

Stillwater Site Council Information

The Stillwater Elementary Site Council is a team of parents, teachers and staff that work to improve student learning through an open, shared leadership process involving all stakeholders in the school. The Council is a partnership formed to foster trust, maintain a positive yet critical dialogue, make clear decisions, and promote a safe and effective learning environment. In order to help focus the community's energy and to help focus on tasks that will achieve goals, a plan of operation has been developed.

The Council's purpose is to serve. The council has a permanent open agenda item at the beginning of each Site Council meeting so issues and ideas may be expressed directly to the Council. Ideas and issues may also be directly communicated to a Site Council representative. The Council's minutes are available in the Stillwater office as well as on the Stillwater website following each meeting.

The Site Council will develop a "Plan of Operation" including areas of focus and allocation of site funds. Specific organization, member selection criteria, procedures, and goals are to be determined by the Stillwater Staff. The plan will be published one week prior to the staff meeting where it will be presented. The plan must be approved by seventy (70%) – a super majority vote- of the site's bargaining unit members present at the meeting. By April 1 of the school year, there will be a review of the plan and an assessment of the use of funds.

Stillwater Elementary Site Council Plan of Operation

1.0 Purpose of the Site Council

The Stillwater Elementary Site Council (hereinafter referred to as "Council") is formed to improve student learning through an open, shared leadership process involving all stakeholders in the school. The Council will conduct itself as a partnership in order to foster trust, to maintain a positive, yet critical dialogue, to make clear decisions, and to promote a safe and effective learning environment.

2.0 Focus of the Site Council

- 2.1 The Council will develop and promote a clear vision and mission for Stillwater Elementary.
- 2.2 The Council will serve as ambassadors to the entire staff, parents, and community of Stillwater Elementary by listening carefully to their questions or concerns and seeking to have such matters resolved as quickly as possible.
- 2.3 The Site Council will develop guidelines that will identify or aid in identifying a sampling of appropriate issues.

- 2.4 The Site Council will determine allocations for the Site Based Council Funding (\$400 per REA FTE). This funding may be used for compensation, professional development, or release time. If the funds are not used and the site team would like to carry the funds over for the next school year, this may be done with approval of the Superintendent.

3.0 Membership & Roles

- 3.1 Elected & Appointed Membership. The Council will supervise the election of new members during the month of May. The Council's membership will include the following configuration:
 - 3.1.1 Four voting members will be certificated staff, elected by staff and serving distinct constituencies: (K/1), (2/3), (4/5) and (Specialist/Support). At least fifty percent (50%) of the Site Based Council must be composed of REA certificated staff. In designing the balance of the team, it is expected that that principal will serve on this council. In addition, consideration shall be given for representation of all groups that compose the school community.
 - 3.1.2 Two voting members will be parents, elected by the Site Council.
 - 3.1.3 One or two voting members will be classified staff, elected by the classified staff
 - 3.1.4 Two non-voting members will be students, appointed by the Principal on an as-needed basis
 - 3.1.5 The principal is a voting member.
 - 3.1.6 The Council may add to this body when it is determined by the Council that additional representation is required for the Council to be significantly more effective in serving the Purpose and Focus of the Council.

3.2 Selection Process:

There will be an open application process for all positions (no appointed positions). Staff members seeking election for specific positions will submit a letter of interest to the Principal and the certificated staff will vote (simple majority) for the candidate of its choice. The classified position will follow the same procedure but will be elected by the classified staff.

Parent and community membership positions of the Site Council will be advertised in the school newsletter and /or local newspaper to solicit interested volunteers. The membership will be selected by the staff representatives of the Site Based Council.

- 3.2.1 Parent and Teacher Members will serve for a two-year term with members serving on a rotating basis of new and returning members
- 3.2.2 Student Members will serve on an as needed basis.
- 3.2.3 PTA, Teacher, and Parent Members cannot serve more than two consecutive terms.
- 3.2.4 The Principal is a permanent member of the Site Council.
- 3.2.5 The Secretary is a permanent member of the Site Council.

3.3 The Role of Council Member:

Communicate with their constituents (e.g., random sampling, open forum, separate flyers for a particular issue, monthly updates from the parent representative sent to their constituents, bulletin board).

