

SCHOOL GOVERNANCE TEAM BYLAWS

(Charter Term 2016 – 2021)



Tift County Schools

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Initial Matters

Article I:	Name
Article II:	Preamble and Purpose
Article III:	Operational Date

Membership

Article IV:	Membership
Article V:	Officers and Duties
Article VI:	Term of Office
Article VII:	Elections
Article VIII:	Vacancy
Article IX:	Committees, Study Groups, Task Forces
Article X:	Compensation

Meetings

Article XI:	Meeting Notice and Location
Article XII:	Quorum and Voting Requirement
Article XIII:	Minutes; Open Records
Article XIV:	Parliamentary Authority

Responsibilities/Governance

Article XV:	Responsibilities and Accountability
Article XVI:	SGT Guidelines
Article XVII:	Immunity
Article XVIII:	Role of Board of Education

Tift County Charter System Local School Governance Bylaws and Guidelines

INITIAL MATTERS

Article I

Name

The name of this school governance team shall be the School Governance Team (or “SGT”) organized as a governing council for the school, pursuant to the authority of the Board of Education of Tift County, the Charter Schools Act (O.C.G.A. § 20-2-2060 et seq.), applicable state and federal law, and the Charter System Petition of the Tift County Board of Education.

Article II

Preamble and Purpose

Recognizing the need to increase student achievement through academic and organizational innovation by encouraging local school systems to utilize the flexibility of a performance based contract called a charter, and recognizing the need to improve communication and participation of parents and the community in the management and operation of local Schools, the Tift County Board of Education believes parent and community support is critical to the success of students and schools. The intent of these bylaws and guidelines is to bring communities and schools closer together in a spirit of cooperation to solve difficult education problems, improve academic achievement, provide support for teachers and administrators, and bring parents and community members into the school-based decision-making process.

The establishment of SGTs, pursuant to the Charter Petition, is intended to help the Tift County Board of Education develop and nurture participation, bring parents and the community together with teachers and school administrators to create a better understanding of and mutual respect for each other's concerns, and share ideas for school improvement. SGTs shall be reflective of the school community, and shall aspire to the School District's mission (*to educate, prepare, and inspire students to reach their fullest potential*) and vision (*prepare our students for tomorrow by building on our tradition of excellence*).

As is required by the Constitution of the State of Georgia, the management and control of public schools shall be the responsibility of the local board of education. The school leader shall be the principal who is ultimately responsible for school operations and improving student achievement. Each member of the SGT, however, shall be accorded the respect and attention deserving of their position.

Article III Operational Date

By August 26, 2016, an SGT shall be operational in each of the charter system schools in the Tift County School District. The board of education through its staff shall provide a training program to assist schools in forming an SGT and to assist SGT members in the performance of their duties. Such program shall address:

- (1) The organization of SGTs
- (2) Their purpose and responsibilities
- (3) Applicable laws, rules, regulations and meeting procedures
- (4) Important state and local school system program requirements

Additional training programs will be offered to SGT members annually.

MEMBERSHIP

Article IV Membership

The SGT shall consist of a minimum of eight members, of whom a majority shall constitute a quorum. Membership on the SGT shall be determined as follows:

- One (1) principal, who shall serve as non-voting member of the SGT; however, to ensure continuity the principal will serve as chair of the SGT
- Two (2) parents/guardians of a student in the School who are elected by the parents/guardians of the school
- One (1) business community member nominated by the Principal and approved by the SGT
- One (1) community member appointed by the Principal
- Two (2) full-time certified staff who work the entire day at the school, elected by members of the certified staff assigned to the school. (Administrators are not eligible)
- One (1) non-certified staff member at the school, nominated by the Principal and approved by the SGT

The SGT shall elect from its membership the co-chair to serve with the principal.

- **Note A:** An employee of the local school system may serve as a parent representative on the SGT of a school in which his or her child is enrolled if such employee works at a different school.
- **Note B:** A parent of a child assigned to an alternative education program does qualify for election as a parent in the home school where their child would attend.
- **Note C:** School Board members are disqualified from serving on school SGTs but are allowed to vote as a parent from an electing body.
- **Note D:** There is no prohibition in the law for a qualifying person to serve on two or more school SGTs, where qualified.

Article V Officers and Duties

The officers of the SGT shall be a chair (principal), co-chair, and a secretary. . The co-chair and Secretary of the SGT shall be elected by the SGT at the first meeting of the SGT following the election of SGT members. The officers of the SGT shall hold office concurrently with their term of membership on the SGT.

