

WILLIAM DIAMOND MIDDLE SCHOOL

SCHOOL COUNCIL BY-LAWS

These By-laws, adopted this 10th day of May, 2010, shall govern the operation of the School Council (the “Council”) for William Diamond Middle School (the “School”) in Lexington, Massachusetts.

ARTICLE 1

AUTHORITY; PURPOSES

1.1 **Authority:** The Council operates under the authority of Chapter 71, Section 59C of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended (the “Statute”), and the School Councils Policy adopted by the Lexington Public Schools (the “Policy”). In the case of any conflict, the Policy overrides these By-laws and the Statute overrides either the Policy or these By-laws.

The Massachusetts Department of Education has published a Massachusetts School Council Handbook (the “Handbook”), dated June, 2001, which provides an overview and interpretations of certain requirements of the Statute.

The current versions of the Statute, the Policy and the Handbook, along with these By-laws, shall be maintained in the Council’s minute book in the School office.

1.2 **Statutory Purposes:** The Council shall assist the Principal of the School (the “Principal”) in identifying the educational needs of the School’s students, in adopting educational goals for the School, in reviewing the annual budget for the School and in formulating an annual School Improvement Plan for the School.

1.3 **Other Functions:** The Council may also, as requested by the Principal, provide feedback or solicit community input on other questions concerning the operation of the School, the School facilities, or School-community relations.

ARTICLE 2

MEETINGS

2.1 **Frequency:** The Council shall endeavor to meet at least once during each month of the School’s academic year (the “School Year”), beginning with September, and shall meet new fewer than seven (7) times during the School Year. The Council shall meet more frequently as it deems necessary.

2.2 **Time and Place:** Meetings shall be held at times and places reasonably convenient for attendance by a broad cross-section of members of the School community, and shall generally be located within the School. The first meeting during each School Year shall take place no later than forty (40) calendar days after the first day that the School is in session for such School Year.

2.3 **Notice:** The Secretary or either Co-Chair shall notify the Town Clerk of the Town of Lexington (the “Town Clerk”) of the time and location of the Council’s meetings no less than forty-eight (48) hours prior to a scheduled meeting. Notice of meetings shall also be publicized in the School newsletter (currently the Newsflash) and on the electronic mailing list operated by the School Parent Teacher Association (the “PTA”).

2.4 **Quorum:** A majority of the members of the Council then in office shall constitute a quorum. Formal votes taken at any meeting shall be by majority vote of those present. In the absence of a quorum the Council shall not consider any business; *provided, however,* that the members present at a duly organized meeting may continue to transact business until adjournment notwithstanding the withdrawal of any one or more members so as to leave less than a quorum.

2.5 **Conduct of Meetings:** Meetings of the Council shall comply with the open meeting law of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, M.G.L. c. 39, § 23B. The Council shall endeavor to create a collaborative atmosphere characterized by open communication and consensus decisionmaking and welcoming of public input.

ARTICLE 3

MEMBERSHIP

3.1 **Number of Members:** The Council shall consist of the Principal, six (6) parent representatives, five (5) faculty representatives and up to three (3) community representatives.

3.2 **Qualifications:** Each parent representative shall have at least one (1) child in attendance at the School at the beginning of each year of his or her service on the Council. Each faculty representative shall be a member of the faculty or administration of the School. Each community representative shall be a resident of the Town of Lexington or a person engaged in business therein. Community representatives may include non-professional staff employed by the School; *provided, however,* that at no time shall a majority of the community representatives consist of School employees.

3.3 Terms of Office

3.3.1 **Principal:** The Principal shall serve as a member of the Council *ex officio* while he or she is Principal of the School.

3.3.2 **Parent Representatives:** Parent representatives shall serve for a term of two (2) years, provided that (a) a parent representative shall not continue to serve if at the beginning of a new school year he or she no longer has a child in attendance at the School and (b) parent representatives may be elected for a term of one (1) year if necessary to provide for staggered terms.

3.3.3 **Faculty Representatives:** Faculty representatives shall serve for a term of two (2) years, provided that (a) a faculty representative shall not continue to serve after he or she ceases to be a member of the School faculty and (b) faculty representatives may be elected for a term of one (1) year if necessary to provide for staggered terms.

3.3.4 **Community Representatives:** Community representatives shall serve for a term of two (2) years.