- 3.3.1 Represent their constituents' point of view.
- 3.3.2 Decide if an informational session for constituents or a school-wide opinion survey would be helpful prior to a decision being made by the team on a controversial issue.
- 3.3.3 Attend all meetings or send an alternate in their place (if members of the team do not attend two meetings during the school year and fail to send an alternate, the facilitator will meet with them to determine if a new representative is needed. If so, a replacement will be appointed by the Site Council). Support the decisions of the Council. Despite any personal feelings individuals might have, once the Council has voted, every member of the team is ethically obligated to support that decision.

3.4 The Role of Facilitator:

The Council will elect a Facilitator from its members. The Facilitator will prepare an agenda for each meeting in conjunction with the Principal. The Facilitator will convene and preside over Council meetings.

- 3.4.1 Manages the content of the discussion by focusing the Council on the task at hand, intervening when the group falls off task, seeing that ideas are appropriately captured, and calling for closure at the appropriate time.
- 3.4.2 Protects the process, enforcing ground rules and time allotments, managing the behavior of the group and individuals, protecting ideas and individuals from attacks, and suggesting processes for following the agenda and devising other approaches if the process bogs down.
- 3.4.3 Focuses on closure by insisting that discussions be resolved with the identification of appropriate next steps, that agreements and decisions be suitably identified and recorded.

4.0 Conducting Business:

- 4.1 The council will meet once per month. The Facilitator will endeavor to keep all regularly scheduled meetings to less than two hours. A calendar will be published at the first meeting of each school year.
- 4.2 Regularly scheduled meetings will be open to the public. Up to fifteen minutes will be allocated at the beginning of each meeting to allow the community to provide verbal or written input. The regularly scheduled meetings are designed to conduct Council business. Comments and suggestions are welcome, but the Council will not enter into a debate or

dialogue with the public. Comments and concerns relative to school personnel are to be addressed to that person or the Principal directly and privately.

- 4.3 At the discretion of the Council, a closed, working meeting may be held to determine procedure, resolve Council membership issues, prepare for the regularly scheduled meeting, etc.
- 4.4 The Council may from time to time create ad-hoc committees as needed. The Council will provide a written statement of purpose for the committee and will elect a liaison to serve on the committee. Council members may serve on the committee, but parents, staff, students and administration may also serve on a committee formed by the Council.
- 4.5 The Council may from time to time conduct community surveys. Prior to conducting a survey, the Council will define a methodology for conducting the survey; the objective of the survey; and a clear process for using the data.
- 4.6 A modified Roberts Rules of Order will govern the meetings. An agenda will be posted prior to each meeting and will include:

- Call to Order
- Community Input
- Approve minutes from prior meeting
- Review meeting agenda
- Principal report
- Committee reports
- Old business
- New business
- Adjournment

- 4.7 A working quorum of fifty percent is required to call a meeting to order.
- 4.8 A majority is required to pass a motion.
- 4.9 How Decisions Are Reached. Decisions shall be made by consensus and interest- based problem solving, except as otherwise provided. In other words, a group goal should be reached through decisions that best reflect the thinking of all group members. Consensus is:
 - finding a proposal acceptable enough that all members can support it and no member opposes it
 - taking the time required to make an acceptable decision
 - active participation of all group members where input is valued
 - communication skills including listening, conflict resolution and discussion facilitation
 - creative thinking and open-mindedness
 - realizing no one may be completely satisfied, but everyone can live with the decision reached

5.0 How issues are brought to the Council:

- 5.1 Any issues can come to the Council through any Council member in written form at any time (email is acceptable).
- 5.2 Input from the community is specifically solicited at the beginning of each regular public meeting during the community input portion of the agenda.
- 5.3 Once an issue is brought to the Council, the appropriate representative(s) will notify the person(s) raising the issue in writing (email is acceptable) in a timely manner of any actions or decisions regarding that issue.
- 5.4 Audience Participation
 - 5.4.1 Every member of the Stillwater Elementary School Community is welcome to attend the Site Council meetings, unless a Closed Session has been called.
 - 5.4.2 The audience will not be addressed nor will questions be taken from the audience during the normal agenda.

6.0 Amendments to Plan of Operation

Every three years, the Council will form a subcommittee to carefully review the plan of operation and to make recommendations for possible amendments. During the course of normal business, the Council may amend the Plan of Operation with a 2/3 majority vote.