The Chair (Principal)

The school principal shall have the following duties pertaining to the SGT activities:

1. Cause to be created the SGT by convening the appropriate bodies to select SGT members; setting the initial agenda, meeting time, and location; and informally notifying all SGT members of the same (it shall be the duty of the Secretary, as stated below, to give official legal notice)
2. Perform all of the duties required by law and the bylaws of the SGT;
3. Communicate all SGT requests for information and assistance to the Superintendent (or designee) and inform the SGT of responses or actions of the Superintendent
4. Develop the school improvement plan and proposed school budget for monies allocated from charter system proceeds and submits to the SGT for its review, comments, recommendations, and approval
5. Develop the agenda for each meeting of the SGT after taking into consideration suggestions of SGT members and the urgency of school matters. An item may be added to the agenda according to Robert's Rules of Order; and
6. Serve as the spokesperson of the SGT (or select a designee to serve as spokesperson)

The Co-Chair (Non-Principal)

The SGT co-chairperson shall have the following duties pertaining to SGT activities:

1. In the absence of the Principal, shall preside at SGT meetings;
2. Shall be responsible for signing the required affidavit on each occasion the SGT elects to close a meeting and enter into executive session. A copy of the affidavit shall be made available for public viewing in the same manner as meeting minutes.

The Co-Chair shall, in the absence or disability of the Principal, perform the duties and exercise the powers of the chairperson and shall perform such other duties as shall be required by the SGT.

The Secretary

The secretary shall attend all meetings, act as clerk of the SGT, and be responsible for recording all votes and minutes of all proceedings in the documents to be kept for that purpose. The secretary shall give official notice of all meetings (or cause another person to give notice of meetings) of the SGT, according to Article XIII. The Secretary shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the SGT.

Article VI

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Term of Office

The term of office of all SGT members shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30. Members of the SGT shall serve for a term of two years if applicable.

With the exception of the principal, SGT members may only serve two consecutive terms. After serving two consecutive terms a member must rotate off the SGT for at least one term before being nominated for re-election to the SGT.

Article VII Elections

The principal of each school shall call a meeting of electing bodies during the month of May each year (or at such other time as is deemed practical) for the purpose of selecting members of the SGT. The parent election shall be advertised publicly a minimum of two weeks prior to the election. Prior to the parent election, all prospective candidates must contact principal for qualification. Qualification shall include but not be limited to enrollment verification, written commitment to Code of Ethics (BBFBA) and Conflict of Interest (BBFBB).

The electing body for the parent members shall consist of parents and guardians eligible to serve as a parent member of the SGT, with a maximum of two ballots per enrolled student.

The electing body for the certified staff members shall consist of all certificated personnel eligible to serve as a certificated member of the SGT.

Election method/procedures: Nominations shall be accepted by the principal from members within the electing body prior to the actual voting meeting. Write-in votes will not be accepted during the election. Teacher and parent election meetings shall use the plurality method of election. One vote shall be taken with the highest vote recipients being elected to serve on the SGT. Where individuals tie with the highest number of votes, as many shall serve on the SGT as there are positions open. If the number of vacancies on the SGT is fewer than the number of candidates tied for the opening, then subsequent votes are required until a winner can be determined. Teachers/Parents must be present and qualified to vote (proxies are not allowed). A person does not have to be present at the time of the vote to be elected to the SGT (Nominee must have agreed in advance to serve if elected). Each Teacher/Parent shall be issued one ballot (maximum of two/parent guardian ballots per student) after they have been identified by the school principal or designee as a member of the electing body.

Election Ballots: It shall be the responsibility of the Superintendent's designee to provide voting ballots to each school principal to be used in the election of parent and teacher representatives to the SGT. All ballots cast shall be maintained on file at the school as an official record of the SGT for a period of two (2) years or until the term of office for which the election was held is ended; whichever is longer.

Article VIII Vacancy

The office of SGT member shall be automatically vacated if a) a member resigns, b) if the person holding the office is removed as a member by an action of the SGT, or c) if a member no longer meets the qualifications specified in the bylaws.

In the event of a vacancy on the SGT, a replacement can be appointed by the principal or recommended by principal and approved by remaining LSGT members (depending on the position vacated), unless there are 90 calendar days or less remaining in the term, in which case the vacancy shall remain unfilled.

Note A: An SGT member may be removed from office for failure to attend meetings, participate in required training, violating the TCBOE Code of Ethics, or other good and sufficient cause. Removal for cause requires a two-thirds majority vote of the SGT. This provision is not applicable to the Principal.

Article IX Committees, Study Groups and Task Forces

The SGT may appoint ad hoc committees, study groups, or task forces for such purposes as it deems helpful and may utilize existing or new school advisory groups.

