

Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual

Title: GOVERNANCE OF ALTERNATIVE AND SMALL SCHOOLS

Section: 602.5

Board Report: 07-0124-PO2

Date Adopted: January 24, 2007

Policy:

THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER RECOMMENDS:

That the Chicago Board of Education rescind Board Reports 98-0429-EX2, Guidelines and Procedures for the Operation of Local School Councils at Small Schools, 00-1025-EX2, Guidelines for Alternative Local School Councils, and 03-0924-EX01, Guidelines for Military Academy Boards of Governors and adopt a new Policy on the Governance of Alternative and Small Schools.

POLICY TEXT:

I. Purpose, Goals and Applicability

Alternative schools and small schools are attendance centers with: specialized school design, educational foci or curricula; and/or specialized student populations.

The Illinois General Assembly was aware of the specialized characteristics of alternative and small schools and limited the application of certain provisions of the Illinois School Code to such schools. Specifically, the Illinois School Code provides that the provisions with respect to the composition, organization, operation and powers of Local School Councils do not apply to alternative schools or small schools created by the Chicago Board of Education ("Board"). Instead, the Board may develop appropriate alternative methods for involving parents, community members and school staff to the maximum extent possible in all of the activities of alternative and small schools. 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4(b). The purpose of this policy is to establish such alternative methods for those Chicago Public Schools designated by the Board as either small or alternative schools.

This Policy shall not to apply to schools designated by the Board as alternative or small schools in the following instances:

(a) When the Board enters into a school management agreement or school development agreement with a third-party for the management of a school. In such instances, the CEO, in consultation with the third-party, shall develop the composition and duties of the school's advisory body and such requirements shall be included in the agreement with the third party.

(b) When the Board approves an alternative method for involving parents, community members and school staff in the activities of the school pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4(b) and the Board's Policy to Establish Renaissance Schools.

II. Definitions

Alternative School: A school created by the Board that has a specialized student population, educational focus, curriculum or school design, with an appointed body created pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4(b) to involve parents, community members and school staff in the activities of the school.

Small School: A school created by the Board that has a specialized educational focus, curriculum or school design and an enrollment of approximately 600 students if a high school or 350 students if an elementary school, with an appointed body created pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4(b) to involve parents, community members and school staff in the activities of the school.

Military Academy: One type of alternative school created by the Board that has a military science curriculum and an appointed Board of Governors created pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4(b) to involve parents, community members and school staff in the activities of the school.

Principal: The lead administrator in a school selected by the Chief Executive Officer who possesses a Type 75 Administrative Certificate issued by the State of Illinois and meets applicable principal qualification requirements established by the Board.

Academy Superintendent: The lead administrator in a military academy selected by the Chief Executive Officer who possesses a Type 75 Administrative Certificate issued by the State of Illinois and meets applicable principal qualification requirements established by the Board.

Commandant: A retired military officer or non-commissioned officer, certified JROTC instructor and Board employee who is in charge of the military program and instruction at a military academy. The commandant shall be under the direct supervision of the principal/academy superintendent and the broad supervision of the Military Area Officer.

JROTC Instructor: A Board employee who is a retired military officer or non-commissioned officer certified by one of the U.S. armed services as qualified to teach and train cadets participating in the JROTC Program.

Teacher: A Board employee possessing an Educational Certification from the State of Illinois assigned to perform a majority of his or her duties at an alternative school or small school and who is not the principal/academy superintendent or assistant principal.

Parent: A parent/legal guardian of a student currently enrolled in the school, as defined in Board Rule 6-28, and who is not related to the principal or academy superintendent and who is not an employee of the Board. In an alternative school designed to serve students enrolled for one year or less, parents of students who had been enrolled in the school within eighteen (18) months of the date of their appointment as parent representatives may serve out the entire term of their appointment.

Community Resident: A person who resides either within the attendance boundaries of a school or within District 299 if the school does not have attendance boundaries. Community residents may not be: (1) related to the principal or academy superintendent, (2) employees of the Board, or (3) parents of students currently enrolled in the school where they serve.

