

Superintendent Procedure 4110SP Family & Community Advisory and Oversight Committees



Approved by: s/ Denise Juneau Date: June 11, 2019

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A. Background

Family and community participation on advisory committees helps build relationships, shape understanding and involve community members in improving public education. Some committees are required by policy or in order for the District to receive grants or program funds; others exist because they perform useful functions. Committees have various functions that include, but are not limited to: research, oversight of activities, serving as vehicles for community input, information exchange and networking.

This policy and procedure is not meant to eliminate or reduce other avenues for community input to the Board and Superintendent, e.g. email, surveys, open meetings, community meetings, public hearings, parent organizations, focus groups, working groups/teams, planning/steering committees and taskforces.

This procedure does not apply to committees or groups established under other Board policies.

B. The following definitions will be used for the purposes of implementing Policy No. 4110:

1. Advisory & Oversight Committees:

- Advisory and oversight committees are typically long-term, oversight groups formed to advise the Superintendent or School Board on specific issues or topics and often make recommendations. Advisory committees are for one year unless stated otherwise in its charge. Community representatives make up a majority of the advisory committee's members; however, a Seattle Public Schools (SPS) staff member usually will be designated by the Superintendent or designee to co-lead the group.
- Meetings should be open to the public; however, because the Open Public Meeting Act (OPMA) does not apply to these meetings, they may close on occasion to deal with sensitive material.
- The requirements for advisory and oversight committees found in Superintendent Procedure 4110SP apply to these groups.
- *Examples:* Race & Equity Advisory Committee, BEX Oversight Committee

2. Taskforces & Focus Groups:

- Taskforces and Focus Groups are time-limited and often formed for a short-term assignment. They are made up of SPS staff and community members and are formed to address a clearly defined topic.

- Meetings should be open to the public; however, because OPMA does not apply to these meetings, they may close on occasion to deal with sensitive material.
 - The requirements for advisory and oversight committees found in Superintendent Procedure 4110SP do not necessarily apply to these groups; however, for the sake of transparency, elements of 4110SP should be incorporated as appropriate.
 - Each group shall have a charge that includes the scope of work, manner and timing of expected work product and duration of the group. The Deputy Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, or direct report to the Superintendent that is over the group shall determine which other elements of 4110SP shall apply.
 - *Example:* Taskforce on Assessments and Measuring Progress
3. Working Groups/Teams and Planning Committees:
- Working Groups/Teams are typically ongoing, but membership may change year-to-year. They usually are made up of only SPS staff and are formed to address internal, management, or implementation planning functions.
 - Meetings are not open to the public and OPMA does not apply to these meetings.
 - The requirements for advisory and oversight committees found in Superintendent Procedure 4110SP does not apply to these groups.
 - *Examples:* Weighted Staffing Standards Team, Principal Professional Development Planning Committee, High School Steering Committee, and Strategic Plan Goal Working Groups

C. Establishing Advisory & Oversight Committees

Advisory and Oversight Committees shall serve in an advisory capacity and without pay. The final decision on matters presented to them shall remain with the School Board or Superintendent.

1. Appointing Authority

The Superintendent (or his/her designee) or the School Board shall approve all committees and appointments involving members of the community. The Superintendent, School Board or any Board Committee may establish an Advisory or Oversight Committee.

2. Charge

A written charge or assignment shall be made and/or modified, which shall be issued to the committee by the appointing authority. The charge shall describe the number and qualifications of committee members, selection process, responsibilities, scope of review, manner and timing of expected work product, term of the committee, length of term of individual members, staff support required and reporting relationship to the appointing authority.

3. Duration of Committee and Terms of Office

The duration of the committee and the term for individual members shall be established in the charge and shall be set to match the expected function of the committee. If not specified in the charge, the duration of the committee shall be one year.

4. Notices

Notification of the establishment of a committee shall be designed to inform in a timely manner all individuals who might be interested in serving. It shall include a link on the district website and direct written notice to community organizations which may have an interest in participation. Other methods used to identify and contact potential committee members include, but are not limited to: district email lists; letters to key communicators; site councils; community and ethnic newspapers; radio station public service announcements; postings in neighborhood centers, public libraries, public clinics and housing, school bulletin boards, and PTSA newsletters. Notice should identify the time commitment involved.

5. Qualifications and criteria for selection

Committee members may include members of the community at large, staff (including building administrators and staff, teachers and central office staff), students, parents and other family members, experts and representatives of certain organizations.

The qualifications shall be set out in the charge.

The Superintendent or designee shall appoint staff representatives, including a co-lead for the committee (see below). Representatives of organizations shall be nominated in writing by the head of the organization to the appointing authority. Students, families, members of the community and experts may be self-nominated or nominated by Board members, the Superintendent or designee. Preference shall be given to individuals who reside within the district. Consideration should be given to those community members and groups who have not been active or represented in district decision-making processes, as well as representation by individuals of differing gender, ethnicity, race, age, geography and stakeholder interest groups. No one may serve on the committee who has a direct or indirect financial interest in the outcome of the recommendations made by the committee. Members shall decline to vote on or participate in official district business in which the individual has a remote interest.

The appointment authority may accept or reject any nomination. By agreeing to serve on the committee, a person acknowledges his or her acceptance of the requirements of this procedure and the charge for that committee.

6. Documentation

The appointing authority shall prepare documentation of the establishment of a community committee, which shall include the charge, membership, selection process and manner of notification to the community, and a discussion of consideration given and efforts made to involve individuals and groups who have been under-represented in district decision-making processes, as well as representation by individuals of differing gender, ethnic, race, age, geography and stakeholder interest groups. A copy of the memorandum shall be kept in the Board Office and JSCEE reception area for public review.

D. Operations of Advisory & Oversight Committees

1. Staffing

The charge shall set out the staff support for the committee, including expenditures. Support may include scheduling meetings, distributing agendas, handouts, preparing and distributing minutes, providing information, participation as a member, etc. Using volunteers to reduce the time spent by district staff is in order.

2. Orientation

The Superintendent or designee should provide for appropriate orientation to new committee members regarding functions of the committee, as well as information about the district organizational structure, resources available, terminology, etc.

3. Presiding Officer, Voting and Other Committee Operations

Unless the charge specifies otherwise, decisions regarding committee operations, including selection of a presiding officer, voting standards and other matters, shall be established by the committee at its initial meeting. At least one staff member and one community member shall be selected to co-lead the committee.

4. Meetings

The frequency of meetings, places, times and form of announcements shall be set by the committee. The charge may also provide direction in that regard.

5. Expenses

Reimbursement of any out-of-pocket expenses shall require prior written approval by the appointing authority.

6. Open Public Meetings Act and Records Retention

Advisory committees do not have authority to take action on behalf of the School Board, are not subject to the Open Public Meetings Act and are not required to keep minutes. However, meetings should be open to the public and minutes should be kept. Records of the committee which are provided to the district should be treated the same as any other records of the district.

7. Reports

The committee shall make progress reports to the appointing authority as set forth in the charge. Any presentations or reports to the School Board or Board committees shall become public documents by virtue of their presentation to the School Board or Board committee in a public meeting. A minority report of members of the committee is permitted.

8. Follow-through

The appointing authority will respond within three months of receiving the final committee report regarding each of the recommendations made by the committee, and include a brief rationale for any recommendations, which it cannot, or will not follow.

9. Indemnification

The district, in accordance with approved Board policy, shall indemnify committee members acting in good faith in the course of their responsibilities.

Approved: June 2013

