

New Highland Elementary School

SBDM Council Bylaws

New Highland Elementary School is committed to involving parents, staff, and community in educating our students to their highest possible level, while fostering positive attitudes and behaviors.



Every child. Every day. Whatever it takes.

I. Composition and Terms

A. Composition of the Council

The council will consist of the principal, three teacher members, and two parent members. If the minority enrollment at the school is eight percent or higher on October 1 preceding the start of a new council term, the council will also include at least one minority member (teacher OR parent).

B. Terms

Terms of council members will be staggered so that continuity within the council is maintained. Members will be elected to 2 year terms.

Terms begin July 1 and end June 30. Teachers and parent council members are allowed to seek re-election to serve consecutive terms as long as they remain eligible. Between the date of the elections and the start of the new council term, members-elect are encouraged to attend all Council meetings.

C. Leave of Absence

Leave of absence for a council member will not be granted.

II. Eligibility and Elections

A. Teacher Elections

1. Teacher Qualifications

- a. All staff certified for the position they hold may vote in the teacher election.
- b. To be elected to the council, a teacher must hold a position at the school requiring a teaching certificate (including counselor, media specialist, and traveling certified staff).
- c. Teachers will be elected by a majority of teachers in an election conducted by teachers.

2. Teacher Election Chair(s)

At one of the regularly called March faculty meetings, teacher representatives of the council will request that teacher elections be included on the agenda. At this meeting, teachers present will select the Teacher Election Chair(s) to run the teacher elections. The Chair(s) will be chosen from among those teachers who do not intend to run for the council that year. The teacher representatives of the council will give the name(s) of the selected Teacher Election Chair(s) to the council no later than the April council meeting. The name(s) will be recorded in the minutes.

3. Teacher Election Chair(s) Responsibilities

- a. Teacher Election Chair(s) will hold the teacher election before April 30th. The Chair(s) will be responsible for running the election including setting procedures to be followed and notifying the teachers of the date, place, and time of the elections.
- b. Upon request, the council may provide the Teacher Election Chair(s) with guidelines to help formulate the procedures for the election.

B. Parent Elections1. Role of the Parent-Teacher Organization

The school's largest parent-teacher organization will develop procedures for and conduct their own election for parent representatives to the council. If no parent-teacher organization exists, the largest group of parents formed for this purpose will run the election.

2. Parent Qualifications

Parent members must be the parent, step-parent, or foster parent of a child who will be enrolled at the school during one's term of office. Legal guardians also qualify as parents if the student lives with them and they have a court order giving them legal custody.

THREE GROUPS OF PARENTS MAY NOT SERVE ON THE COUNCIL

- a. Employees of New Highland Elementary or their parents, children, siblings, spouses, aunts, uncles, sons-in-law, and daughter-in-law.
- b. Employees in our district administrative offices or their parents, children, siblings, spouses, aunts, uncles, sons-in-law, and daughter-in-law.
- c. Members of the district school board, or spouses of district school board members.

3. Parent Elections

Parent elections will take place no later than May 30th. The parents of all children pre-registered to attend the school during the next year may vote. The PTO will determine how the election will be conducted. The principal will assist the PTO in notifying parents of the election schedule. The PTO will notify the current council of those elected no later than five school days after the election.

