



*By-Laws*

*of*

**Peek's Chapel  
Elementary School  
Council**

## **Peek's Chapel Elementary School Council Bylaws**

### **Article I: Name**

A school council has been established in the **Peek's Chapel Elementary School** in the **Rockdale County Schools** on **September 14, 2006**. The name of this school council shall be the **Peek's Chapel Elementary School Council**, hereinafter referred to as the school council, organized under the authority of state law (O.C.G.A 20-2-85 – 20-2-86).

### **Article II: Purpose**

The establishment of school councils is intended to help local boards of education by bringing parents and the community together with teachers and school administrators to create a better understanding of and mutual respect for each other's concerns and share ideas for school improvement. School councils shall represent the community of parents and businesses.

The members of the school council are accountable to the constituents they serve and shall:

1. Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues;
2. Regularly participate in school council meetings;
3. Participate in information and training programs;
4. Act as a link between the school council and the community;
5. Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community; and
6. Work to improve student achievement and performance.

### **Article III: School Council Authority**

The school council shall advise and make recommendations to the principal, local board of education and local school superintendent on matters relating to school improvement and student achievement.

The school council shall participate in the selection of the school principal in accordance with the written policy of the local board of education.

The school council shall review and approve the school improvement plan.

The school council shall review school site budget and expenditure information, and site average class sizes by grade.

The school council has the authority to appoint committees, study groups, or task forces for such purposes as it deems helpful and may utilize existing or new school advisory groups.

The school council shall have the same immunity as the local board of education in all matters directly related to the functions of the school council.

#### **Article IV: Role of the School Council**

The school council provides advice and recommendations to the school principal and, when appropriate, the local board of education and local school superintendent, on any matter related to student achievement and school improvement, including but not limited to, the following:

1. School board policies;
2. School improvement plans;
3. Curriculum and assessments;
4. Report cards issued or audits of the school conducted by the Office of Student Achievement;
5. Development of a school profile which shall contain data as identified by the school council to describe the academic performance, academic progress, services, awards, interventions, environment, and other such data as the school council deems appropriate;
6. School budget priorities, including school capital improvement plans;
7. School-community communication strategies;
8. Methods of involving School-based and community services;
9. Community use of school facilities;
10. Student discipline and attendance;
11. Reports from the principal regarding progress toward the school's student achievement goals, including progress within specific grade levels and subject areas and by school personnel; and
12. The method and specifications for the delivery of early intervention services or other appropriate services for underachieving students.
13. parents and the community;
14. Extracurricular activities in the school;

#### **Article V: Membership**

Membership on the school council shall be open to principals, teachers, parents, business representatives and other such members as the school council may specify in its bylaws. Members of the school council shall not receive compensation to serve on a school council. Members of the school council shall include:

1. Two parents or guardians of students enrolled in the school, excluding parents or guardians who are also employees of the school;
2. Two parents who are businesspersons;
3. Two certificated teachers who are employed at least four of the six school segments at the school, excluding any personnel employed in administrative positions;
4. The school principal; and
5. One representative each from the following school affiliated organizations, such as the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), and affiliated booster organizations that have filed the intent to comply form regarding their booster club according to Rockdale County Board Policy LEC and regulations LEC-R.

## Article VI: Terms

Council members shall be elected initially for one term. Council members **may** serve more than one term provided they meet the eligibility conditions for membership for the time of their subsequent term. For the initial school council election, the one candidate with the most votes in each category will be elected to a two-year term. The remaining elected candidates will be elected for one-year terms. At the conclusion of the one-year term and in subsequent years, terms for all seats will be for two years, providing for staggered terms for council members.

## Article VII: Elections

Elections shall take place in August.

1. **Parent Election.** The electing body for the parent members shall consist of all parents and guardians eligible to serve as a parent member of the school council.
  - a. Candidates may self-nominate or nominate another person. Candidates must meet eligibility requirements for the group they have been nominated to represent.
  - b. Nominations must be submitted in writing on the school's web link.
  - c. Candidates will prepare a statement of their experiences and reasons they wish to serve on the school council. Additional information, such as past service of school councils, PTA/PTO, or other organizations/activities may be included. These statements will be published in advance for the voters to review.
  - d. On the designated day of the election, voting members will drop by the school during designated times and cast their ballot on-line. The office will remain open until 6:00 PM to allow for parents to drop in after school to vote.
  - e. At the designated deadline for nominations to close, should the number of candidates be less than or equal to the number of available seats, then the candidates will be considered to have been elected by acclamation.
  
