

Ashton Ranch Elementary School Site Council Handbook (proposed for August 2009)

Dysart Unified School District #89
Surprise, Arizona

Article I. Mission Statement and Goals

Section 1. Mission Statement

As members of the Ashton Ranch School Community, we believe learning for all is our core purpose, and we will empower our students to be responsible and contributing members of our democratic society both now and in the future.

*Advancing
Responsible*

***Empowered(Excelling) August 4
Students***

Section 2. Goals

Goal I: Empowering and collaborative leadership

Goal II: A productive culture

Goal III: Focused and effective instructional practices based on relationships, rigor, and relevance

Goal IV: Consistent, systematic, focused and responsive monitoring of student progress

Goal V: Relevant and effective professional development programs/activities

Goal VI: A safe, orderly, and inviting environment

Goal VII: Meaningful parental involvement

Goal VIII: Mutually beneficial school/community relationships

Article II. Responsibilities and Procedures

Section 1. Responsibilities of the Site Council

- A) To promote student involvement and input in all school activities
- B) To promote and communicate successes to parents, teachers, and the community by encouraging special programs and communicating about the purposes of the Council
- C) To review the curriculum and provide learning experiences which produce school improvement as indicated by Effective Schools Research and successful Model Schools.
- D) To listen and be responsive to the Ashton Ranch needs by facilitating the development of short term and long range objectives and action plans for the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)
- E) To assess how well the school is doing through surveys and other types of assessment
- F) To maintain a safe, orderly and secure school learning climate
- G) To facilitate budget development for both capital and operating funds as empowered by District guidelines and policies.

Section 2. Procedures for each Responsibility

The following procedures will be used to fulfill the responsibilities of the ARSC:

A) To promote student involvement

1. Include student representatives in ARSC meetings in order to solicit regular input from the students
2. Operate a web page on the school website
3. Encourage student community service projects each school year
4. Recognize students quarterly for types of outstanding contributions

B) To promote effective communication

1. Give a monthly oral report to PTA
2. Give a report to faculty meetings at least once a month
3. Post minutes and agenda in public areas; post on the school website
4. Display ARSC meeting dates on marquee
5. Place pertinent ARSC information on the school website
6. Present a monthly award which includes a framed certificate and professional duty day (**gift card**) **August 4** to nominated teachers and staff.
7. Recognize that ARSC reserves the right to present recognition awards to students, parents, and community members and to promote successes through other means. One such award is a Character Counts volunteer award given to a parent or a community member

who volunteers at a meritorious level. This volunteer award can be given as determined by the ARSC.

8. Provide for a ARSC Membership Handbook containing all necessary records

C) To review the curriculum and provide effective learning experiences

1. Contact the building administrator who will work with faculty committees to review the curriculum
2. Check in February for faculty consensus on any curriculum refinements
3. Plan by February for the ARSC to reach consensus on the curriculum committee and faculty's recommended learning plan
4. Hear reports of the principal on a quarterly basis after administration and faculty have monitored curriculum refinements to assess whether purposes are attained
5. Begin curriculum development cycle
6. Establish a procedure for selection of professional, certified staff **(teachers and support staff) August 4** as follows:
 - When a vacancy occurs, the principal informs the ARSC
 - A screening **(interview) August 4** committee is selected by ARSC **(the principal) August 4** consisting of parents, teachers and the principal
 - This screening **(interview)** committee reviews applications, determines interviews and conducts interviews
 - **A recommendation for hire can be made after reference checks. The principal is the final approver. August 4**

D) To facilitate the development of school improvement plans

Support a procedure for creating a Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) and sub-committee goals as follows:

Steps for completing School Improvement Process

1. Review the goals, qualities, indicators, and data sources in the revised Goals for Learning Environments.
2. Share Values and Core Behaviors.
 - In defining core behaviors, staff looks at how they demonstrate each value in relation to the Goals for Learning Environments.
3. Prepare CIP- with the Team Leaders and Super Teams
 - Use procedures outlined in the DUSD Continuous Improvement Plan Procedures
4. Site Council identifies immediate needs
 - Determine immediate needs and write a needs statement for each goal using procedures outlined in the CIP procedures
5. Site Council obtains input from constituents regarding prioritized needs.