C. Minority Representation

1. If after both the teacher and parent elections there is no minority representation and the school enrollment is eight percent or higher as of the previous October 1, a special election will be held to elect a minority parent and an additional teacher.
2. Minority members must be American Indian, Alaskan Native, African American, Hispanic, including persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, and central or South American origin, Pacific Islander or other ethnic group underrepresented in the school. Minority representatives must meet the appropriate eligibility requirements.
3. The principal is responsible for organizing the minority parent and teacher elections as follows:
 - a. Following the general elections, if a minority member was not elected, the Teacher Election Chair(s) and the PTO will organize a special election (with organizational help from the principal, if needed). The election will be organized no sooner than ten and no later than twenty school days after the election (parent or teacher) which came last. The principal will notify all parents of the date, time, and location of the election. The notice will call for nomination of minority parents for the ballot. At the election, parents may nominate additional minority candidates. The candidate receiving the most votes will be elected. In the event of a tie, a run-off will be held.
 - b. Following the general election, if a minority member was not elected, the principal will call a meeting of all teachers in the building within seven school days of whichever election (parent or teacher) came last. Teachers will elect one minority teacher to serve as an additional teacher member on the council.
 - If there are no minority teachers on staff to elect, an additional non-minority will be elected (to represent and speak for the school minority population).
 - If there are minority teachers on the faculty and they decline to serve, no additional teacher will be elected.

D. Vacancies During a Term of Office1. Notice of Vacancy

When a teacher or parent vacancy occurs in the middle of a term, a new member will be elected to complete the term. The principal will post a notice in the faculty workroom and in a place readily accessible to parents stating that there is a vacancy and including the text of this subsection of the bylaws. The principal will also communicate this information to the PTO President.

2. Election to Fill a Teacher Member Vacancy

Within 10 school days of the vacancy, the Teacher Election Chair(s) selected the previous March will use the procedures established to conduct a teacher election to fill the vacancy.

3. Election to Fill a Parent Member Vacancy

The PTO President will call an election to be held no less than 10 or more than 20 days after the vacancy occurs. The PTO will use the procedures described in section II B of the bylaws.

4. Election to Replace a Minority Parent Member

The principal will implement the procedures described in section II C.

5. Election to Replace an Additional Teacher Member

The principal will implement the procedures described in section II C.

III. Council Training

- A. New Members:** A member elected for the first time will complete a minimum of six hours of training in the process of school-based decision making no later than thirty (30) days after the start of his or her term. Training must be provided by a person endorsed by the Kentucky Department of Education. Members-elect are invited and encouraged to attend council meetings that occur prior to the start of the term on July 1.
- B. Experienced Members:** A member elected who has served on a council previously will complete at least three (3) hours of training in the process of school-based decision making no later than one-hundred-twenty (120) days after the start of his or her term. Training must be provided by a person endorsed by the Kentucky Department of Education. Experienced members may receive training credit by attending any of the approved SBDM training workshops offered by endorsed trainers.
- C. Mid-Year Vacancies:** Members who are elected to fill a vacant position after the start of a term will complete the required training no more than thirty (30) days after the election. Training must be provided by a person endorsed by the Kentucky Department of Education.
- D. Reporting:** By November 1st each year, the principal will ensure that names, addresses, and the training completed by each council member is reported to the Kentucky Department of Education.

IV. Standards of Conduct

A. Attendance

Members of the council will attend all council meetings. If a member is unable to attend a meeting, he or she will notify the Chair of the Council. If a member is unable to attend on a regular basis, the Chair of the Council will contact the member to consult and to discuss the possibility of resignation. A member who has three unexcused absences from council meetings will resign.

B. Conflict of Interest

No one may serve on a school council who has a conflict of interest pursuant to KRS 45A [KRS 160.345(2)((a))]. A member who discovers a business or financial interest (not covered by KRS 45A) which may cause the appearance of impropriety should refrain from participating in any discussions or decisions involving those interests.

C. Ongoing Eligibility

Any member who ceases to be eligible to serve on the council will resign.

D. Improper Meeting

Council members will not meet to discuss council business in a group that constitutes a quorum without following the procedures for scheduling a meeting of the full council in accordance with the Open Meetings Law as described in Section VI of these bylaws.

E. Intentional Interference with School-Based Decision Making

No member of the council will intentionally engage in a pattern of practice which is detrimental to the successful implementation of or which circumvents the school-based decision making process.

V. Removal of Members

A member who violates the standards of conduct and does not submit a letter of resignation to the council could be reprimanded or removed in one of the following ways:

A. Commissioner's Recommendation

The Commissioner of Education can recommend removal for immorality, misconduct in office, incompetence, and willful neglect of duty or nonfeasance. The local board of education then holds a hearing into the charges to decide whether removal is warranted.