Eligible Student: A pupil currently enrolled full-time in a small or alternative high school who is in good academic standing (at least a 2.5 grade point average and high school attendance rate of 90% and no history of incidents of misconduct or violations of the Board's student discipline policy as a high school student) shall be eligible to serve on Appointed Local School Councils and Boards of Governors.

Advocate: An individual such as a community activist, business leader, former senior military officer or other professional who is at least 18 years of age and who possesses skills or expertise in a field which is the educational focus of or will contribute to the fulfillment of the educational mission of an alternative school or small school. An Advocate may not be: (1) related to the principal or academy superintendent, (2) an employee of the Board, or (3) the parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the school where they serve. An Advocate is not required to reside within District 299.

The appointed bodies of military academies shall be known as Boards of Governors (hereinafter "boards.") The appointed bodies of alternative schools and small schools shall be known as Appointed Local School Councils (hereinafter "councils").

III. Initial Establishment

No sooner than two years from the date a new alternative or small is opened, the Board shall establish a council or board in accordance with the terms of this policy. Except when otherwise authorized by the Board, the composition of the council or board established for a new school shall be as described in section IV of this policy.

IV. Composition

Unless an alternate composition is otherwise authorized by the Board, the composition of a council established after the date this Policy is adopted shall be:

- the Principal,
- six Parents,
- two Teachers,
- two Community Residents
- two Advocates, and,
- in high schools, one full-time Eligible Student in good academic standing.

Unless an alternate composition is otherwise authorized by the Board, the composition of a board established after the date this Policy is adopted shall be:

- the Principal/Academy Superintendent,
- Commandant,
- two Teachers,
- one JROTC Instructor,
- six Parents,
- two Community Residents,
- two Advocates; and
- the Cadet Battalion commander or other Senior Cadet.

The members of a council or board may submit a proposal to the Area Instruction Officer (“AIO”) or Military Area Officer (“MAO”) for a change in its composition, with reasons justifying the proposal, for approval by the Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) and Board. If approved, any change in composition will be effective for the next biennial Local School Council election period, unless otherwise authorized by the CEO and the Board.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, on or before July 1, 2007, the composition of councils and boards in existence on the date this Policy is adopted shall be presented to the Board for confirmation or adjustment as appropriate. Any such adjustments shall, at a minimum, ensure that the composition of such councils and boards includes at least two Advocate members that support the mission of the school.

To the extent practicable, appointments to councils and boards shall reflect a school’s racial and ethnic diversity. The Office of Local School Council Relations will be responsible for ensuring that the composition and operation of councils and boards is consistent with this Policy.

V. Candidate Eligibility Requirements

Each candidate for appointment to a council or board other than those whose appointment is automatic by virtue of his or her position at the school shall submit the following forms to the principal or academy superintendent: (1) Nomination Form; (2) Statement of Economic Interests; (3) Criminal Conviction Disclosure Form; and (4) Candidate Statement of qualifications and plans if elected. In addition, each teacher candidate and JROTC Instructor candidate must submit a Teacher Candidate Information Form which describes their professional development credentials, community service and organizational memberships. Each student candidate must submit a Student Statement. Each Advocate candidate must submit a resume. The eligibility requirements for each position on a council or board are as follows:

1. Parent Eligibility.

Each Parent candidate must:

- be the parent or legal guardian of a student currently enrolled in the school, as those terms are defined herein;
- not be related to the principal;
- not be an employee of the Board; and
- pass a criminal background investigation.

In an alternative school designed to serve students enrolled for one year or less, parents of students who had been enrolled in the school within eighteen (18) months of the date of their appointment as parent representatives may serve out the entire term of their appointment.

2. Teacher Eligibility.

Assistant principals are ineligible to serve on councils or boards. Each Teacher candidate must:

- be employed and assigned as a teacher or in a position for which teacher qualifications are required; and
- be employed to perform the majority of his/her employment duties at the school where he/she is a teacher candidate.