6. Site Council assesses current status of previous CIP in the context of current needs.
7. Define objectives(s)/Write Action Plan(s)
8. Share CIP with faculty, professional development committee, and ARSC
9. Communicate progress on the CIP on a quarterly basis with the ARSC and the Ashton Ranch community

E) To assess school climate via surveys

1. Design/approve surveys and assessments for students, parents, and teachers
2. Evaluate feedback and results from these surveys and assessments pertaining to the short and long range improvement plans

F) To maintain a safe and secure school learning climate

1. Continue the preventive, supportive, and corrective discipline plan
2. Ask the building administrator to prepare a school safety report quarterly and report to the ARSC
3. Consider improvements for campus safety such as peer mediation or other such improvements related to a positive learning climate

G) To facilitate budget development for both capital and operating funds as empowered by District guidelines and policies.

Facilitate the School Budget Process

1. In January of each school year, the principal will explain and gather input for a proposed budget based upon enrollment information, needs, sustenance and improvement requests from all staff members as follows:
 - a. The principal, beginning in January, will meet with grade level, special area, and special education teachers to gather sustenance and improvement plan requests from each group or individual staff member in writing utilizing the district forms for submitting requests.
 - b. The principal, beginning in January, will meet with the team leaders to discuss budget needs for the next school year and based on these needs determine funding allocations.
 - c. The principal will include in the budget requests items directly related to the CIP or other school needs.
 - d. By February 15, the principal will organize budget sustenance and improvement requests received through meetings described in A-C above **and place all in the school budget binder. (delete) August 4**

2. At the March Site Council meeting, the principal will present the proposed budget to the Ashton Ranch Site Council. A budget summary request form prepared by the principal will be given to each Site Council member for review with the entire budget binder being available for reference and specifics. Clarification, changes or deletions will be considered based upon Site Council member consensus.
3. At the April Site Council meeting, the principal will present the proposed staffing requests to the Site Council. Updated staffing information will be presented upon the final enrollment count being determined after the 100 day enrollment statistics are available.
4. In April, the Site Council will review the proposed budget ensuring that all areas of the school and the current improvement plans are represented and will request further clarification of any items presented.
5. When or if budget adjustments or improvement changes are required or desired, the principal will communicate these changes at the final Site Council meeting in May.

Article III. Council Organization and Operations

Section 1. Council Composition

- A) The Council shall consist of a maximum of eleven (11) voting members, each with one vote
- B) The members of the Council may include, but not necessarily be limited to the following:
 - (1) Administration - The principal of the building shall have a permanent seat on the Council (with one vote)
 - (2) Certified Personnel - There shall be four voting positions on the Council for any full or part-time certified personnel employed at Ashton Ranch. Included in this group are teachers, tutors, librarians, coaches, counselors, school psychologists, speech pathologists, occupational-therapists, and physical therapists.
 - (3) Classified Personnel - There shall be one voting position on the Council for any non-certificated employee of Ashton Ranch. This member may be selected from secretaries, custodians, aides, cafeteria employees, crossing guards, or nurses.
 - (4) Parents/Guardians/Community Members/Observer
 - a. There shall be four voting positions on the Council for the parent/guardian category. Parents/guardians must have a

child currently enrolled at Ashton Ranch or reside in the Ashton Ranch attendance area.

- b. There shall be one non-voting process observer designated by the principal and approved by the ARSC. This person shall attend each meeting and have the duties of assisting the facilitation by providing feedback during and after the meeting to the co-chairs and the council. This person shall be trained in process observation and group facilitation skills.
- c. There shall be one voting community member position. This member shall not have children going to Ashton Ranch and must reside or have a business in the attendance area.