B. Office of Education Accountability

The Office of Education Accountability (OEA) can investigate claims of intentional interference with school-based decision-making. If the OEA cannot resolve the issue it is forwarded to the Kentucky Board of Education, which holds a hearing to determine whether the charges are valid. The first time the Kentucky Board finds a person guilty of such interference, the person will receive a reprimand. The second time, the person can be removed from office.

VI. Meetings

A. All Meetings

1. Council meetings will comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Law.

Open Meetings Law [KRS 160.345(2e)] The meetings of the school council shall be open to the public and all interested persons may attend. However, the exceptions to open meetings provided in KRS 61.810 shall apply.

Exemption from Open Meetings Law (KRS 61.810) All meetings of a quorum of the members of any public agency at which any public business is discussed or at which any action is taken by the agency, shall be public meetings, open to the public at all times, except for the following:

(c) Discussions of proposed or pending litigation against or on behalf of the public agency;
(f). Discussions or hearings which might lead to the appointment, discipline, or dismissal of an individual employee, member, or student without restricting that employee's, member's, or student's right to a public hearing if requested. This exception shall not be interpreted to permit discussion of general personnel matters in secret;

2. Council meetings will be open to the public unless the council goes into closed session under the provisions of the Open Meetings Laws as outlined in subsection D of this section.

B. Regular Meetings

1. At the first council meeting on or after July 1st each year,
 - a. the council will designate a regular meeting time and place. Consideration to being convenient to the public will be given.
 - b. the council will vote to designate a Vice Chairperson who will act in the event the Chairperson is unable to attend a meeting.
 - c. the Chairperson will distribute to members the sign-off/waiver to be notified by email regarding council meetings and pertinent information
2. The principal will post a copy of the regular meeting schedule in the teachers' workroom and in a place regularly accessible to parents. He or she will use any other methods deemed appropriate to make the schedule readily available to the public.

C. Special Meetings

1. Any meeting not at the regular time or place is a special meeting.
2. A special meeting of the council may be called by the chairperson or by a majority of council members.
3. Any special meeting of the council will comply with the requirements of the Open Meetings Law; therefore, the following steps will be taken:
 - a. Written Notice The person or persons calling the meeting will prepare and sign a written notice that states the date, time, and place of the special meeting and an agenda for the meeting. Only issues listed on that agenda may be discussed at the special meeting. Items may be subtracted from that agenda before approval at the meeting but they cannot be added or revised.

- b. Delivery of Notice The person or persons calling the meeting will arrange for the written notice to be delivered to every council member and to any media organization that has made a written request to be notified of the council meetings. The delivery can be made only by hand, fax, US mail, or email. To receive email notification, a written request must be on file at the school. The notice will arrive at least 24 hours before the time set for the meeting.
- c. Posting of Notice The notice will be posted conspicuously at the school, and also at the building where the meeting will be held if the meeting will not be held at the school. These copies will be posted as soon as possible after the meeting is called, but definitely no less than 24 hours before the meeting will be held.

D. Closed Sessions

The council may go into closed session only to discuss hiring personnel, or actual or pending litigation. The following procedures will be followed to go into a closed session:

1. A motion will be made and a vote taken that the council will go into closed session to discuss individual applicants for hiring under KRS 61.810(1)(c) or litigation under KRS 61.810(1)(f). See section VI A(1) of the bylaws for statute.
2. Individuals with pertinent information to the discussion may be invited to participate in the closed session (including the council secretary for minutes).
3. The motion and results of the vote including the statute number allowing the closed session will be recorded in the council minutes.
4. Only the topic announced in the open session motion may be discussed in the closed session.
5. No council action may be taken in a closed session.
6. The council will return to open session to make any decisions.
7. The decisions will be recorded in the council minutes.