1. **Businesspersons Election.** The electing body for the Businessperson members shall consist of the principal and the elected members from the parent and teacher council representatives.
  - a. Businesspersons may be recommended by the principal or any member of any electing body within the school.
  - b. Businesspersons will be elected by a majority votes from the teacher, parent, and principal representatives on the council.
  
2. **Teacher Election.** The electing body for the teacher members shall consist of all certificated personnel eligible to serve as a teacher member of the school council.
  - a. Candidates may self-nominate or nominate another person. Candidates must meet eligibility requirements for the group they have been nominated to represent.
  - b. At the designated deadline for nominations to close, should the number of candidates be less than or equal to the number of available seats, then the candidates will be considered to have been elected by acclamation.
  
3. **Conditions and considerations:**
  - a. Elections shall be determined by a simple plurality of votes, with no minimum number of votes required for election.
  - b. In the event of a tie, a run-off date will be set one week after the first ballot.

### **Article VIII: Vacancies**

The position of a school council member shall be automatically vacated if:

1. A member resigns by delivering a written resignation to the school council;
2. A member no longer meets the qualifications specified by law; or
3. A member is removed by an action of the school council.

The school council may, by a majority vote, determine a position vacant if it finds that a member of the council is no longer active in the council due to inactivity (misses more than 3 consecutive meetings or more than 30% of the meetings of the school council). The effective date of a vacancy shall be determined by the school council.

An election within the electing body for a replacement to fill the remainder of an unexpired term shall be held within 30 days unless there are 90 calendar days or less remaining in the term in which case the vacancy shall remain unfilled.

### **Article IX: Meetings**

All meetings of the council shall be open to the public. The school council shall meet at least 4 times annually. The council shall also meet at the call of the chairperson, or at the request of a majority of the members of the school council.

Notice by mail shall be sent to school council members at least seven days prior to a meeting and shall include the date, time and location of the meeting. School councils shall be subject to the Open Meetings Act in the same manner as local boards of education.

The school council secretary shall be responsible for notifying, in writing, the local newspaper designated as the legal organ of the county of all meetings of the school council at least twenty-four hours in advance of the meeting.

A quorum must be present in order to conduct official school council business. A quorum is comprised of a majority of school council members. Every question shall be determined by a majority vote of members present. Each member of the school council is authorized to exercise one vote. Proxy votes are not allowed. Members must be present in order to vote.

### **Article X: Minutes**

School councils shall be subject to the Open Records Act, relating to the inspection of public records, in the same manner as local boards of education. A summary of the subjects acted on and the members present at the meeting of the school council shall be made available to the public for inspection at the school office within two business days of the meeting. The minutes shall be provided to the school council members, each of whom shall receive a copy of such minutes, within 20 days following each school council meeting. The official minutes shall be open to public inspection once approved by the school council immediately following the next regular meeting of the school council.

Minutes at a minimum shall include the names of the school council members present at the meeting, a description of each motion or other proposal made, and a record of all votes. In the case of a roll-call vote, the name of each school council member voting for or against a proposal or abstaining shall be recorded. In all other votes, it shall be presumed that the action taken was approved by each person in attendance unless the minutes reflect the name of the persons voting against the proposal or abstaining.

### **Article XI: Officers of the School Council**

The officers of the school council shall be a chairperson, vice chairperson, and secretary. Officers of the school council, other than the chairperson, shall be elected at the first meeting of the school council following the election of school council members. The term of the officers of the school council shall be one year.

The chairperson, which shall be a parent, shall develop the agenda for all meetings, preside at all meetings of the school council, and perform such other duties as required by law or as shall be requested by the school council.

The vice chairperson shall, in the absence of the chairperson, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the chairperson and shall perform such other duties as shall be requested by the school council.

The secretary shall act as the clerk of the school council, record all votes and minutes of all proceedings, give notice of all meetings of the school council, and shall perform such other duties as may be required by law or as shall be requested by the school council.

### **Article XII: Duties of the Principal**

The school principal shall have the following duties pertaining to school councils:

1. Cause to be created a school council by convening the appropriate bodies to select school council members; setting the initial agenda, meeting time, and location; and notifying all school council members of the same;
2. Call meetings of the electing bodies after providing public notice at least two weeks before such meetings;
3. Communicate all school council requests for information and assistance to the local school superintendent and inform the school council of responses or actions of the local school superintendent;
4. Develop the school improvement plan and school operation plan and submit the plans to the school council for its review, comments, recommendations, and approval;
5. Provide progress reports regarding the school's student achievement goals; and
6. Perform all of the duties required by law and the bylaws of the council.

