

Appendix E: Charter School Bylaws

A.L.B.A. School
School Governance Council Bylaws

Preamble

ALBA School is a Bilingual MPS instrumentality charter school serving students from Head start to fifth grade. Parents, community members, and teachers with strong beliefs in bilingual education and the educational benefits of the fine arts joined together to create ALBA in 2003. Parents, community members and local business partners serve on the School Governance Council (SGC) where they collaborate with staff to develop goals, allocate the school budget, and interpret general policies while remaining true to the mission statement of ALBA. The focus of the ALBA SGC is to positively impact students through education and a positive environment that celebrates the Latino culture. Furthermore, the SGC is a part of the interview and evaluation process of teachers when possible. The SGC collaborates with PTO to organize events for students and staff throughout the year.

ALBA School Mission Statement

ALBA is a small school whose mission is to: integrate the Latino culture and language into a challenging academic curriculum, develop fully bilingual/biliterate students in English and Spanish, and provide instruction in the fine arts emphasizing Latino contributions to facilitate students' positive self identity to continue as lifelong learners. Parent involvement is the cornerstone of our program.

ALBA School Philosophy Statement

ALBA's initial creation was sparked by the desire of parents in the Latino community to become more active in their children's education in a bilingual environment where language and cultural diversity would be accepted and seen as asset rather than a drawback. ALBA's educational program is founded on the conviction that bilingual students can reach their full potential academically, in English and Spanish, when challenged through a rigorous curriculum that includes the fine arts to develop critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity.

Article I: Name

A school council has been established in the ALBA School in the Milwaukee Public Schools District. The name of this organization shall be “ALBA School Governance Council”.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of our school council is to assist the local board of education by means of encouraging parents and community members to collaborate with the Teacher’s cooperative to: generate school policies, review the School Improvement Plan (SIP) to establish and manage the school goals, and build a positive school environment for the well-being of the student. The school council represents the community of parents and businesses. Members of our school council are held responsible to the constituents they serve and will:

- a. Uphold a school-wide perspective on issues
- b. Participate in school council meetings on a regular basis
- c. Contribute in shared decision making process on issues such as school budget
- d. Take part in training programs, workshops, and share pertinent information
- e. Connect school council and the community
- f. Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community
- g. Labor to improve student achievement and performance

Article III: Membership

All adults of the ALBA School Community are eligible to become members of the council through the peer election process. The school Council shall be comprised of the following:

- a. Teachers, Staff, Parents, Community and Business Partners.
- b. ALBA’s School Governance Council shall consist of 9 members:
 - 1.) five (5) parent members
 - 2.) three (3) staff members
 - 3.) one (1) community members

Members are defined in the following manner:

1. Parent: A parent is defined as an adult of 18 years or older. The adult can be a biological or adoptive parent of a child that is enrolled in ALBA School. A parent may also be a guardian or a person who has custody of the child, for example, a grandparent that has custody of a child. A parent that is employed by ALBA School cannot participate in the council as a representative, but can act as support.
2. Staff and support staff: All teachers and support staff is eligible to be nominated to be a part of the SGC.

3. Community Representative: Any resident of the city of Milwaukee is eligible to serve as the community representative.
4. Teacher Cooperative Representative: Full time, contracted, certified teacher that is a member of the Teacher's Cooperative.

All efforts will be made to have simple majority and full representation of each representative. However, the SGC will continue to function even if there is not full representation in each category. For example, if a committed community member cannot be found, or if that community member is absent for 3 consecutive meetings, the SGC will continue to function without one, while still searching to fill the spot. In addition, the representatives of the SGC have the responsibility to act as a representative of the families of ALBA School. Therefore, representatives must make an effort to communicate with the families to find the voice, pulse, and concerns of the school population as a whole.

Article IV: Fiscal Year & Quorum

The ALBA School Governance Council Year shall follow school budget year of July 1st to June 30th. To conduct business, a simple majority of council members (4) must be in attendance. In addition, one representative from each group (parent, staff and community member) must be present. If there is less than a simple majority in attendance, the meeting shall be adjourned.

However, in the case of a member who misses 3 consecutive meetings, the member will be asked to resign by a facilitator and an alternate will be chosen to represent that constituency by the SGC. A good faith effort will be made on the council's part to find a replacement in a timely manner, however, if one is not found, SGC will continue to function with or without quorum.

Article V: Officers & Duties

School Governance Council members shall work within in the budge school year of July 1st to June 30th. There should be a simple majority of four (4) members present in the meeting in order to conduct business. The simple majority consists of one staff member, two parent members, and one community member. If there is not a simple majority, the meeting will be rescheduled. However, as stated before, the SGC reserves the right to continue to function even if there is not full representation in each category. For example, if a committed community member cannot be found, or if that community member is absent for 3 consecutive meetings, the SGC will continue to function without one, while still searching to fill the spot.

A. Officers

1. 1 Facilitator (President)
2. 1 Recorder

B. Duties

1. Facilitators
 - a. Access information for the agenda
 - b. Set agenda to be published 2-3 days before the meeting
 - c. Set time limit on discussions
 - d. Keep meeting flowing
 - e. Call special meetings as needed
 - f. Schedule school secretary to send out an “Alert Now” automated phone call message the day before the SGC meeting to parents as a reminder.