E. Public Input

1. Every agenda will include a public comment item.
2. Public input may be informal with the chairperson calling on persons who wish to speak.
3. If more than several persons wish to speak, the chairperson will have the option of setting time limits for speakers based on time allotted for this item, the number wishing to speak, and any extra time left on the agenda; or if the agenda will run over, by consensus of the members present to continue.

VII. Agendas

A. Agenda Requests

Anyone may submit items to the chairperson for inclusion on the agenda. Items must be submitted no later than ten (10) school days before a scheduled meeting.

B. Preliminary Agenda

The chairperson will prepare a preliminary agenda marked as such to be posted in the teachers' lounge and in a place readily accessible to all parents and distributed to all council members at least five (5) school days before each regularly scheduled council meeting. Each preliminary agenda will include the following items:

1. Opening Business
 - a. Agenda Approval
 - b. Approval of minutes from previous meeting
 - c. Good News Reports
 - d. Public Comment
2. Student Achievement / Planning
3. Budget Report
4. Committee Reports
5. Bylaw or Policy Review or Report
6. New Business
7. List of items submitted but not on the agenda and their disposition (as needed)

C. Approval of Agenda

At the beginning of each regular council meeting, the council will approve an agenda for the meeting through consensus. Items on the preliminary agenda may be added, deleted, or modified at this time.

VIII. Records

A. Open Records Requests

The principal will be the official records custodian and will make the notebooks of council bylaws, policies, minutes, budgets, current CSIP, and other council records available in response to written requests. A fee set by the local Board of Education may be charged to cover copying costs other than staff time to make the copies in accord with the provisions of the Open Records Law. Persons who want copies of documents in the council binder will give the principal a written request.

B. Office Copies

At least one binder of council records will be maintained in the front office and made available as part of normal office operations. This binder will contain copies of the council bylaws, all council policies, and council minutes for the current school year, the current council budget, and the current CSIP. All council records will be maintained in the school office in accordance with the State Archives Records Retention Schedule (725 KAR 1:030).

IX. Council Officers and Duties

A. Chairperson

The principal will serve as the chairperson of the council. The chairperson will preside at all council meetings and carry out other specific duties as assigned by these bylaws.

B. Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chairperson will be chosen by consensus from within the council membership at the first meeting of the council on or after July 1st. The vice-chairperson will act as chairperson in the absence of the chairperson. The vice-chairperson may also serve as the chairperson for the council should the process of selecting a new principal become necessary. In this event, the council will follow the criteria and policy outlining procedures for principal selection.

C. Recorder / Secretary

1. The chairperson of the council will appoint a recorder for the council. The recorder will not be a member of the council.
2. The duties of the recorder will be to:
 - a. Take minutes at each council meeting that include an accurate record of all motions made and decisions or actions taken.
 - b. Take, copy, and distribute the draft minutes, marked as such, to each member of the council and post a copy in the teachers' lounge and in a place readily accessible to all parents. This will be done within five (5) school days after each meeting.
 - c. Make copies of the final, approved minutes for the binders in the office and send copies to all council members, the president of the parent-teacher organization, and the superintendent or superintendent's designee. This will be done within five (5) school days following the meeting at which minutes were approved.

X. Committees

A. Use of Committees

Committees will be used to support and to accomplish tasks of the council.

B. Committees Policy

The council will adopt a committee policy to facilitate the participation of interested persons. The policy will include the number of committees, their jurisdiction, their composition, and the process for member selection.

XI. Decision-Making

A. Quorum

A majority (more than half) of the members, including at least one parent member, will constitute a quorum. A quorum must be present for the council to take action.

A quorum of the council shall not meet privately to discuss council business or privately meet in groups consisting of less than a quorum to discuss council business in order to defeat the requirements of the Open Meetings Law. This includes telephone discussions. Council decisions cannot be made unless in a called meeting with a quorum present.

