

**GUIDELINES
FOR
FACULTY COUNCILS**

***Teachers Association of Baltimore County
TABCO***

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of clarity the following definitions shall apply to these guidelines:

Teacher - "All certified, professional personnel, and all secondary school nurses, except for administrative and supervisory personnel, represented exclusively by the Association..." Master Agreement 2003-2007.

Association (**TABCO**) - The Teachers Association of Baltimore County, Maryland, Inc.

BACE - Baltimore County Instructional Assistants and Clerical Employees, Inc.

Administrative Team or Administrative Staff - shall be the principal and the assistant principal(s) at the school or the person(s) with administrative responsibility at the local site.

Faculty - shall be the teachers at the school or the teachers at the local site who are represented by the Faculty Council.

TEACHERS ASSOCIATION OF BALTIMORE COUNTY MISSION STATEMENT

We, the members of the Teachers Association of Baltimore County, shall advance the quality of public education by empowering ourselves to secure those conditions which enhance professional growth, morale, and the general welfare for the educational employees, the students and the community in order to maximize excellence and equity in the public schools.

FACULTY COUNCIL STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

Faculty Councils represent an opportunity for teachers to use their management skills and experience to work with a school's administrative team in a cooperative and synergistic manner to identify and appropriately resolve any problems, concerns or issues which inhibit a school's ability to achieve its primary goal of enhancing student achievement.

The cooperative Faculty Council/administrative team process reflects the BCPS philosophy that those people most directly impacted by how a school functions should have the opportunity to be involved in determining how that school goes about meeting its goals. This philosophy assumes the value and worth of each impacted individual as a participant in the decision-making process and demonstrates the belief that none of us is as smart as all of us.

A successful Faculty Council/administrative team process will enable schools to enhance student achievement and improve the total learning environment by:

- utilizing a process which includes the opportunity for input for teachers, administrators, and other appropriate sources.
- the total sharing of information by both groups without hidden agendas or attempts to manipulate information, thus allowing all members to concentrate on making good decisions.
- striving to make only decisions with which all members of each group are comfortable.

1. PURPOSE

- a. To establish and maintain positive relationships among the faculty and the administrative staff in order to facilitate a two-way process for direct and organized levels of communication.
- b. To serve as the vehicle for which proposed changes on existing policies and procedures, and new policies and procedures may be considered.
- c. To provide the faculty an avenue for shaping the conditions and results of their work.
- d. To utilize teacher leadership skills at the school site level to establish local school policies, practices, and budget with the administrative staff.

- e. To develop shared decision making and shared accountability through an established system of Site-Based Decision Making/Participatory Management.
- f. To promote an open, collaborative mode of cooperation among members of the faculty.

2. **ESTABLISHMENT**

- a. Each school will establish a Faculty Council.
- b. It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Association Representatives to conduct the annual May election of teachers to serve on the Faculty Council.
- c. The Faculty Council shall be elected by the secret ballot method under the direction of the Chairperson of the Association Representatives.
- d. Teachers elected to serve on the Faculty Council must be members of TABCO. Administrative staff is excluded from serving as members of the Faculty Council.
- e. All faculty members, except nonteaching Administrative personnel, shall be eligible to vote in the election of Faculty Council members.
- f. Faculty Council members serve from July 1 to June 30 of the following year.
- g. A vacancy due to the resignation, transfer, or any other reason of an elected member shall be promptly filled by a special election conducted by the Chairperson of the Association Representatives.

3. **COMPOSITION**

a. **SIZE**

- (1) There should be at least one Faculty Council member for every ten (10) teachers in the school, except that no Faculty Council should have fewer than three (3) nor more than ten (10) members.
- (2) The Chairperson of the Association Representatives or the chairperson's designee is an additional member.