2. Recorder
 - a. Take notes/minutes
 - b. Verify important information to assure accurateness.
 - c. Review previous month’s minutes at meeting
 - d. Give current notes to SGC members.
 - e. Published minutes will be distributed to the PTO for their information and agenda.
 - f. Published minutes will be distributed to the Head Start facilitator for their information and agenda.
 - g. Minutes will be reviewed with faculty during the next scheduled staff meeting.

Article VI: Elections

Nominations and Elections

A. Elected School Governance Council Members

1. Founding staff member or teacher that has been at ALBA for at least 3 years, if possible.
2. Primary and Intermediate grade levels should be represented on the council, if possible.
3. Parents must have children currently enrolled at ALBA.
4. A member who misses 3 consecutive meetings will be asked to resign by a facilitator and an alternate will be chosen to represent that constituency. A good faith effort will be made on the council’s part to find a replacement, however, if one is not found, SGC will continue to function with or without quorum.

B. Terms of Membership

- One staff member for a three (3) year term, that is the president.
- One staff member for a two (2) year term, that is the recorder.
- One staff member for a one (1) year term, that is to support and communicate findings to staff and families.

The initial parent positions will run as follows:

- One parent for a three (3) year term
 - One parent for a two (2) year term
 - Three parents for one (1) year term.
2. Annual Parent and Staff elections to be completed by June 1st.
 3. Consecutive terms are allowed.

C. Election Process

The Governance Council will be elected by formal procedures through a fair and open election process, without regard to race, color, or national origin.

1. Community Representatives will be appointed by the Teachers' Cooperative.
2. Parent Elections
 - a. During the spring, an informational sheet, timeline, and nomination form will be given to the parents/guardians of each ALBA student.
 - b. The form will outline the purpose of the SGC also responsibilities when serving as a board member. Information regarding when nomination forms should be returned will be included.
 - c. Ballots with the names of candidates and candidate statements will be given to all families at ALBA.
 - d. All Ballots must be returned two weeks before the end of the school year.
 - e. Those who are nominated, but not elected, will serve as alternates in the case of vacancies.
 - f. Ballots that are improperly marked or difficult to read will be excluded from the ballot count.
 - g. Ballots will be counted by a team of people comprised of but not limited to: SGC members, school staff, and secretary.
3. Staff Elections
 - a. Staff will be nominated and elected by their constituent group.
 - b. Staff will vote for nominated candidates by raising their hand. Votes will be counted by the SGC facilitator (President).
 - c. This process will take place again in the event of an unforeseen event or vacancy.
 - d. Also, those who are nominated, but not elected, can serve as alternates in the case of vacancies.
 - e. Newly elected members will be seated at the May SGC meeting.

Article VII: Meetings

Meetings

A. The first SGC meeting will take place in September, on the date and time decided upon by the elected members. During the first meeting, the SGC will select at least one community representative to participate in the SGC if one has not been selected. After the first meeting, the SGC will meet a minimum of nine (9) times, once a month, during the school year.

B. Regular Meetings

1. Monthly meetings with special meetings as necessary.
2. Interested parties are invited to all School Governance Council Meetings.
3. Only council members to speak at meetings unless included on agenda.
4. Decision by consensus or majority.
5. Only council members may participate in final decision making.
6. Agenda process
 - a. All staff, parents, students, and community members may submit agenda items for consideration up to five days before the monthly meeting.
 - b. The agenda planning committee, consisting of a parent and the facilitator will determine whether the item will be referred to other organizational structures or acted upon by the council. However, if a parent is not available to be a part of the agenda planning committee, the facilitator can still create the agenda.
 - c. Members of the School Governance Council can be called upon for ad hoc meetings and committees.

B. Special Meetings

1. Called by any member plus two additional consenting members.
2. Rescheduling due to inclement weather or no quorum.
3. A two (2) to Three (3) day notice to members.

Article VIII: Responsibilities of SGC representatives

A. Parents: SGC parents are responsible to communicate with the school families to seek out questions, concerns and get a sense of the school wide issues. SGC representatives have the responsibility to promote the SGC and the PTO agendas and events during the course of the year.

B. Teacher/Staff: Teachers are responsible to seek out questions of interest, issues, and information from parents and staff for the SGC to discuss. Teacher representatives present the SIP with the SGC and work on it to enter information when necessary. Teachers take an active role in seeking information of but not limited to: curriculum to adopt or discontinue, review high standards, tests, building concerns, staffing needs, resources, and the school budget.

- C. Teacher Cooperative Representative: The teacher cooperative representative is responsible in keeping the SGC informed of inquiries and decisions made by the teacher co-operative. The co-op takes the role of promoting curriculum and programing. The co-op actively seeks the participation of the SGC in things such as school budget and information from Central Office.
- D. Parents, Teacher, Teacher Cooperative Representative: All three entities shall work together and have a mutual goal to keep each other informed of events and decisions in order to work together and reach consensus.