

# **SOLENG TOM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CONSTITUTION / BYLAWS**

## **I. PHILOSOPHY**

The School Council shall implement the mission and philosophy of Soleng Tom. This shall be accomplished through the cooperative effort of school personnel, parents, students, and community members.

### **PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT**

We believe that Soleng Tom School should provide successful experiences for each student. We recognize that each child is unique and should be given opportunities to develop and experience a wide range of intellectual, cultural, social, recreational, and civic interests so that each may become a productive and responsible member of society.

### **Mission Statement**

The Soleng Tom School community is committed to providing a safe and secure environment in which children are supported in achieving their optimal potential. Learners are encouraged to investigate, to reflect, and to collaborate as they develop an understanding of their world. Students' respect and responsibility for learning are keys to their development as productive and involved citizens.

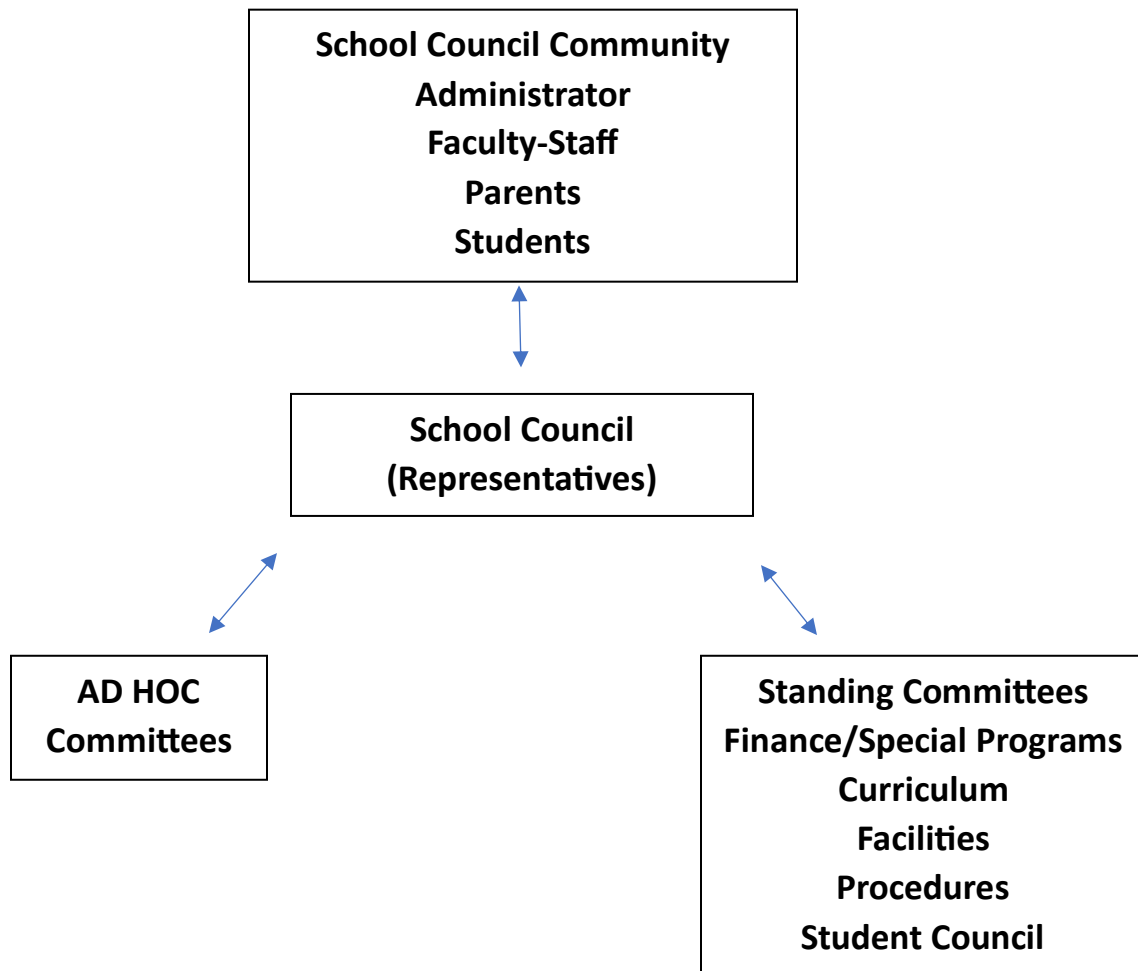
### **Goal Statement**

Students, staff, parents, and the community are to be involved in making decisions that are in the best interest of our student's achievement and personal growth.