3. JROTC Instructor Eligibility.

Each JROTC Instructor candidate must:

- be employed and assigned as a JROTC Instructor; and
- be employed to perform the majority of his/her employment duties at the school where he/she is a JROTC instructor candidate.

4. Student Eligibility.

Candidates for the position of Student Representative on a council or board at a high school must be full-time students in good academic standing.

At a military academy, the student representative shall be the Cadet Battalion Commander or other senior cadet with the next highest military ranking if the Cadet Battalion Commander does not meet the requirements to serve as the student representative, unless otherwise determined by the Board.

5. Community Resident Eligibility.

Each Community Resident candidate must:

- reside within either a school's attendance area or District 299 if the school does not have attendance boundaries;
- be at least 18 years of age;
- not be related to the principal or academy superintendent;
- not be the parent/legal guardian of a student currently enrolled at the school
- not be an employee of the Board; and
- pass a criminal background investigation.

6. Advocate Eligibility.

Each Advocate candidate must:

- be at least 18 years of age;
- not be related to the principal or academy superintendent;
- not be the parent/legal guardian of a student currently enrolled at the school;
- not be an employee of the Board;
- possess skills, expertise or experience in the field which is the educational focus of the school at which he or she serves or possess attributes which will contribute to the fulfillment of the educational mission of the school;
- pass a criminal background investigation.

VI. Appointment

The following process shall apply for the appointment of members to a board or council:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Appointment Process</u>
Principal	Automatic appointment by virtue of position.
Academy Superintendent	Automatic appointment by virtue of position (military academy high schools only).
Commandant	Automatic appointment by virtue of position (military academy high schools only).
JROTC Instructor	Appointed by the Board following a non-binding advisory poll of the school staff (military academy high schools only).
Teacher	Appointed by the Board following a non-binding advisory poll of the school staff.
Student	Appointed by the Board following a non-binding advisory poll of the student body (only on high school Appointed Local School Councils).
Cadet Battalion Commander or Highest-ranking Cadet Officer	Appointed by the Board (military academy high schools only)
Parent/Legal Guardian	Appointed by the Board following a non-binding advisory poll of parents.
Community Resident	Appointed by the Board on recommendation of the CEO.
Advocate	Appointed by the Board on recommendation of the CEO.

1. Parent Appointments

All parents/legal guardians of children enrolled in an alternative school or small school are eligible to participate in a non-binding advisory poll for the purpose of recommending candidates to serve as parent representatives to the school's council or board. The poll shall be conducted under the supervision of the Office of the CEO or designee. The results of the poll shall be reported to the AIO or MAO and submitted to the Board with a recommendation by the CEO. The CEO may recommend any of the names from the poll for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names. The Board will exercise absolute discretion in appointing parent representatives.

In the event of a vacancy, the council or board shall recommend to the AIO or MAO a candidate for consideration by the CEO for recommendation to the Board for appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. The CEO may recommend any of those names for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names to fill the vacancy. The new parent representative shall serve on the council or board until the end of the original two-year term.

2. Teacher and JROTC Instructor Appointments

All school staff members who are Board employees and perform a majority of their duties at the school are eligible to participate in non-binding advisory polls for the teacher and JROTC Instructor representatives to councils and boards. The polls shall be conducted under the supervision of the Office of the CEO or designee. The results of the polls shall be reported to the AIO or MAO and submitted to the Board with a recommendation by the CEO. The CEO may recommend any of those names from the poll for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names. In addition to the poll results, the Board will consider additional criteria in making appointments, including, but not limited to, professional development, membership in professional organizations, and other related experience. The Board will exercise absolute discretion in appointing teacher and JROTC instructor representatives.

