

**SOUTH CAROLINA
SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL**

**Fairfield Middle School
School Improvement Council By-Laws**

Article I

Name of Organization

The name of the organization will be the Fairfield Middle School Improvement Council.

Organization's Mission

Our mission at FMS is to provide excellent educational services by using the best educational tools and technology that will help our children to enhance their learning ability which will allow them to exceed their learning expectations.

Article II

Purpose:

- Participation in the development of the five-year school improvement plan.
- Assist in implementing the plan and evaluating the outcomes.
- Advise on the spending of any state incentive award funds received by the school.
- Write the annual *Report to the Parents* about the progress of the school and SIC in achieving the goals and objectives of the School Improvement Plan.
- Write the annual *School Report Card*.
- Participate in the revision of the school improvement plan if a school is rated as "At Risk" (formerly "Unsatisfactory") on the *School Report Card*.
- Consult with the school about the training and support that will be provided to parents as part of the School Reading Proficiency Plan.
- Provide other assistance that the principal may request as well as carry out any other duties prescribed by the local school board.

The council will not have any of the powers and duties reserved by law or regulation to the local school board.

Article III

Representation and Membership

The Fairfield Middle School Improvement Council will be comprised of 10 members:

- Two parents of students in the school elected by the parents of the students enrolled in the school;
- Two teachers from the school elected by faculty;
- Two community representatives appointed by the principal. The appointments should include one business partner and other persons from the community to balance representation, or other variables; and

- The principal will serve as an ex-officio member of the council. As many as three additional ex-officio members may also serve on the council, the number and positions to be determined by the SIC. These ex-officio positions may include, but are not limited to, the following: an administrator, the president of the school's parent teacher organization, the immediate past chairperson of the School Improvement Council, or the Teacher of the Year. If the leadership of any of the named organizations or positions is unable to serve, an appropriate representative will be named by the organization sending the representative.

Each elected and appointed member will have one vote and absentee ballots or proxy voting will not be permitted. Ex-officio members are not voting members of the SIC.

A ratio of two-thirds elected members to one-third appointed members will be maintained as mandated by state law (i.e. twice as many elected as appointed). Ex officio members do not figure into the elected/appointed membership ratio. **Each member will have one vote and absentee ballots or proxy voting will not be permitted.**

Article IV

Election and Appointment Procedures

Elections will be held no later than October of each year and council members will assume their responsibilities immediately. Appointments will be made within 14 days of the elections.

Information about the upcoming election of parent representatives will be printed in the school calendar or school newsletter along with a nomination ballot, when applicable.

Ballots will be returned to the school within seven days. The ballots will be counted by a minimum of three members of the council and be retained for one year at Fairfield Middle School.

Teacher representatives to the council will be elected by the faculty during a regularly scheduled faculty meeting.

The names and addresses of all council members will be forwarded to School Improvement Council Assistance (SCIA) at the University of South Carolina within 30 days following the elections.

The names of all council members will be published in the school calendar or school newsletter following the elections.

Article V

Tenure

All elected and appointed members of the council will serve a two-year term. Staggered elected terms provide a continuity of membership and knowledge of the SIC's actions from year to year. Appointed members of the community are often willing to commit to one year at a time, but are encouraged to serve for two years just like elected members. Ex-officio members do not figure into the elected/appointed membership ratio.

No limit will be set on the number of terms a member may serve.

The council may establish committees made up of teachers, parents, business leaders, and other citizens to study specific issues and make recommendations to the council. These committees will not be permanent and will have no responsibilities beyond those outlined by the council when established.

Membership on the council will terminate when members:

- No longer have a student enrolled in the school or no longer live in the school attendance zone;
- No longer hold a teaching position at the school;
- Have missed three consecutive scheduled meetings without proper notice to the chairperson; or
- Submit a letter of resignation to the chairperson.

In the event of any of the above situations, the chairperson will appoint, in the case of an elected member, the person with the next highest number of votes in the most recent election is selected. In case of an appointed member, the principal will select a replacement. The replacement will not serve a full term, but finish the term of the person replaced.