### **THE GOALS OF SHARED DECISION MAKING**

1. To improve the effectiveness, productivity, and professional practices of employees.
2. To improve student learning by creating environments that are responsive to diverse student needs.
3. To enrich the educational climate.
4. To encourage commitment to and involvement by staff, students, parents, and the extended community.
5. To make decisions in the best interest of students learning within the context of Arizona statutes ARS 13-351-354, board policy, and consensus agreement.

## II. Overview of Governing Structure



## III. School Council

### A. Definition of the School Council

The school Council is a representative body of people who are elected from the Soleng Tom School Community according to Articles IIIB and IIIC. The School Council is the primary governing body of Soleng Tom Elementary.

### B. Membership of the School Council

The School Council will be composed of 11 members:

- 1 Principal or Designated Representative
- 1 Classified Staff representing Teaching Assistants, Office Staff and Community Representatives.
- 6 Parents
- 6 Teachers
- 1 Representative of Custodial / Food Service / Monitors Staff
- 1 Student Council President
- 1 Community Member

\*Chairs of the Standing Committee will attend when necessary

There will be equal numbers of parents and teachers on the council and this group shall constitute the majority of the council. The council will make every attempt to reflect the ethnic diversity of the community. The facilitator and secretary will be elected from the membership of the council during the first meeting of the year.

### **C. Procedures for Electing the School Council Members**

1. Each constituency group will elect its School Council Representative. School Council vacancies will be communicated to all voting bodies by the second week of school. These groups include parents, teachers, and classified staff.
2. Members of the School Council will accept the nominations in writing during the first month of school. Nominees will be asked to submit a paragraph stating how they would serve as a voice for their constituency group and their qualifications. This statement needs to be received by the School Council by the end of the fifth week of school.
3. Ballots will be prepared and distributed no later than the sixth week of school.
4. Election of School Council members will be by secret written ballot.
5. The Procedures Committee will count the ballots.

### **D. Terms of Office**

1. The Principal and the Student Council President will be permanent members of the school council.
2. All other members will be elected for a one-year term. Members can be elected for no more than two consecutive terms with one year off before serving again.
  - a. The School Council must have at least one parent/teacher with previous year of experience.
  - b. The School Council must have equal representation of parent/teacher.

### **E. Attendance at School Council Meetings.**

All meetings will be posted and will comply with open meeting laws.

1. Non-Member attendance.  
Non-voting members may attend any School Council meeting and express concerns as recognized by the Chair.
2. Member Attendance  
Regular attendance or notification of absence is required.  
Non-attendance for three consecutive meetings may imply an inability to serve. A letter will be sent to the stakeholder member from the council to determine her/his intent to serve. Notification will then be made to the stakeholder group so that they may select a new representative. (Example: If a first-grade parent representative needs to be replaced then the first-grade parents will be notified, and they select a new representative.)
3. Standing Ad Hoc Committee Chair Attendance  
Committee Chairs or their designated representative will attend at their own discretion or at the request of the School Council.

### **F. Vacancies and Replacements on the School Council**

Vacancies that occur during the school year will be advertised. Elections will be held as in Article IIIC. Each stakeholder group will be responsible for selection of members.

## **G. Duties and Responsibilities of the School Council**

1. School Council shall act as an advisory group and recommend policy regarding the control and management of school affairs, property, and interests for the specific purpose of promoting student achievement.
2. At no time shall the School Council or its members, individually or in concert, act in a way that violates the appropriate laws of the State of Arizona, the rules of the State Board of Education, the policies of the TUSD Governing Board, the decisions of the Soleng Tom School Council or its Constitution / Bylaws.
3. Neither the School Council nor its members, individually or in concert, shall interfere in the day-to-day operations of the school duties of the school administration, faculty, or staff.
4. The executive authority shall reside in the principal of Soleng Tom Elementary and the principal shall have the full authority to carry out the recommendations of the School Council.
5. The School Council shall determine how the duties of the committee will be shared among the members of the School Council (i.e., taking members, Chair, etc.)
6. The method of membership of Standing and Ad Hoc committee shall be determined by the School Council.
7. The School Council shall decide to refer issues to Standing and Ad Hoc Committees.
8. The School Council shall act on issues not referred to Standing and Ad Hoc Committees and act on recommendation of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees.
9. Decisions on when a vote is appropriate of any issue by the whole or any part of the Soleng Tom Community will be made by the School Council.
10. Minutes of each School Council meeting will be made available to the Soleng Tom Community.
11. The School Council will consider questions to include on the Quality Survey, specific to the needs of Soleng Tom to enhance school effectiveness.
12. Consider ways to use tax credit funds not identified for specific programs.
13. Approve 301 goals and determine if they have been met.