In the event that a teacher or JROTC instructor representative is unable to perform his/her employment duties at the school due to illness, disability, leave of absence, or any other reason, the CEO shall declare a vacancy or temporary vacancy and the Board shall appoint a replacement representative after considering the preferences of the school staff as ascertained through a non-binding advisory poll. The CEO may recommend any of those names for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names to fill the vacancy. The new teacher or JROTC instructor representative shall serve on the council or board until the end of the prior representative's leave or the end of the original two-year term, whichever comes first.

3. Student Appointments

Where appropriate, full-time members of a high school's student body are eligible to participate in a non-binding advisory poll for the student representative to the council. The results of the poll shall be reported to the AIO and submitted to the Board with a recommendation by the CEO. The CEO may recommend any of those names from the poll for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names. The Board will consider additional criteria, including, but not limited to, a student's school service, community service, and other relevant experience. The Board will exercise absolute discretion in appointing student representatives.

In the event that a student representative is for any reason unable to continue to serve on a council, the CEO shall declare a vacancy and the Board shall appoint a replacement representative after considering the results of a non-binding advisory poll. The CEO may recommend any of those names for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names to fill the vacancy. The new student representative shall serve on the council until the end of the original one-year term.

If the Cadet Battalion Commander in a military academy does not meet the eligibility requirements for appointment to the board as described herein, the Board of Education shall appoint the next highest-military ranking senior cadet who meets the criteria. In the event a cadet member is for any reason unable to continue to serve on a board, the CEO shall declare a vacancy and the Board shall appoint the next highest-military ranking senior cadet who meets the criteria. The new student cadet representative shall serve on the board until the end of the original one-year term.

4. Community Resident and Advocate Appointments

Both the principal or academy superintendent and council or board may submit lists of candidates for the Advocate and Community Resident positions to the AIO or MAO. The AIO or MAO shall then submit to the CEO: (1) the list or lists of candidates submitted to them; (2) lists of any additional candidates, if desired; and (3) nomination materials for each candidate, including Nomination Forms, Statements of Economic Interests, Criminal Conviction Disclosure Forms, resumes of Advocate candidates and Candidate Statements. The CEO may submit any of those names for appointment by the Board, or may submit other names. The Board will exercise absolute discretion in the appointment of Community Residents and Advocates.

In the event of a vacancy, the council or board shall recommend a candidate for consideration by the AIO or MAO and the CEO for recommendation to the Board for appointment to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. The CEO may recommend any of those names for appointment by the Board or may recommend other names to fill the vacancy. The new community or advocate representative shall serve on the council or board until the end of the original two-year term.

VII. Term of Office

The term of office for both council and board members shall be two (2) years. Student members shall serve for one (1) year.

VIII. Removal of Members of Appointed Local School Councils or Boards of Governors

1. Subject to notice and a hearing convened pursuant to Board Rules, the Board may remove members from councils or boards for the reasons stated below:

- (i) Failure to meet eligibility requirements for their position as stated in Section V, "Candidate Eligibility Requirements," throughout their entire term of office.
- (ii) Failure or Refusal to Complete the Mandatory Training. Incoming council and board members are required to attend a training program within six months of taking office. The Board may remove a council or board member for failing or refusing to complete the mandatory training.
- (iii) Violation of State Law or Board Rules and Policies. The Board may remove council and board members for violating Illinois law or Board Rules or Policies, including, but not limited to, the Code of Ethics. In particular, members of councils and boards shall not engage in any contract, work, business, or sale of any article with or to the school where they serve. Council and board members may also be removed by the Board for failure to file the required Statement of Economic Interests.
- (iv) Criminal Convictions. The Board may remove council and board members pursuant to Board Rule 6-30 for failure to disclose criminal convictions listed in the Criminal Conviction Disclosure Form. The obligation to disclose criminal convictions is ongoing and the Board shall remove any member convicted of a crime listed on the Criminal Conviction Disclosure Form that renders the member ineligible to serve.
- (v) Unbecoming Conduct. The Board shall have the authority to suspend or remove council or board members for unbecoming conduct, which involves any type of action that disrupts the educational process at the school in which he/she serves. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - member refuses to attend council or board meetings or walks out of meetings before a vote is taken, without reasonable justification;
 - member refuses to resolve disputes with the principal or academy superintendent or other council or board members to structure programs conducive to learning;
 - member uses or attempts to use his/her office to influence disciplinary actions against school personnel or students or the improper closing of school staff positions or programs; or
 - member refuses to remain in attendance for the duration of council or board meetings with the intent to terminate quorum.

