

Vassal Lane Upper School School Advisory Council By-Laws

Article I. Name

The name of this organization is Vassal Lane Upper School (VLUS) School Advisory Council. The VLUS School Advisory Council (SAC) is located at 197 Vassal Lane, Cambridge 02138

Article II. Purpose

The Vassal Lane Upper School School Advisory Council will work with the Head of School to:

- A. Identify the educational needs of students attending the school;
- B. Adopt educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards;
- C. Review the annual school building budget;
- D. Formulate a School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Article III. Membership

Section 1. Eligibility for Membership

All current VLUS families and staff are eligible to seek election into the VLUS SAC. Only elected SAC Caregiver/Parent and Teacher Representatives are considered voting members.

Section 2. Voting Members

Voting members shall include five caregivers/parents, elected by VLUS families; 5 staff members, elected by staff, the VLUS Family Liaison and the VLUS Head of School.

Every effort will be made to recruit and maintain a School Advisory Council that reflects the diversity of the school, e.g. grade level, academic program, socio-economic status, race and ethnicity.

Section 3. Representative Responsibilities

- A. Elected Caregiver/Parent Representatives shall attend scheduled SAC meetings, act as a liaison between the VLUS family community and the Council, communicate with the VLUS community about SAC business and solicit feedback from the VLUS community regarding matters before the Council. Additionally, caregiver/parent representatives shall develop a forum organized at least once per year where they can meet with VLUS caregiver/parent community informally.
- B. Elected Staff Representatives shall attend scheduled meetings, act as a liaison between VLUS staff at large and the Council, communicate SAC business and solicit feedback from VLUS staff about matters before the Council.

Section 4. Elections

A. Call for Candidates

VLUS Administration shall recruit caregiver/parent candidates for the Council at the start of the new school year with the goal of producing a diverse slate of candidates by September 30th. A similar process will be followed to solicit staff representative candidates.

B. Elections

Elections shall take place the second week of October. Ballots will be sent home to families via electronic and paper communications the Tuesday after Indigenous People's Day. Voting for Caregiver/Parent representatives will conclude three days after ballots have been distributed. VLUS will make it a priority to accommodate families who prefer or need to vote in their home language.

Voting for Staff Representatives will take place concurrently.

Election Results will be communicated first to the candidates. Upon their notification and formal acceptance, the results will then be announced to the VLUS community via electronic and paper communications.

The elected representatives will take office at the first VLUS SAC meeting following the announcement of results. This meeting should be scheduled to take place the third week of October.

Section 5. Term of Office

A. Caregiver/Parent Representatives will have staggered terms as follows:

Three Caregiver/Parent representatives will have a one-year term, October thru September;

Two Caregiver/Parent Representatives will have a two-year term beginning in October thru September of the second year.

Caregiver/Parent Representatives may run for office for consecutive terms and/or more than once during their tenure at VLUS.

B. Staff Representatives will serve a one-year term, October thru September. Staff Representatives may run for office for consecutive terms and/or more than once during their tenure at VLUS.

C. Vacancies

Interim vacancies will be filled by the SAC Co-Chairs, who will seek volunteers from the group affected (i.e. caregiver/parent or staff) with a notice of such vacancy widely

distributed to parents and staff. The appointed representative shall serve until the next election cycle.

Section 6. Officers

A. Co-Chairs

The VLUS Head of School shall act as School Advisory Council Co-Chair alongside a Caregiver/Parent Co-Chair, elected by caregiver/parent representatives at the first meeting of the new term.

The Co-Chairs will collaborate to ensure the smooth functioning of the Council, set meeting agendas, and shall alternate facilitating SAC meetings. They will also notify the school community of all meetings, handle written communications and other occasional correspondence from the Council to the school community and others as needed.

B. Recording Secretary

The Recording Secretary will be elected from within SAC members on the first meeting of the term.

The duty of this office is to take and keep minutes of all School Advisory Council meetings and distribute the minutes of each meeting to SAC representatives no later than 10 days after the last meeting. SAC representatives will have 48 hours to review and share any edits they may have with the Recording Secretary, who after the allotted time, will consider the minutes approved and post them to the VLUS website.

Article IV. Meetings

Section 1. Regular School Advisory Council Meetings

- A. The SAC will meet monthly, with meetings that rotate between morning and evening times.
- B. Meeting dates and times will be established at the first meeting of the new term.
- C. Meeting Norms and protocols will be determined by the group at the first meeting of the term and revisited annually, or as needed.
- D. Meeting Agendas will be set by the Co-Chairs, with input from SAC representatives, and distributed to the VLUS community at least one week prior to that month's meeting.
- E. In accordance with Open Meeting Law, all meetings are open to the public, meeting announcements and reminders will be made with at least 48 hours' notice, and minutes will be posted within 10 days of the last meeting.

Section 2. Special School Advisory Council Meetings

A special SAC meeting may be called by the Co-Chairs if such need arises. Special SAC meetings will follow the meeting guidelines and norms of regular SAC meetings.

Section 3. Voting

Every effort shall be made to reach consensus on all policy matters and other issues that come before the Council. If, after reasonable discussion, consensus cannot be reached, then an affirmative vote by three of the five caregiver/parent representatives and a majority of staff representatives will constitute a policy decision. In case of a tie vote, the decision of the Head of School will prevail.

Section 4. Quorum

Quorum is reached when three of five caregiver/parent representatives and a majority of staff representatives are present at a meeting.

Article V. Sub-Committees

School Advisory Council Sub-Committees will be chaired by an elected caregiver/parent or staff representative and open to all VLUS caregiver/parent and staff members. Recruitment to serve on sub-committees will be widely publicized and mindful to include diverse community stakeholders as much as possible.

Section 1. Standing Sub-Committees

Standing Sub-committees of the SAC will be complementary to the on-going work of the Council and address the on-going or emerging needs of the school community.

A. Caregiver/Parent Education

The Caregiver/Parent Education Sub-Committee will work with VLUS administration to develop programs and events designed to provide parents and caregivers additional resources and information about issues relevant to middle school student development and further parent-school partnerships.

Section 2. Ad-Hoc Committees

Ad-Hoc Sub-committees of the SAC will be convened as needed to address an emerging need of the school community.

A. Hiring

The Hiring Sub-Committee assembles when a staff vacancy arises. A caregiver/parent and staff SAC representative will work collaboratively to recruit community members (caregiver/parents and staff) to participate in the hiring of new staff, work with CPS and VLUS Administrations to manage communications, convey hiring guidelines and protocols between the administration and the Hiring Sub-Committee and address any administrative needs throughout the hiring process.

Additional Standing and Ad-Hoc Sub-Committees may be instituted as the need arises.

Article VI. By-Law Review

The SAC By-Laws shall be reviewed by the Council Representatives every two years [from ratification] to ensure they remain current and in keeping with current VLUS policies and structure.

Article VII. By-Law Amendments

Amendments to the by-laws may be proposed by any SAC Representative. Any amendment(s) presented at a SAC meeting shall be considered for voting at a subsequent meeting. No vote on an amendment shall be taken without quorum being present. An affirmative vote by two-thirds of members is required to adopt an amendment into the SAC By-Laws.

Article VIII. Parliamentary Authority

The authority for this organization shall be “Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised.”

Duly Adopted, 7 June 2018