Plan
6. School Council and Committee Membership Lists
7. Official correspondence

C. REQUESTS FOR COUNCIL RECORDS

1. Requests for council records must be made in writing to the principal. Requests must include specific documents and dates.
2. The fee for copying of council records shall be 10 cents per copy unless the request is for the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan document.
3. The fee for a copy of the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan document shall be the school's cost for one copy, as per printing records.
4. Council By-Laws, Policies and the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan shall be posted on the school's web page and can be accessed by the public at no cost.
5. The requested record must be provided to the person making the request within three business days. (The attorney general ruled in 01-ORD-94 (May 2001) that the only days that are excluded are legal holidays and weekends. As a result, the fact that a school may be closed over the winter holidays or spring break and no one is in the office does not prevent the clock from running on the three-day response requirement.)
6. The school council secretary shall make or provide copies of requested documents at the principal or chairperson's request.
7. School council records will be available for inspection during the hours the school's library is open. (est. 8:00 am-3:00 pm)
8. The custodian of records for the school shall be the principal, and the principal shall make the final determination regarding which records not listed above are available for inspection and all matters in regards to open records requests not covered in this policy, in compliance with state guidelines and requirements.

ARTICLE VIII. APPEALS

A. REQUEST

For a person (s) to appeal a decision of the council or file a grievance he/she must first request in writing an opportunity to be heard and shall include information about the grievance issue.

B. SCHEDULE

A council shall schedule a hearing within thirty (30) working days from the date the request is received. The person appealing shall be informed of the hearing by registered letter.

C. HEARING

The person appealing may be represented by legal counsel and may call witnesses as long as the testimony is germane to the issue.

D. DECISION

The council shall consider the merits of the complaint, make a decision, and respond in writing to the complaint.

E. REPORT

A copy of the written grievance or appeal, and a written reply by the council shall be provided to the superintendent within ten (10) working days of the council's decision.

F. BOARD POLICY

A copy of the local board of education's approved process for Appeals of Council Decisions is available upon request.

ARTICLE IV. AMENDMENTS

A. AMENDMENTS TO COUNCIL BY-LAWS

These by-laws may be amended after the first and second reading at two consecutive council meetings by majority vote of the school council.

B. AMENDMENTS TO COUNCIL POLICIES

Policy will be reviewed at least annually, or more often if needed. The council may amend policy following the decision making process outlined in this document.