Article VI

Officers

The officers of the Fairfield Middle School Improvement Council will consist of a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. The officers will be elected annually by the full council membership no later than the October meeting of each academic year. Ex-officio members are not eligible to be an officer of the council.

Article VII

Duties of Officers

- Overall Duties of the Chair:
- Direct the monthly SIC meetings.
- Act as spokesperson for the SIC when working with the faculty, parent or community groups, district staff, and local school board.
- Sign documents assuring SIC participation, such as the school's annual *Report to the Parents*, the narrative accompanying the annual state *School Report Card*, and the budget submitted to the S.C. Department of Education for any incentive award expenditures.
- Appoint SIC members and others to serve on committees as needed.
- Prepare the monthly agenda with the principal well in advance of the monthly meeting to allow time for the Secretary to send it to all members prior to the meeting and to have it posted publicly at the school and on the school's website.
- Conduct monthly meetings of the SIC, directing the action of the meeting through the agenda, and appointing committees as needed.
- Communicate regularly with the subcommittee, project, and task force leaders to support their activities and prepare them for reporting progress at the meetings.
- Overall Duties of the SIC Vice Chair:
- Assist the Chair during meetings, assuming the leadership for a discussion period or for the entire meeting if the chair is unable to attend.
- Assume leadership of a standing committee, task force or project of the SIC.

- Assist with the development of the agenda, committee activity and general support of SIC initiatives.
- Additional duties and activities will vary according to local SIC bylaws.
- Coordinate with the SIC Chair to identify the actions needed.

Overall Duties of the SIC Secretary:

- Maintain a set of records at the school for the SIC including current bylaws, current and past copies of SIC meeting agendas, minutes, current and past copies of the school's Report to the Parents, latest copy of the state School Report Card, and a copy of the current year portion of the school's improvement/renewal plan
- Work with school staff to ensure that copies of the bylaws, current year's minutes and agendas and other pertinent information is readily available to the public, or by posting it to an SIC section of the school's web site.
- Assure the agenda is distributed to all SIC members at least 10 days prior to the next meeting, and that a copy of the agenda is available for public view prior to the meeting by posting it at the school or on the school's website.
- Record attendance at each meeting.
- Make a record of the actions taken at each meeting (using the agenda as a guide for reporting actions taken and giving summaries of discussion points where appropriate).
- Coordinate with the committee and school staff about having copies of materials prepared for each meeting.
- Summarize information about meeting actions for publication in the school's newsletter or calendar.
- File the approved minutes or record of action in an SIC folder at the school and arrange to have them posted to the school's web site.
- Distribute copies of the minutes/record of action of the previous meeting along with the agenda of the upcoming meeting to all SIC members in advance of the meeting.
- Contact the SIC Chair or committee leaders to determine if materials need to be copied for the next meeting.
- Submit to the school newsletter/calendar the summary of the last SIC meeting and the agenda of the next meeting.

SIC Committee Leadership Duties:

- Direct the actions of a standing committee responsible for monitoring the implementation of a strategy or an ad hoc committee with a specific task and limited time of existence.
- Communicate progress to the SIC Chair and prepare the report to the SIC.
- Report the progress of the committee's work when scheduled on the agenda.
- Recruit committee members from among others not already serving on the SIC.
- Chairs of SIC committees are not required to be elected or appointed SIC members.

Article VIII

Meetings

The council will establish a schedule and location for regular SIC meetings at the first SIC meeting of the school year. Council members will be notified as soon as practicable of any changes to the regular meeting schedule or location.

A simple majority of the council membership will constitute a quorum if at least one parent and one teacher representative are present.

Training

An orientation session will be held annually for all council members that includes information about council roles, responsibilities, and functions, as well as information on school and local district policies and procedures. Council members will attend school improvement council training workshops sponsored by the district office, the Professional Development Section of the State Department of Education, or School Improvement Council Assistance (SICA) in the University of South Carolina's College of Education.

The principal will share information on school activities, successes and concerns with council members.

Training and technical assistance is available from the district, the State Department of Education, and SICA.

Article X

Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meetings of the council by a two-thirds vote of those present provided that the specified amendments have been introduced at a prior meeting, included in the minutes of that meeting, and are listed on the agenda for the current meeting.