Article X Compensation

Members of the SGT shall not receive compensation to serve on the SGT or its committees.

MEETINGS

Article XI Meeting Notice and Location

All meetings of the SGT shall be held at the school in a location determined by the principal. The SGT shall meet at least six times annually at times and dates approved by the governance team.

The SGT secretary shall be responsible for notifying, in writing, the Director of Communication or Superintendent designee of any and all meetings of the SGT. It is the responsibility of the SGT secretary to maintain a written record of compliance with this notification requirement. Additionally, the SGT secretary shall provide advance notification, in writing or via email, to the school community of teachers and parents of any and all SGT meetings. See Article V, Officers and Duties.

- **Note A:** The SGT Secretary shall notify the Director of Communication of all dates, times and locations of meetings for the entire school year, July 1 through June 30, and said Director shall notify the local media. Additionally, SGTs shall notify the Director of

Communication of all cancellations, date/time/location changes and called meetings to notify the local media.

- **Note B:** The Secretary shall make the time, place, and dates of regular meetings available to the general public and a notice of such information shall be posted at least one week in advance of any regular meeting and maintained in a conspicuous place available to the public at the regular place of the meeting and on the school's website. For any meeting other than a regularly scheduled meeting, the secretary shall provide written or oral notice of the time place and date of any such special called meeting to the Director of Communications and shall post a written notice of the time, place and date of such meeting at least 24 hours prior to such meeting at the place of regular meetings and upon written request from any local broadcast, or print media outlet whose place of business and physical facilities are located in Tift County the secretary shall provide notice of such meeting by telephone, fax or email to that requesting media outlet at least 24 hours in advance of the called meeting.
- **Note C:** When special circumstances occur, and are so declared by the SGT, the SGT may hold a meeting with less than 24 hours' notice upon giving such notice of the meeting and subjects expected to be considered at the meeting as is reasonable under the circumstances including notice to the Tifton Gazette in which event the reason for holding the meeting within 24 hours and the nature of the notice shall be recorded in the minutes. Such reasonable notice shall also include, upon written request within the previous calendar year from any local broadcast or print media outlet whose place of business and physical facilities are located in Tift County, notice by telephone, fax or email to that requesting media outlet.
- **Note D:** Prior to any meeting, the Secretary shall make available an agenda of all matters expected to come before the SGT at such meeting. The secretary shall make the agenda available upon request and shall post the agenda at the meeting site as far in advance of the meeting as is reasonably possible, but shall not be required to make the agenda available more than two weeks prior to the meeting and shall post the agenda at the regular meeting site and on the school website immediately prior to the meeting. Failure to include an item on the agenda which becomes necessary to address during the course of the meeting shall not preclude consideration and acting upon such item. Upon written request from any local broadcast or print media outlet, a copy of the meeting's agenda shall be provided by fax, email or regular mail through a self-addressed stamped envelope provided by the requestor.

**Reference: Open Meetings Act OCGA sec. 50-14-1*

Article XII Quorum and Voting Requirement

Each member of the SGT is authorized to exercise one vote. Proxy votes are not allowed. Voting members must be present in person to participate or vote.

A quorum representing a majority of SGT members must be present in order to conduct official SGT business.

At all meetings of the SGT questions shall be determined by a majority vote of members present, representing a quorum, unless there is an express law or rule to the contrary.

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Article XIII
Minutes, Open Records

The minutes of the SGT shall be recorded by the Secretary and shall include the names of the members present, a description of each motion or other proposal made, and a record of all votes. Each SGT member shall receive a copy of the minutes at least 5 days prior to the next scheduled meeting, at which the minutes shall be approved.

Minutes shall be made available to the public at the school office. A draft version of the minutes shall be available at the school office within two working days after the meeting in which they were recorded.

A copy of SGT meeting minutes and a copy of any affidavit executed shall be posted to the SGT page of the school's website within three working days.

SGTs shall be subject to Article 4 of Chapter 18 of Title 50, relating to the inspection of public records, in the same manner as local boards of education.

Article XIV
Parliamentary Authority

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall be used as a guide to govern parliamentary authority for SGTs in all cases applicable but not inconsistent with these bylaws.

