




School Year 2019 – 2020

Local School Advisory Team Guidelines



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A Message from the DCPS Communications and Engagement Office



Dear DCPS Community,

District of Columbia Public Schools' (DCPS) mission is to ensure that every school guarantees students reach their full potential through rigorous and joyful learning experiences provided in a nurturing environment. To carry out that mission, strong partnerships between families, school staff, principals and communities are essential.

In the fall 2017, DCPS strengthened its commitment to these partnerships by making "Engaging Families" one of our five districtwide strategic priorities. Through this priority, DCPS and its schools are expected to "ensure communication and deepen partnerships with families and the community."


An important body that DCPS will increasingly rely on for facilitating these partnerships at each school is the Local School Advisory Team (LSAT). The LSAT is a team of parents, teachers, non-instructional school staff, and community members who meet monthly to advise the principal on matters that promote high expectations and high achievement for all students at their school. This team advises the principal on topics including, but not limited to, school priorities and initiatives, the development of the Comprehensive School Plan, and the alignment of school goals with broader DCPS goals.

LSATs are mandated to exist at every DCPS school and principals are expected to strongly consider LSAT advice. In order to support LSATs in carrying out their mission, DCPS provides this Guidelines document along with additional resources on the DCPS website at bit.ly/dcpslsat. Staff from the DCPS Communications and Engagement Office (CEO) are also available to answer any questions about LSATs and provide individualized supports. Please feel free to reach out to them by email at ceo.info@k12.dc.gov or phone at 202.719.6613.

We look forward to continued and strengthened engagement with all of our school community stakeholders!

Thank you,

Shanita Burney
Officer, Communications and Engagement Office
DC Public Schools



In addition, Local School Advisory Teams carry certain responsibilities regarding the excessing of DCPS job positions, according to the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the WTU and DCPS as quoted in part below:

4.5.2.2 When DCPS determines an excess is necessary, the Local School Restructuring Team (LSRT) shall make a recommendation as to the area(s) of certification to be affected.

4.5.2.8 When the Supervisor's final decision departs from the recommendation of the LSRT, as to the



Membership

Each Local School Advisory Team will have the following members representing their constituencies:


- 1 WTU Building Representative or designee
- 4 Teachers, elected by the ET-15 and EG-09 teachers
- 4 Parents/guardians elected by the parents
- 1 Parent Group Leader (of PTA, PTO, PTSA, HSA, or other such group) or designee

- 1 Non-



Elections

Local School Advisory Team elections are held annually between May 1 and June 30. If there are extenuating circumstances where this fails to happen, schools shall hold elections as soon as possible after the new school year begins, no later than September 30, and with a minimum of three weeks' notice to the school community. The DCPS Communications and Engagement Office must be notified of any elections not taking place within the May 1 - June 30 window.



If there is an elected student government president in the high school, that individual will serve as the student representative on the Local School Advisory Team or designate their Vice President to serve. If there is no Student Government Association (SGA), the student representative may be designated by the principal until an SGA Chapter is organized.

Certifying Elections

After elections have taken place and all team members have been identified, their names and contact information must be submitted to the DCPS Communications and Engagement Office in order to certify the Local School Advisory Team election. This information should be submitted by email to ceo.info@k12.dc.gov or online at bit.ly/lsainfo19-20.



Operating Principles and Practices for Local School Advisory Teams

Consensus

Local School Advisory Teams should strive for consensus in all matters. Driving to consensus is a strong foundation for the kind of active, focused discussion in which every LSAT should be engaged. There may be times, however, when consensus cannot be reached. In those cases, the principal will benefit from diverse points of view. These differences in opinion are no less helpful to the principal than a single opinion. Presenting and discussing diverse points of view in this way mirrors other organizational structures, such as the U.S. Supreme Court, in which majority and minority opinions plainly and openly co-exist.


Trust and Confidentiality

Particularly when discussing school budget implications, Local School Advisory Teams occasionally have the need to discuss sensitive and confidential personnel information. The principal will set clear expectations at these junctures and explicitly inform team members when discussion topics must be kept confidential. At these times, team members must abide by the principal's judgment to operate as a closed meeting and keep the discussion confidential. In cases where Local School Advisory Teams include students, there may be additional sensitivity around certain topics. In some instances, the high school student may be asked to excuse themselves from the meeting. Sound judgment and respect for those who may be impacted by decisions being discussed are imperative for all team members.

Certain kinds of highly confidential personnel information cannot be shared with the Local School Advisory Team. Personally identifiable information about students and employees must not be disclosed to or discussed by Local School Advisory Teams.

Before holding a closed meeting, the LSAT must first meet in public and vote in favor of conducting a closed meeting and the subject of the closed meeting must be made publicly available.

Transparency of Local School Advisory Team Meeting



notice via the school's website or listserv, and publishing in the District of Columbia Register (DC Register). The DCPS Office of the General Counsel will provide instructions on the process for publishing meeting notices in the DC Register. , LSATs shall electronically record all meetings whether open or closed. Detailed meeting minutes and/or electronic recordings shall be retained for 5 years.

LSATs shall establish rules for open meetings and for dispersing information on meeting discussions in



The secretary keeps minutes for each meeting.

Within 1 school day, the secretary distributes minutes to team members and the principal.

Within 1 school day of receiving the minutes from the secretary, team members may comment on the minutes to improve accuracy. Failure to respond shall be taken as assumed confirmation of the accuracy of the minutes.

Within 3 school days of the meeting, after approval by the LSAT members and principal, the minutes will be posted on the school's website and/or otherwise made available to the school community.

Minutes may also be distributed via school newsletter, listserv, or other means that the Local School Advisory Team deems fit.

Minutes, or notice that they were publicly posted, must also be provided to the DCPS Communications and Engagement Office by emailing them to ceo.info@k12.dc.gov.

Minutes must be detailed enough to provide a full record of a meeting. However, confidential information shall not be included.

Recommendations for Effective Meetings

Building positive relationships is key to being able to collaborate. Local School Advisory Teams should set themselves up for success by ensuring there is a healthy culture of respect, group decision-making, and people connecting with each other.

Operating transparently is integral to ensuring that the Local School Advisory Team is trusted by the school body. As such, LSATs should make sure everyone knows when and where meetings take place, how the decisions are made, what is expected of members, where they can go to find more information, and other opportunities to participate.

Providing information in a way that is accessible and comprehensible is an important part of making sure that all members can participate in the discussion. Consider the formatting of information, the possibility that background information or explanations will be needed, the use of acronyms, and whether translation or interpretation services are needed.

