

Sequoia School for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing

SCHOOL COUNCIL GROUND RULES 2010-2011

1. Mission Statement

The mission of Sequoia School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (SSDHH) is to provide a safe, challenging and motivating educational environment, which promotes development of wholesome social skills, academic growth, and independence through the bi-lingual and bi-cultural (Bi-Bi) approach.

2. Membership and Involvement

- A. Members will consist of a minimum of two parents, two teachers, one support staff, one community member, and the principal.
- B. School community information and involvement will consist of informing the community of meeting dates and minutes in the school newsletter and in the office.
- C. Observers or visitors are welcome and must sign in and include the child's name and their address.

3. Structure

- A. Meetings will be held Wednesday evenings from 6:00 – 7:00 PM.
- B. The chair will be Jennifer Reid and Heather Laine will be the vice chair. If both chairs cannot attend, the meeting will be canceled
- C. School Council can identify subcommittees. They can be non-council members but must be chaired by a council member. The meeting time, the subcommittee would decide length and place. All information must come back to the full Council before going to the public.
- D. Community input forms will be made available in the newsletter and in the office. Observers wishing to address the School Council during the meeting will also use the input form.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. There are expectations for good attendance. The chair will oversee if action is required because of excessive absences. If a member steps down, a "like person" shall replace them, i.e. teacher shall replace a teacher.
- B. The Secretary will record the minutes. Should the secretary be absent a recorder will be assigned.
- C. The responsibility of members is to represent their group. Members shall agree to be open-minded throughout the meeting.
- D. The chairs will publish the agenda, prepare materials for meetings, and convene and direct meetings.

- E. Each member will bring community involvement and input to the meetings.
- F. The committee needs to set the agenda for the next meeting; this will be done via email.

5. Meeting Guidelines

- A. Start on time
- B. Develop and review the agenda.
- C. Conduct one piece of business at a time.
- D. Participation is a right and a responsibility.
- E. Initiate ideas.
- F. Support, challenge, and counter ideas. We believe that differences that are resolved constructively lead to creative problem solving.
- G. Give others a chance to talk. Silence does not always mean agreement.
- H. Communicate authentically; what a person says should reflect what he/she thinks as well as what he/she feels.
- I. Conduct group business in front of the group.
- J. Conduct personal business outside of the meeting.
- K. Develop conditions of respect, acceptance, trust, and caring.
- L. Develop alternative approaches to the solutions of a problem.
- M. Question readiness to make decisions.
- N. Make decisions.
- O. Assign follow-up actions and responsibilities.
- P. Summarize what has been accomplished.
- Q. Meeting discussions shall be open and on-task.
- R. Meetings will be held in accordance with a set agenda.
- S. Meetings will be conducted in a positive manner.
- T. Meetings can be held with one co-chairperson and a quorum of four.

6. Decisions and Search for Consensus

- A. Decisions shall be made by consensus. A consensus is an agreement in opinion, testimony, or belief.
- B. The group may choose not to come to a decision.
- C. The group may table items pending further information.
- D. A member can agree to stand aside.
- E. Our definition of a consensus is: "All School Council members can live with the decision and publicly support the decision."

7. Amendment to Ground Rules

- A. The ground rules may be amended at any time with consensus of the members.