C) Members of the above groups shall be selected with no further requirements such as grade levels, number of children or years of employment by the Dysart Unified School District #89.

Section 2. Terms of Membership

- A) Membership on the council shall be for a term of two years, except the Principal may serve continuously during his/her tenure in this position. A parent/guardian may, at his or her option, serve a third year if no other parent/guardian is available to fill another open position. Terms for the teacher and parent positions shall be staggered for the 2007-08 school year with two teachers and two parents serving a one year term and two teachers and two parents serving two year terms. Beginning with the 2008-09 year all parent and teacher terms will be two years long.
- B) No member, other than the principal, may serve consecutive terms, unless not enough applicants exist for a given position in the certified, classified, or parent vacated positions.
- C) If a member resigns before the end of his/her term, his/her replacement (Article III, Section 3) shall serve the remainder of that term and be eligible for one additional full term.

Section 3. Selection and Replacement Procedure

Selection of members shall be as follows:

With the exception of the administrative member, who shall be the current principal, volunteers for the members described in Article III, Section 1 B will be solicited through general announcements in the school and community prior to the conclusion of the school in June and thereafter as often as required to fill vacant memberships.

In the event of more volunteers than openings in any category of membership, an election process will be used by the ARSC to elect new members.

Process Description

- 1) All teachers shall elect new teacher members from the applicants.
- 2) Parents shall elect new parent members from the applicants.
- 3) The ARSC classified member shall be elected by all classified employees at Ashton Ranch.
- 4) The community member shall be elected by the community.

In the event of a vacancy, the expeditious selection of new members to fill an unexpired term will follow the same procedure as in the initial selection process for that category of members.

In each of the membership groups listed above, the election process shall be written ballot prior to May 15th of each school year. Teachers and support staff shall be given separate written ballots. Parents and community members shall receive written notice of their opportunity to vote by written ballot on the first Tuesday in May. The polling place located in the school's office entrance foyer shall be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The respective ARSC member groups shall count ballots and the results of the election shall be presented to the ARSC at the June meeting. All candidates shall receive written notice of these results.

Section 4. Member Roles

- A) Member roles shall consist of facilitators and a recorder
- B) All roles shall be solicited on a volunteer basis, subject to Council approval. In the event of more than one volunteer, a consensus process shall be used. One facilitator shall be the principal; a co-facilitator may be chosen from the remaining members of the Site Council.
- C) The term for the co-facilitator and the recorder shall be one year. Members may serve two consecutive terms. The second term of office shall be subject to the procedures listed in the Article III Section 4 B.

Section 5. Duties of the Roles

- A) Facilitators
 - (1) May co-facilitate all meetings unless one is absent and then the other facilitator fulfills the role independently
 - (2) The co-facilitator will work with the principal to plan and direct the council and to prepare and distribute the agenda
 - (3) Will be responsible for maintaining communication within the council, the school community and the public

(4) Will complete facilitation training if offered by the Dysart School District for site councils

B) Recorder

(1) Ensures complete and accurate records of all ARSC meetings, including attendance

(2) Is responsible for filing minutes and reports in a permanent record in the school office. This file shall also include the Mission Statement and a complete copy of the updated handbooks.

(3) In the absence of the recorder, the chair will appoint a member to act as recorder until the return of the elected recorder.

Section 6. Ad Hoc Committees

A) The power to form special committees and to appoint their members rests with members of the council

B) The Council may create such subcommittees as deemed necessary to promote and carry out the council's mission

C) The subcommittee shall take its direction from the council and will regularly keep the council informed of its work

D) The chairperson of the subcommittee must be a member of the ARSC. The subcommittee chairperson shall be appointed by the council

E) The subcommittee may include people who are not members of the council.

F) Members of the subcommittee will be selected in a similar manner to that of council members: volunteers will be solicited, with a consensus process to determine subcommittee membership if there are more volunteers than positions (see Article III Section 3).

