

**GRESHAM-BARLOW SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**District Advisory Council**  
**GUIDELINES**  
**Revised: 1/2009**

**Preamble**

It is the intent of the Board of Education of the Gresham-Barlow School District to foster effective communication between the Board and the community through the District Advisory Council (hereinafter referred to as the DAC). The DAC has been formally established by the Board and serves as the primary liaison between the school district and Board, and the community which the district serves.

Membership on the DAC can be rewarding to the individual members. It can also be quite demanding. Membership requires extra meetings at the district level and extra work at the parent support group/advisory committee level. To be an active member of the DAC can be a sacrifice in terms of one's personal time, but such participation will lead to a better education for the students of the Gresham-Barlow School District.

The guidelines which follow are an attempt to create a structure in which effective communication takes place. To function effectively, certain procedures must be followed. At the same time, it is the desire of the Board that the activities of the DAC not be inhibited or constrained by such guidelines and procedures. It is hoped that the appropriate balance between structure and flexibility can be reached.

**Membership**

1. The DAC shall consist of two members from each of the elementary, middle, and high schools. DAC representatives shall be selected by the schools' parents support groups whenever possible. The process for selection shall be well publicized to the members of each school's community.
2. DAC members must reside within the boundaries of the Gresham-Barlow School District and must have at least one child in attendance at the school they represent.
3. Members of the school board shall attend DAC meetings on a rotating basis and give reports when possible on the upcoming school board meeting agenda, hear comments by the DAC, answer questions about district policy, and seek the opinion of the DAC on matters pertaining to the operation of the district.
4. School district administrators serve the DAC in an advisory capacity; they do not vote. While the superintendent and other members of his/her cabinet attend most DAC meetings, the assistant superintendent or designee facilitates the activities of the Committee and is the primary administrative liaison with the DAC.

**Terms of Office**

1. Normally, the term of office for a DAC member shall be two years. However, if a person is selected to fill an unexpired term, that person's term may be for only one year. While the school parent support groups are free to select the representatives they believe are most capable, the school board encourages a periodic turnover in representation in order to infuse new perspectives to DAC proceedings and to involve a large number of parents in discussions pertaining to district operations.

2. It is preferred that one member from each school shall be selected in even-numbered years, the other member shall be elected in odd-numbered years so as to provide continuity in the school's representation from one year to the next. If possible, this election shall take place by the end of April so that the new member(s) can attend the May meeting and participate in planning the next year's DAC activities.

### **Duties and Responsibilities**

Examples of DAC responsibilities include but are not limited to:

1. Providing advice on matters related to the operation of the school district;
2. Reacting to proposed changes in the district operation;
3. Bringing matters of community concern to the attention of the administration and Board; and
4. Communicating with the community about matters of importance to the district.

### **To fulfill these responsibilities requires that DAC members:**

1. Become familiar with the district's planning priorities, curriculum, budget, and other issues related to the operation of the school district. In general, this type of familiarity is not intended to be in-depth, but merely informational to help members better understand the workings of the district. In some instances, however, it may be advisable to have the DAC familiarize itself thoroughly with a particular issue through a more concentrated study.
2. Solicit information from parents and other patrons of their respective school communities about matters related to the operation of the school district.
3. Provide advice on district operations when requested by the board and/or district.
4. Report on the activities and actions of the DAC to the parent community and other patrons of the school they represent. DAC members are expected to make such reports at meetings of the school's parent support group/advisory committee and through the school's parent newsletter.
5. Be available to parents who have questions or concerns about the operation of the school district and convey those questions or concerns to the administrative liaison to the DAC.
6. Each member of the DAC is encouraged to attend as many district meetings as possible as a DAC. These include: regular school board meetings, and budget committee meetings.

### **Specific duties of DAC representatives are to:**

1. Attend all DAC meetings or send a representative on behalf of the school. If a member is absent three consecutive meetings, that member shall be dropped from the committee, upon recommendation of the DAC executive committee, and shall be so informed by the principal of the school s/he represents. If a member of the DAC resigns or is dropped from the committee due to lack of attendance, the parent support group which that member represents shall have one month in which to fill the position. If the parent support group is unable to fill the position the principal is expected to select the replacement.
2. Report back monthly to the local school parent support group board membership.
3. Communicate DAC information to school parents (e.g., through the school newsletter).
4. Serve as liaison between the DAC and school's parents.
5. Contact the DAC chairperson, or the administrative liaison, prior to the meeting, if there is a specific concern to be discussed at the meeting.
6. An alternative representative will be notified by the regular member if both members are not able to attend an upcoming meeting and requested to attend the meeting in their absence.