3.4 **Election or Appointment of Members**

3.4.1 **Parent Representatives:** Parent representatives shall be selected by the parents of students attending the School in an election conducted by the PTA during the school year prior to the year in which parent representatives are to serve and conforming to the following parameters:

(a) The Secretary or a Co-Chair of the Council shall notify the Co-Presidents of the PTA of the number of available positions.

(b) The PTA shall solicit candidates from among parents of current sixth and seventh grade students at the School and parents of fifth grade students at the School's "feeder" elementary schools (presently, Fiske Elementary School, the Joseph Estabrook School and Maria Hastings Elementary School).

(c) Each parent (or legal guardian) shall receive one ballot and shall be entitled to select freely from among all of the candidates a number of representatives equal to the number of available positions.

(d) A notice that ballots have been distributed shall be included in at least two (2) consecutive issues of the School's regular newsletter for parents (currently, the Newsflash), or in a similar communication, prior to the time at which ballots must be submitted.

(e) The PTA shall tabulate the results of the election and shall certify the newly-elected representatives in writing to the Co-Chairs of the Council.

3.4.2 **Faculty Representatives:** Faculty representatives shall be selected by the teachers of the School in an election conducted by the Principal in which each teacher shall be entitled to vote freely from among all candidates for a number of representatives equal to the number of available positions. The Principal shall certify the newly elected representatives in writing to the Council.

3.4.3 **Community Representatives:** Persons interested in the position of community representative may apply to the Principal, who shall appoint community representatives at his or her discretion and shall certify newly appointed representatives in writing to the Council.

3.5 **Resignation:** A parent representative, faculty representative or community representative may resign at any time by giving written notice of such resignation to either of the Co-Chairs. Such resignation shall be effective upon receipt of such notice by the Co-Chair, unless the notice specifies a later effective date acceptable to the Council.

3.6 **Vacancies:** The Council shall have and may exercise all of its powers notwithstanding the existence of one or more vacancies; *provided, however*, that if a vacancy causes the number of parent representatives to be less than the number of faculty representatives

plus the Principal, such vacancy (or vacancies) shall be filled as soon as possible, and in any event no later than forty (40) calendar days following such vacancy by a special election conforming as closely as possible to the provisions of Section 3.4.1, with the representative(s) so elected filling the unexpired term(s) of the vacant seat(s).

3.7 **Changes to the Composition of the Council:** The Principal may alter the composition of the Council as set forth in Section 3.1 by a dated, written memorandum filed with these By-laws, and each such memorandum shall become part of these By-laws and shall constitute an amendment to Section 3.1 hereof; provided that (a) the number of parent representatives shall be no less than the number of faculty representatives plus the Principal and (b) the number of community representatives shall not exceed the number of parents, teachers, students and staff serving on the Council. A change in the composition of the Council shall take effect for the School year next following the year in which the change is made.

ARTICLE 4

OFFICERS

4.1 **Co-Chairs:** The Co-Chairs of the Council shall prepare an agenda for each meeting of the Council and shall jointly preside over the meetings. The Principal shall serve *ex officio* as a Co-Chair. At the first meeting of the Council during each School Year, the Council shall by majority vote elect a second Co-Chair from among the parent representatives; such Co-Chair shall serve until the first meeting of the following School Year.

4.2 **Secretary:** The Secretary shall record minutes of the meetings of the Council, and after approval of such minutes by the Council shall include the minutes in the Council's minute book and shall forward a copy of the minutes to the archives maintained by the Town Clerk. When the Secretary is not present for any portion of a meeting, the Co-Chairs shall designate another member to record minutes. At the first meeting of the Council during each School Year, the Council shall by majority vote elect a Secretary who shall serve until the first meeting of the following School Year.

ARTICLE 5

COMMITTEES

The Council may from time to time authorize standing or ad hoc committees for such purposes as it may determine to be useful or efficient, and may appoint the chair and members of any such committee from among its own members and/or from outside its own membership; *provided, however,* that no duties required to be performed by the full Council shall be delegated to a committee. Meetings of a committee shall be held at such time and place as is designated by the chair of such committee; a majority of members of the committee in office shall constitute a quorum and voting shall be by majority of those present. A committee that does not include a quorum of the Council shall not be required to comply with the open meeting law.

ARTICLE 6

AMENDMENT

These By-laws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the members of the Council present and voting thereon at any meeting of the Council. Section 3.1 of these By-laws may be amended as provided in Section 3.7.