### **Article XIII: Board of Education Responsibilities**

The local board of education shall provide all information not specifically made confidential by law, including but not limited to, school site budget and expenditure information and site average class sizes by grade, to the school council as requested or as required by state law or state board rule.

The local board shall designate an employee of the school system to attend school council meetings as requested by a school council for the purpose of responding to questions the school council may have concerning information provided to it by the local board or actions taken by the local board. The central administration shall respond to requests for information from a school council.

The local board of education shall receive and consider all recommendations of the school council, including the annual report, as follows:

1. Public notice shall be given to the community of the local board's intent to consider school council reports or recommendations.
2. Written notice shall be given to the members of the school council at least seven days prior to such local board meeting, along with a notice of intent to consider a school council report or recommendation.
3. The members of the school council shall be afforded an opportunity to present information in support of the school council's report or recommendation; and
4. The local board of education shall respond to each recommendation of the school council within 60 calendar days after being notified in writing of the recommendation.

The local board of education shall provide a training program to assist schools in forming a school council and to assist school council members in the performance of their duties. Such program shall address the organization of school councils; their purpose and responsibilities; applicable laws, rules, regulations and meeting procedures; important state and local school system program requirements; and a model school council organization plan.

Additional training programs shall be offered to school council members annually.

#### **Article XIV: Bylaws**

The school council shall adopt the bylaws as it deems appropriate to conduct the business of the school council. The adoption of bylaws or changes thereto requires two-thirds affirmative votes.

#### **Article XV: Parliamentary Authority**

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be the governing parliamentary authority for school councils in all Cases applicable but not inconsistent with these bylaws.

#### **Article XVI: Conflict of Interest & Code of Ethics**

Conflict of interest issues generally do not apply to school council members because school councils are advisory in nature, as opposed to boards of education which are decision-making bodies. However, an individual who perceives a potential conflict of interest on any vote of the school council should disqualify himself/herself from that vote.

The school council shall abide by the Code of Ethics for School Council Members.

## **Code of Ethics for School Council Members**

As a member of the Peek's Chapel Elementary School Local School Council, representing all the citizens of my school community and the constituencies I present, I recognize:

1. That my fellow citizens have entrusted me with the educational development of the children and youth of this school.
2. That the public expects my first and greatest concern to be in the best interest of each and every one of these young people without distinction as to who they are or what their background may be.
3. That the future welfare of this community, of this State, and of the nation depends in the largest measure upon the quality of education we provide in the public schools to fit the needs of every learner.
4. That my fellow school council members and I must take the initiative in helping all the people of the community to have all the facts all the time about their school, to the end that they will readily provide the finest possible school program, school staff, and school facilities.
5. That legally the authority of the school councils is derived from the State which ultimately controls the organization and operation of the school district, and which determines the degree of discretionary power left with the Rockdale Board of Education and the people of this community for the exercise of local autonomy.
6. That I must never neglect my personal obligation to the community and my legal responsibilities to the State and school system, nor surrender these responsibilities to any other personal group, or organization; but that beyond these, I have a moral and civic obligation to the nation which can remain strong and free only so long as public schools in the United States of America are kept free and strong.

In view of the foregoing considerations, it shall by my constant endeavor:

1. To maintain a school-wide perspective on issues and to regularly participate in school council meetings and information and training programs.
2. To act as a link between the school council and the community and encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community.
3. To work to improve student achievement and performance.
4. To devote time, thought and study to the duties and responsibilities of a school council member so that I may render effective and creditable service.
5. To work with my fellow school council members in a spirit of harmony and cooperation in spite of differences of opinion that may arise during vigorous debate of points at issue.
6. To base my personal decision upon all available facts in each situation; to vote my honest conviction in every case, unswayed by bias of any kind; and, thereafter, to abide by and uphold



the final majority decision of the school council.

7. To remember at all times that as an individual I have no legal authority outside the meeting of the school council and conduct my relationships with the school staff, the local citizenry, and all media of communication on the basis of this fact.
8. To resist every temptation and outside pressure to use my position as a school council member to benefit either myself or any other individual.
9. To recognize that it is important for the school council to understand and evaluate the educational programs of the school.
10. To bear in mind under all circumstances that the primary function of the school council is to make recommendations regarding the improvement of student achievement, but that the administration of the educational program and the conduct of school business shall be left to the principal, superintendent, and local board of education.
11. To welcome and encourage active cooperation by citizens, organizations, and the media in the district with respect to establishing recommendations regarding current school operation and proposed future improvement.
12. Finally, to strive step-by-step toward ideal conditions for most effective school improvement, in a spirit of teamwork and devotion to public education as the greatest instrument for the preservation and perpetuation of our representative democracy.