RESPONSIBILITIES/GOVERNANCE

Article XV
Responsibilities and Accountability

- (A) The members of the SGT are accountable to the constituents they serve and shall:
- (1) Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues; and
 - (2) Regularly participate in SGT meetings; and
 - (3) Participate in information and training programs; and
 - (4) Act as a link between the SGT and the community; and
 - (5) Encourage the participation of parents and others within the school community; and
 - (6) Work to improve student achievement and performance.
 - (7) Adhere to all Tift County Board policies and regulations

Last Revised: September 18,2017

- (B) SGT decision-making authority includes approval of 1) local field trips as provided for in board policy and regulation; 2) adoption of unified dress code according to BOE policy; 3) development and implementation of school-wide discipline plan based on BOE behavior code; 4) approval of fund raisers as allowed by board policy and regulation 5) approve local school budget. All decisions involving waiving State Board Policy, Procedures, Regulations, Rules, Guidance, etc. shall be submitted in writing to the Superintendent for consideration.
- (C) The SGT may provide approval, advice and recommendations in the following areas:

Communication and Parent Involvement

- School-community communication strategies
- Parent/community involvement plan; approves parent engagement guidelines
- Extra-curricular activities
- School-based and community services
- School profile (academic performance, academic progress services, awards, interventions, environment, etc.)
- Rewards and Recognitions

Budgets

- Monitors budget allocations
- Distributes incentive funds based upon district approved guidelines

Resource Allocation

- Proposes allocation of personnel and other resources within allocated budget to Superintendent

School Improvement

- Participates in development and approves School Improvement Plan (SIP)
- Monitors implementation of the SIP
- Proposes research-based instructional innovations aligned to the SIP and student data to the Superintendent
- Monitors results of approved innovations
- School Attendance

Personnel Decisions

- Recommends principal candidate in the case of a vacancy, except in the case of an administrative transfer by the Superintendent
- Works collaboratively with the Superintendent to develop up to 2 annual goals for Principal performance
- Provides feedback on Principal performance on these goals for the Principal's continuous improvement and Superintendent's consideration in preparing the Principal's evaluation

Facility, Calendar and Policy Input

- By-laws
- Provides input on facility use by outside groups

Last Revised: September 18,2017

- School Board policies under public review
- Provides input and recommendations on school system calendar

Evaluation and Review of College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI)

- Balanced Scorecard
- Program evaluation data, mid-year and annually

(D) The Principal's performance shall be appraised by the SGT as follows:

Appraisal of the principal's performance is the responsibility of the Superintendent and may only be delegated to certified personnel trained in the use of the Georgia Leadership Evaluation Instrument or other state approved instrument. However, Tift County recognizes that the SGT needs to have a mechanism for providing important feedback to the principal regarding his/her leadership style and practices. Such feedback is essential to meaningful communication between the team members and the principal and will evoke honest communication regarding performance and leadership practices.

To that end, the SGT will work collaboratively with the Superintendent or designee to develop up to two (2) annual goals to evaluate the principal's performance. The SGT shall provide feedback to the Principal related to performance towards meeting the goals and to the Superintendent or designee for consideration in preparing the Principal's evaluation.

(E) When a vacancy in the position of school principal exists:

- (1) The Superintendent shall determine if administrative transfers are appropriate and effect such transfer(s) – which may fill the principal position at one school while open another administrative position. If an administrative transfer is directed by the Superintendent, the SGT shall have no role in the principal selection process.
- (2) In cases where a principal position is not filled by an administrative transfer, the Superintendent shall receive applications for the position and create list for interviewing.
- (3) The LSGT's designee/s shall participate in the interview process with Superintendent's staff and other system personnel as determined.

(F) In order to prepare the SGT for its governance role, members will receive an initial orientation regarding their duties and responsibilities. Additionally, the SGT will receive training in governance, applicable school law, rules and regulations, parliamentary procedure, the open-meetings and open records act, school level budgets, allocation of personnel, effective communication strategies, utilization of facilities, measurement and assessment, school improvement planning and resource allocation.

(G) The SGTs will maintain focus on the system-wide mission and vision of the school district.

- (H) Members shall annually sign a "Conflict of Interest" statement, as well as a copy of the Code of Ethics, to be kept on file by the School District.

Article XVI
SGT Guidelines

The SGT shall adhere to the guidelines as provided in the by-laws. Any questions should be referred to the Superintendent.

Article XVII
Immunity

To the extent allowed by law, the SGT shall have the same immunity as the Local Board of Education in all matters directly related to the functions of the SGT.

Article XVIII
Role of the Board of Education

The Local Board of Education shall provide all information not specifically made confidential by law, including school site budget and expenditure information and site average class sizes by grade, to the SGT as requested or as required by state law or the Charter. The local board may also designate an employee of the school system to attend SGT meetings as requested by an SGT for the purpose of responding to questions the SGT may have concerning information provided to it by the local board or actions taken by the local board. The central administration shall be responsive to requests for information from an SGT.

The local board of education shall receive and consider all recommendations of the SGT, including the annual report, according to board policy.