## **Officers**

1. From among the school representatives, the DAC shall select an executive committee consisting of a chairperson, vice chair, and secretary. The term of office of the executive committee shall be one year, beginning in July. No individual may serve more than two consecutive years as either chair or vice chair.
2. The chairperson meets and/or reviews with the administrative liaison the monthly DAC meetings and upcoming agendas.
3. The DAC will discuss possible nominations for officers for the following year at their April meeting. An election will normally be held at the May meeting of the DAC.
4. As a group, the executive committee acts only on matters assigned to it by the entire DAC or on matters such as failure to fulfill responsibilities by a DAC member. It takes no formal action to represent positions of the entire DAC, except as directed by the entire DAC. The executive committee may appoint persons to fill unexpired terms when the school parent support group is unable to do so.

## **Duties of Officers**

1. Duties of the chairperson:
  - a. Work with the administrative liaison to provide a printed agenda for each meeting.
  - b. Conduct the DAC meeting in accordance with the approved agenda.
  - c. Work with the administrative liaison to arrange for guest speakers on the suggested topics each month.
  - d. Communicate official DAC positions, verbally or in writing, to the board of directors and to other individuals and groups.
2. Duties of the vice chair:
  - a. Support and assist the chairperson and secretary.
  - b. Conduct meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
3. Duties of the secretary:
  - a. Take minutes of each meeting and see that they are delivered to the district office for timely distribution. Note: Minutes shall be distributed to: all DAC members, principals, members of the school board, and the superintendent's cabinet.
  - b. Keep attendance records.

## **Filling Vacancies in Officer Positions**

When one of the officer positions becomes vacant, the following will occur:

- a. If the position of chair is vacated, the vice chair will become chair.
- b. If the positions of vice chair or secretary become vacant, there will be a special election at the next DAC meeting.

## **Meetings**

1. The DAC shall generally meet in district schools on the third Thursday of each month. During some months, an adjustment in meeting schedule may be necessary.
2. The DAC generally meets from September until May; there are no meetings in June, July, August, or December.

3. All DAC meetings are open to the public.
4. The last meeting of each year shall be for purposes of reviewing and critiquing the year's activities and for generating possible agenda items for the following year.

### **Operating Procedures**

1. The chairperson and the administrative liaison will prepare a preliminary agenda for each meeting. DAC members may submit agenda items by contacting the chair or the administrative liaison.
2. The first order of business at each meeting, after the welcome and approval of the agenda, will be an update on school activities by the principal of the school where the meeting is being held.
3. Members of the DAC are urged to participate in discussions and give their opinions. Members are reminded to be wise communicators as some topics for discussion will be of a sensitive nature.
4. School Board representatives will be provided time at DAC meetings to respond to questions and in general, dialogue with members.
5. The DAC is a formal group whose existence is sanctioned by the District's Board of Directors. At times, the DAC may wish to take a formal position on matters brought before it. In such instances, motions, seconds, discussions, and formal votes will be made, taken, and recorded. The results of such actions will be reflected in the monthly DAC minutes which are forwarded to all Board members and, when appropriate, correspondence from the DAC chairperson may be directed to the Board.
6. In some instances when no formal action has been taken, DAC members may later wish to express publicly their own individual opinions or concerns, or those of the school parent support group they represent. This is entirely appropriate but a distinction must be made between this type of opinion or position and that which results from a formal vote of DAC members. This distinction is important in communicating DAC activities and actions to the Board, to the administration, and to the parent community of each school.
7. In some instances, the DAC may break into smaller groups to review and discuss topics.
8. All official members of the DAC shall have one vote each and only those members are allowed to vote and sign the opinions of the committee. *Note: This statement is included so as to clarify whether guests or observers from a particular school are allowed to vote.*

### **Expenses**

Funding of DAC activities will be provided by the District through the Office of the Assistant Superintendent.