- b. A chairperson of the Faculty Council shall be elected by the Faculty Council.
- c. One member of the Faculty Council should be elected or selected to act as secretary.
- d. The Association Representative chairperson as an Ex-Officio member:
 - (1) can vote the same as any other member of the Faculty Council.
 - (2) does not automatically become Chairperson of the Faculty Council but may serve as chairperson if so elected by the Faculty Council.
- e. All Association Representatives are eligible to serve on the Faculty Council.
- f. **BACE MEMBER**
 - (1) A Faculty Council, by an affirmative vote, may include a BACE representative as a member.

- (2) The BACE member shall be in addition to the aforementioned teacher members of the Council.
- (3) Instructional Assistant and clerical personnel must be members of BACE to be eligible to hold this office. However, all members of the BACE bargaining unit are eligible to vote for the BACE member of the Faculty Council.
- (4) The BACE representative shall be elected by a majority vote of the BACE personnel within the school only. BACE members shall not vote for the teacher members of the Council, nor shall teachers vote for the BACE member of the Council.
- (5) The BACE representative shall be a liaison member of the Faculty Council and shall have the responsibility of presenting the views and concerns of the individuals in the BACE bargaining unit.

4. FACULTY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE FACULTY

- a. Teachers should freely communicate concerns to any member of the Faculty Council. A teacher may present concerns orally or in writing to the entire Faculty Council or to any council member. Confidentially, where requested, shall be honored.
- b. The Association recommends that provisions for open meetings of the Faculty Council be established at each school. The purpose of the open meeting can include opportunities for individuals to present concerns and/or solutions to concerns from which the Faculty Council will prepare an agenda for the next meeting with the administrative team.
- c. After each meeting between the Faculty Council and the administrative team, the agenda of items and the resolution of each item shall be published and distributed to the teachers of the school. Personnel matters should not be included in these notes.
- d. The secretary of the Faculty Council shall keep permanent record of all nonconfidential matters.

5. FACULTY COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE PRINCIPAL

- a. Each September the Faculty Council and the principal shall mutually establish regular meeting dates and location.
- b. The Faculty Council may request a meeting with the principal at other times. This meeting shall occur within five duty days of such request. (Article IV, Section 4.3.1)
- c. The principal may request a meeting with the Faculty Council at other times. This meeting shall occur within five duty days of such request. (Article IV, Section 4.3.1)
- d. The principal shall consider the Faculty Council's advice in developing new procedures. (Article IV, Section 4.3)
- e. Meetings between the Faculty Council and the administrative team shall be private. If other individuals are invited to attend, item 4.4 of the Negotiated Agreement must be followed. It is suggested that each party inform the other at least three (3) days in advance if any guest is invited to the meeting between the Faculty Council and the administrative team.
- f. The Faculty Council should submit a written agenda to the administrative team at least three (3) days before any meeting. Items not included on the agenda should only be discussed by the mutual agreement of both parties.

- g. The administrative team should submit a written agenda to the Faculty Council at least three (3) days before any meeting. Items not included on the agenda should only be discussed by the mutual agreement of both parties.
- h. Under emergency conditions, the Faculty Council and the administrative team may mutually agree to waive the written agenda and prior notification and meet to discuss the emergency.
- i. The principal must give reasons in writing to the Faculty Council within ten (10) duty days if the written recommendations of the Faculty Council are not taken (within five duty days whenever possible). (Article IV, Section 4.3.2)

6. **GENERAL SUGGESTIONS**

- a. The Faculty Council and Association Representatives should recommend that all members of the staff become acquainted with the provisions of the Master Agreement.
- b. If questions arise, Association leaders and staff are ready to lend assistance. Contact TABCO and arrange for a school visitation.
- c. The Faculty Council should not become involved in performing tasks which rightly belong to the administration.
- d. Officers or UniServ staff of TABCO and/or members of the central office staff may be invited to attend meetings at the principal's or Faculty Council's request. (Article IV, Section 4.4)
- e. Do not involve the public, PTA, or student council in a problem until all administrative channels have been utilized. (Article IV, Section 4.5.1)
- f. The Faculty Council should avoid problems involving personality disputes.