Removal of a council or board member for unbecoming conduct is subject to a hearing. The CEO's designee shall have the burden of going forward with evidence to substantiate the allegations against the council or board member in question. The challenged council or board member shall have the opportunity to personally present statements and evidence to rebut the charges.

2. A council or board may remove a member for not attending regular meetings. A member may be removed by a majority vote of the council or board if that member has missed three consecutive regular meetings (not including committee meetings) or five regular meetings over a 12-month period (not including committee meetings). The member in question shall have the right to explain the reasons for his/her absence and to vote on whether he/she shall be removed. A vote to remove a member shall be valid only if the member has been notified in writing of the intent to remove him or her at least seven days prior to the vote, by either personal delivery or certified mail sent to the member's last known address.

IX. Vacancies

All vacancies on a council or board shall be filled through the appointment process described in Section VI.

X. Authority & Responsibilities

1. Principal/Academy Superintendent Recommendations and Evaluation

The selection of all principals and academy superintendents (applicable to military academies) shall be under the sole authority of the CEO and the Board. However, councils and boards have the following powers and duties with respect to principal or academy superintendent recommendations:

- (i) Complete the principal selection training provided by the Office of Local School Council Relations prior to undertaking the process of selecting principal candidates to recommend to the CEO.
- (ii) Work closely with the AIO or MAO and the Office of Local School Council Relations during the process of selecting principal candidates to recommend to the CEO.
- (iii) After placing the advertisement in the personnel bulletin, review resumes, conduct interviews of principal candidates, submit to the AIO or MAO to forward to Chief Officer for High Schools or the Chief Officer for Elementary Schools and the CEO a list of one to three candidates for principal or academy superintendent in order of preference. The CEO may then recommend one of these candidates to the Board for employment as principal or academy superintendent under a four-year contract. If none of the candidates is acceptable, the CEO may request a new list of names from the council or board or select a candidate not on the list submitted by the council or board to recommend for appointment as principal or academy superintendent by the Board.
- (iv) Submit to the AIO or MAO to forward to the Chief Officer for High Schools or the Chief Officer for Elementary Schools and the CEO a recommendation regarding the renewal or non-renewal of the principal's or academy superintendent's contract by no later than 150 days prior to the contract's expiration. The principal or academy superintendent must be informed at least 150 days before the contract's expiration as to whether the council or board will recommend that the contract be renewed. Renewal will be solely at the discretion of the CEO and the Board.
- (v) Evaluate the principal or academy superintendent annually using the Board-approved principal performance evaluation form by May 1 of every year of the principal's or academy superintendent's contract.
- (vi) Evaluate the principal or academy superintendent in writing not later than 150 days prior to the expiration of his or her contract to assess the educational and administrative progress made at the school during the term of the contract in order to determine whether to recommend the renewal of the principal's or academy superintendent's contract to the CEO. Such evaluation shall be based on the criteria set forth in the principal's or academy superintendent's contract and shall take into consideration the prior three (3) annual evaluations of the principal's or academy superintendent's performance.
- (vii) Student members of high school councils or boards shall not be eligible to vote on personnel matters that include, but are not limited to, principal or academy superintendent evaluation, or principal or academy superintendent candidate recommendations.

2. General Powers and Duties

Councils and boards have the following general powers and duties:

- (i) Approve a School Improvement Plan and submit the plan to the AIO or MAO. At least twice a year, the principal or academy superintendent shall publicly report to the entire school community on the progress and problems of implementing the School Improvement Plan. The school community shall be afforded the opportunity to make recommendations regarding the School Improvement Plan.