## **H. Meetings of the School Council**

1. Meetings shall follow TUSD Board policy and state and federal guidelines.
2. The School Council meetings will be held no less than four times a year. Special meetings may be called as necessary. Meetings days, times, and places will be determined by the consensus of the School Council members.
3. The Soleng Tom community will be notified of regular meetings through parent and staff bulletins and student council. This will comply with all open meeting laws with a posting of the agenda at least 24 hours in advance.
4. Quorum  
A majority of all members of the School Council must be present in person to constitute a quorum for official business. A member of the School Council may request a quorum count at any time during the meeting. If the number of members present in person at the time of the quorum count less than a majority, then the meeting shall be adjourned.
5. Special meetings can be called by:
  - a. The facilitator

- b. Twenty five percent of the sitting council members or
  - c. The Principal
6. Notification of special meetings will follow open meeting laws.

### **I. Agenda for School Council Meetings**

1. The School Council will determine the agenda for meetings to include: the aforementioned duties of the School Council as listed in Article III. G., attendance, review of minutes, nonmembers comments, announcements, and other issues deemed necessary by the School Council.
2. Items submitted for the agenda shall be in writing and may be provided by any member of the Council. Other members of the administration, staff, parents, and students shall submit their items for the agenda to any Council member for inclusion one week before the next scheduled meeting.
3. The facilitator and the principal will approve the agenda. The facilitator will post the agenda along with the notification of the School Council meeting at least 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting.

### **J. Official Meeting Minutes**

1. The minutes will reflect the dates, times, and places of the School Council meetings.
2. The minutes will reflect the members who are in attendance at school council meetings, those who are absent, and the stakeholder group each member represents.
3. The minutes will record all motions made and passed by the School Council.
4. The school will document who is selected as officers of the School Council.
5. A motion log will also be maintained to record all motions.
6. A copy of the motion log and the minutes will be made available to all members of the Soleng Tom community. This will be kept in the front office area. The secretary for the School Council will be responsible for uploading this information.
7. A copy of the 301 goals, the bylaws, and school policy documents will be kept with the minutes and motion log so that all members of the Soleng Tom community will have access to this information. This will be updated as necessary by the School Council facilitator.

## **III. Methods of Operations**

### **A. Consensus**

1. Definition of Consensus  
Consensus occurs when a group reaches a conclusion, which has blended the best ideas into a decision that everyone in the group can support.
2. Operation of Consensus
  - a. If consensus is met the issue passes.
  - b. If consensus is not met, the issue will be referred back to the origination subcommittee for revision and/or reconsideration.
  - c. If consensus cannot be reached a vote can be taken and the issue will pass with a 75% majority vote of all school council members.
3. Use of Consensus  
All committee will reach decisions by consensus.

## **B. Majority Vote**

1. Upon consensus of the School Council, an issue may be forwarded to the entire body of the Soleng Tom Community or any constituent appropriate, for a vote by written secret ballot. Issues will be passed by a majority affirmative vote of the ballots cast.
2. Two School Council members will count written ballots.
3. Each member shall have one vote.

## **C. Relationship with School Administration**

The on-site administration shall meet with and report on the implementation of School Council recommendations and provide requisite information and resources to the School Council so that it may fully fulfill its purpose and mission.

## **D. Constitution and Bylaws: Procedure for Action**

1. Amendments
  - a. Any member of the Soleng Tom community can propose an amendment to the Soleng Tom Constitution. Rationale for the proposed amendment will be presented to the School Council.
  - b. The School Council will decide whether to ratify the amendment by consensus of the School Council or to call for a vote of the Soleng Tom community, with a two-thirds vote of the ballots cast needed to ratify an amendment.

## **E. Ratification of the Constitution**

To take effect this document must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the ballots cast by the Soleng Tom Community.