B. Council Responsibilities

The council will make no decisions on issues that are not under their jurisdiction by law. The following issues are under the purview of the School-Based Decision Making Council:

1. School Improvement Planning
2. School Safety Plan
3. Ungraded Primary Program (Elementary)
4. Assessment Data Analysis
5. Achievement Gap Targets
6. Professional Development
7. Spending on textbooks, instructional materials, student support, and staff (including determination of the number of persons to be employed in each job classification)
8. Consultation before the principal selects people to be hired
9. Selection of a new principal
10. Adopting policies in the following areas:
 - a. Alignment with State Standards
 - b. College-Level Courses (Secondary)
 - c. Committees
 - d. Consultation
 - e. Curriculum
 - f. Discipline, Classroom Management, and School Safety
 - g. Enhancing Student Achievement
 - h. Extracurricular Programs
 - i. Instructional and Non-Instructional Staff Time Assignment
 - j. Instructional Practices
 - k. Parent Engagement (Title I Schools)
 - l. Program Appraisal
 - m. School Day and Week Schedule
 - n. School Space Use
 - o. Student Assignment
 - p. Technology Use
 - q. Wellness (Primary to Grade 5)
 - r. Writing
 - s. OTHER: Policies not required by law but recommended by the local district and areas not required by law but required by the Standards and Indicators for School Improvement for Level 3.

C. Consensus

1. The council will operate by consensus decision-making using the following procedures:
 - a. Only decisions that have an immediate deadline or will have very limited impact on the school will be made without a committee recommendation.
 - b. All council members who choose to do so will be given a chance for input on issues requiring a consensus decision.
 - c. If council input and discussion reveal significant concerns or ambiguities related to an issue, the council's normal practice will be to give or return the issue to a committee for further work. Exceptions may be made for urgent timelines or pressing concerns.
2. After council input and discussion, any member may make a motion to accept a proposal. If the proposal being considered is in writing, the motion may be made verbally. If the proposal has not been presented in writing or the member making a motion wants to propose one or more amendments, he or she will write down the motion, read it to the council, and hand the written motion to the recorder for inclusion in the minutes.
3. The chair will then ask if there is further discussion.
4. When that discussion is complete, the chair will test for consensus by asking if there is consensus for approval of the motion. Any member who is not willing to support the motion is obligated to say so at this time. Members who support the motion will indicate by word or other sign that they believe there is now consensus.
5. If no member states unwillingness to support, the chair will direct the recorder to record that consensus has been reached and the motion has passed.

D. Consensus Failure

1. Council voting will be done only when the council must have a decision, consensus has failed, and one or more of the following conditions exist:
 - a. When the council will otherwise be unable to meet a legal deadline by which the council is required to have made a decision, or
 - b. When the council has failed to reach consensus at a second meeting for that purpose.
2. At the first meeting where an issue is discussed, if the chair tests for consensus but consensus is not reached, the council may postpone further consideration until the next meeting or continue to discuss the issue. After testing for consensus on a proposal three times in one meeting, the chair may direct that the proposal be taken up again at the next meeting unless one of the conditions for voting applies.
3. If the council takes up an issue at a second meeting and is still unable to reach consensus, the council will consider alternative steps, including but not limited to:
 - a. Ask a standing committee to bring the council a new proposal on the issue.
 - b. Doing nothing and dropping the issue.
 - c. Decide the issue by majority vote.
 - d. Form an ad hoc committee.

E. Adoption of Policies

1. Policies are defined as written documents that establish rules, procedures, guidelines, standards, or principles to guide decision-making in various situations.
2. To be officially adopted, a policy will have a reading at two different council meetings.
3. Adopted policies are binding until the council amends them.

F. Bylaws Amendment

The council may amend these bylaws by consensus as needed. All motions to amend the bylaws of the council will be submitted in writing. No decision on a motion to amend the bylaws will be made until after the topic has been on the agenda for two meetings and has had two readings.

D. Appeals of Council Decisions

The district Board of Education has established a process of appeals of council decisions.