- (ii) Approve an Expenditure Plan and submit the plan to the AIO or MAO. The expenditure plan shall be consistent with and subject to the terms of any contract for services with a third party entered into by the Board. The expenditure plan must also be consistent with applicable law, collective bargaining agreements, Board policies and standards. The expenditure plan shall be administered by the principal or academy superintendent.
- (iii) Approve transfer allocations within funds via a super majority (50% of the council plus 2), provided that such transfer is approved by the principal or academy superintendent and is consistent with applicable law and collective bargaining agreements.
- (iv) Convene at least two (2) well-publicized meetings annually to present the proposed Expenditure Plan and the School Improvement Plan to the school community. At these meetings, the council/board shall provide an opportunity for public comment.
- (v) Hold an organizational meeting to elect a chairperson, who shall be a parent, and elect a secretary and establish the regular meeting schedule for the year. The organizational meeting is to be held between July 1 and July 14 of each year.
- (vi) Approve fundraising proposals by external organizations using school facilities.
- (vii) Approve purchases to be made with Internal Accounts funds consistent with the requirements of the Internal Accounts Manual and Board Rules or Policies. Additional approval by the Board or Chief Purchasing Officer may also be necessary.
- (viii) Make recommendations to the principal or academy superintendent for appointments to fill vacant, additional, or newly created teacher positions at the school.
- (ix) Make recommendations to the principal or academy superintendent concerning textbook selection and curriculum development consistent with the system-wide curriculum objectives contained in the School Improvement Plan.
- (x) Evaluate the allocation of teaching resources and the assignment/deployment of certified and uncertified staff that is consistent with the instructional objectives listed in the School Improvement Plan. Make recommendations to the principal or academy superintendent for reallocation of teaching and non-teaching staff resources based on this evaluation.
- (xi) Advise the principal or academy superintendent regarding attendance and disciplinary policies for the school, consistent with the Board's student code of conduct/discipline policy.
- (xii) Comply with the Illinois Open Meetings and Illinois Freedom of Information Acts, other applicable state and federal laws, as well as all applicable collective bargaining agreements, court orders, and Board Rules and Policies.
- (xiii) Make public the names and addresses of its members.
- (xiv) Advise the principal or academy superintendent regarding granting the use of school facilities such as assembly halls and classrooms for social and educational activities.
- (xv) If appropriate, initiate a student dress code and/or uniform policy if requested by parents or the CEO.
- (xvi) Encourage participation of parents and community members in school events and school volunteer activities.
- (xvii) Provide parents and community members with a forum to discuss important school and community-related issues and to address school leaders.

- (xviii) Assist school leaders in the identification and development of community resources for the school and students by reaching out to government agencies, local businesses and community organizations to obtain information and resources.
- (xix) Assist school leaders in the promotion of the school, its staff and students.

XI. Manner of Operation

1. No action by the council or board is valid unless approved by a vote of a majority of the serving membership, a quorum of the full membership being present. A quorum of the full membership is 50% plus one.
2. The principal or academy superintendent and student member or Cadet Battalion Commander or other senior cadet member, if any, may not vote, nor be included in any quorum calculation, when the council or board is considering the matters of principal or academy superintendent recommendations or evaluation.
3. Councils and boards may adopt rules, bylaws and policies necessary to conduct their business in an efficient manner that are not inconsistent with Board Rules or Policies or applicable State or Federal laws.
4. Councils and boards shall annually, (1) elect a chairperson who shall be the parent or legal guardian of a child attending the school, and may elect a vice-chairperson, (2) elect a secretary, and (3) adopt and publish a calendar of regular meetings.

Amends/Rescinds: Adopted 07-0124-PO2
(Rescinds 98-0429-EX2; 00-1025-EX2; and 03-0924-EX01)

Cross References:

Legal References: Illinois School Code, 105 ILCS 5/34-2.4b