Section 7. Meetings

A) The ARSC will meet a minimum of one time each month from September **(August) August 4** through May. Other meetings will be scheduled as project or subcommittee work needs arise. Dates of meetings shall be determined by the council. Every effort shall be made to provide at least four days notice of a change of date and/or time.

B) Meetings shall be limited to one and a half hours, with the option of a one-half hour extension by council consensus. Meetings shall be adjourned early if all agenda items have been discussed.

C) If time constraints impede completion of agenda items, the remaining items shall be tabled and be included in the next agenda; however, time shall be provided for citizens' comments at each meeting.

D) The facilitators shall refer to Robert's Rule of Order, Newly Revised, in conducting meetings.

E) Attendance

(1) If a voting ARSC member misses two consecutive, regular meetings the co-chairs shall contact the member to determine his/her intentions toward fulfilling his/her council obligation.

(2) The ARSC shall recognize extenuating circumstances at the discretion of the Council.

Section 8. Meeting Parameters

The ARSC members will abide by the following parameters, set by council consensus, at each regular, special and subcommittee meetings:

- Begin and end our meetings on time
 - Do not engage in side-bar conversations
 - Work toward consensus; if not, table the decision until the next meeting.
 - Listen with respect to each member's perspective
 - Provide each member with the opportunity to speak
 - Once a decision is reached by consensus, support that decision.
 - **Follow the DUSD Seven Norms of Collaboration during each meeting.**
- August 4**

Section 9. Agenda

The agenda will be posted in advance of the meeting.

The agenda for each meeting shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. Opening comments
- b. Minutes from the previous meeting(s)
- c. Committee reports
- d. Unfinished business
- e. New business
- f. Parent/Visitor Comments
- g. Site Council Members' comments
- h. Adjournment

Note: Time agenda items may be extended at the discretion of the council

Section 10. Minutes

A) Minutes shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) Attendance
- (2) Revisions to previous minutes

- (3) Reports on correspondence
- (4) Notes on discussions

B) Within five working days after a ARSC meeting, the minutes shall be distributed to all ARSC members, posted in the faculty room, a copy placed in each staff member's mailbox and a copy kept in a notebook for the public to preview, along with a summary posted, in the office waiting area. A summary will be included in the parent newsletter.

Section 11. Quorum

Seven voting members shall constitute a quorum for each ARSC meeting.

Section 12. Public Input

- A) All ARSC meetings are open to the public
- B) Each agenda shall include an item entitled "Parent/Visitor Comments" at which time non-Council members may state their opinions, suggestions or concerns.
- C) Citizens' comments at other times during the meetings shall be at the discretion of the co-chairs and shall be limited to the topic currently under discussion.

Section 13. Decision-Making

- A) Consensus - Decisions shall be by consensus of the members present. Tax credit approval decisions can be done by phone or email if the request is time sensitive. Total consensus shall be used.
- B) Types of Consensus (using the "Fist to Five") *:
 - (1) Sufficient Consensus - At least 75% of the members must favor a decision. Others agree not to block or sabotage the decision.
 - (2) Total Consensus - 100% of the members of ARSC favor the decision and will totally support it.
 - (3) Facilitator Stipulation - The facilitator will designate a specific number of "voting" rounds to reach sufficient consensus. If sufficient consensus cannot be reached after the predetermined rounds, a secret ballot process will be required.

* The "Fist to Five" format is as follows:

Five fingers	=	All for it; top priority	Total Agreement
			Best Solution
			Complete Support

Four fingers =	Yes, high on my list	Agreement Support Good Solution
Three fingers=	OK with me	Willing to Support
Two fingers =	Will trust group	Don't Agree Won't Support Won't Sabotage
One finger =	Let's talk more	Won't Support May Sabotage
Fist =	No! An alternative is _____	Will Sabotage

Section 14. Amendments

The ARSC Handbook may be amended at any ARSC meeting by a sufficient consensus vote of the members present and reaching consensus. Notice of the proposed amendment shall be given to council members and posted at least 21 days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is considered. Proxy votes will be counted.