7. **ANY POLICIES AGREED UPON BY THE FACULTY COUNCIL AND THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL NOT VIOLATE ANY TERMS OF THE MASTER AGREEMENT.**

8. **RIGHTS OF THE FACULTY COUNCIL PER TABCO MASTER AGREEMENT:**

The contractual basis for faculty councils is outlined in Article IV of the Master Agreement.

- * Section 4.1 outlines the Board of Education and TABCO's desire to encourage the formation of Faculty Councils in each school. It is the responsibility of TABCO to establish the councils.
- * Section 4.1 outlines that all teachers (excluding non-teaching administrative personnel) may vote in the election of Faculty Council Members.
- * Section 4.2 outlines the purpose of Faculty Councils. Those purposes include:
 - 1. establishing and maintaining positive relationships and communications among faculty and staff.
 - 2. serve as the group by which proposed changes in existing policies and practices for each school are considered and be the group to bring forward those discussions with the principal.
- * Section 4.3 requires that the principal shall consider the advice of the council in developing and evaluating policies and practices of a school.
- * Section 4.3.1 requires a principal to meet with the Faculty Council at its request at a mutually agreeable time but no later than five (5) days from the time of the request and in turn if requested by the principal, the Faculty Council must meet within five (5) days of such a request.

- * Section 4.3.2 requires that if a principal does not accept the written recommendations of the council, the principal must respond within 10 days.
- * Section 4.4 provides for the right of officers or staff of TABCO and central office staff, to attend meetings at the request of the principal or the council.
- * Section 4.5 provides the right for the Faculty Council to appeal a decision through administrative channels beginning with the Executive Director of Schools or to pursue a grievance.
- * Section 4.5.1 allows for the Faculty Council to discuss an issue with the officials of TABCO at any time, but prohibits discussion with the PTA or the student council until all administrative channels have been used. This section also prevents release of information to the press until all administrative channels have been utilized.
- * Section 3.6 provides the chairperson of the Faculty Council or his/her designee with the following rights:
 1. Placing material in a teacher's mailbox.
 2. Making announcements at faculty meetings or on intercom system.
 3. Posting notices and material on the Association bulletin board.
 4. Conducting polls, gathering information, recording dates and conducting elections.
 5. Use of school telephones for official Association business.
 6. Conferring with teachers about problems, concerns and grievances.
- * Section 8.1 defines Grievance and Grievant as follows: Grievance: A grievance is a complaint by a teacher, Faculty Council, or, in the event of an action affecting Association rights, the Association concerning the interpretation, application, or alleged violation of an express provision or provisions of this Agreement and/or Rule 4141, "Salary Regulations Handbook," as contained in the "Manual of Policies and Regulations."

The Grievant: The grievant is the teacher or teachers, Faculty Council, or Association filing a grievance.
- * Section 10.1.1 and 10.1.2 provides the right of the Faculty Council to request an inspection of a building or that an area be inspected for a health and safety hazard and the right for the Faculty Council to receive a copy of such reports.
- * Section 10.4 requires the principal to establish a policy to keep classroom interruptions at a minimum following consultation with the Faculty Council.
- * Section 10.6.1 allows the principal and the Faculty Council to redistribute 10 minutes of the time before or after school to schedule meetings for instructional or administrative purposes.
- * Section 10.12 requires the principal to work with the Faculty Council to mutually determine the number, type and time of nonemergency faculty meetings and for the principal to involve the Faculty Council in the development of the agenda for faculty meetings.
- * Section 11.1 requires that a student disciplinary procedure be developed according to Board policy by the Faculty Council and administrative staff after consultation with members of the student body.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ON THE "FACULTY COUNCIL GUIDELINES," CALL YOUR UNISERV DIRECTOR FOR INFORMATION ON THE REASONS AND RATIONALE USED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE GUIDELINES.

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