

Bylaws of Vandalia Elementary School Leadership Team

Article I – Name

The name of the Vandalia Elementary School Site Based Leadership Team shall be VLT (Vandalia Leadership Team).

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of the VLT is to deal with issues directly and indirectly related to instruction, student performance and school environment/improvement. These decisions are binding on Vandalia Elementary School provided the decisions are within the authority of the school and with the understanding that the principal may make a different decision than the leadership team. In these cases, while usually rare, the principal will provide a written explanation to the team. Vandalia Leadership Team will embrace the philosophy of the school, including its collaborative atmosphere, mission, policies and goals. The VLT will review and monitor the implementation of practices to ensure alignment with the school philosophy.

Mission Statement: To promote academic excellence while teaching kindness, respect, responsibility, and self-control.

Section 1. FUNCTIONS OF SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP TEAM:

School improvement is a collaborative process supported through general statute (115C-105.27) with representation of all stakeholders. This process is focused through the development of a School Improvement Plan, generated by an elected body, the VLT. This team is comprised of teachers, parents, administrators and other key stakeholders.

The VLT is not designed to usurp the legal authority of the principal. Rather, the team's function specifically:

- facilitates the involvement of the school community in designing and implementing the school improvement plan
- encourages, supports and creates opportunities for involvement from parents
- coordinates the activities associated with the development and design of the school improvement plan
- provides direction in the development of the professional development plan
- provides direction in the use of available resources to optimize planning time for all teachers

Section 2. SCHOOL-BASED LEADERSHIP TEAM DUTIES:

Although the Vandalia Leadership Team is not directly involved in the day-to-day operations of the school, it is involved in a number of tasks that affect the operation of the school. The Leadership Team:

- Facilitates the development of the School Improvement Plan

- Monitors, assesses and amends the School Improvement Plan
- Advances policies and procedures that enhance achievement and meet educational, safety and parent involvement goals
- Facilitates decision-making based on available data
- Builds the capacity of the school to address parent and staff concerns
- Builds the capacity of the school to improve in the following areas:
 - Curriculum
 - School Climate
 - Classroom management/discipline
 - Two-way communication
 - Parent involvement
 - Co-curricular activities
- Consults with the principal and makes recommendations on budgetary issues relating to staff development, instructional materials and staff positions.

The leadership team serves in an advisory capacity regarding the school budget with the team providing collaboration, input and advice to the school principal who makes the final decision as defined by GCS policy.

Article II – Membership

Section 1. Membership of the VLT

Composition of Staff Membership:

- A. School Principal
- B. Curriculum Facilitator
- C. One classroom teacher representing Pre-K
- D. One classroom teacher representing K-2
- E. One classroom teacher representing 3-5
- F. One representative from classified staff (teaching assistants, custodians, cafeteria staff, and clerical staff)
- G. One representative from EC, Speech and AL staff
- H. One representative for all Instructional Support Personnel (Media, Art, Music, PE, Guidance, and Itinerant personnel)

Composition of Parent Membership:

- I. A maximum of 30% of the VLT should be comprised of parents duly elected according to state law by the parent and teacher organization of the school (the PTSA). Parents serving on the VLT shall reflect the racial, socioeconomic and geographic composition of the students enrolled in the school. If the election does not result in a representative group of parents the principal may appoint additional parents to the team as needed. Those names must then be brought to the largest group of parents for approval.

Section 2. Election and terms of service for members

All members will be elected and serve for two years. Additional members may be recommended, voted, and approved by VLT but no additional members may be appointed. To ensure consistency of membership from year-to-year, it is recommended that at least one-half of the composition of the team remain each year, while approximately one-half of the members rotate off the team.

The members should be determined by the end of the preceding school year. Each team should develop a process for ensuring that there is continuity on the team from year-to-year, while still upholding the election guidelines. In the case of attrition, a replacement representative from the constituency group will be nominated by the group or the VLT and voted on to complete the departing representative's term. Leadership team members are expected to regularly attend leadership team meetings.

A. Election of parent representatives

Parent representatives shall have children enrolled at Vandalia Elementary School and shall be elected by the parents of children enrolled at Vandalia in an election conducted by the PTA in the spring. The VLT parent membership should reflect the racial, geographical and socioeconomic status of students at Vandalia Elementary School. If the elected parents do not represent the racial, geographical and socioeconomic status of students at Vandalia Elementary School, the principal can appoint a parent representative which would go to the largest parent organization for approval. Elected parent members should not be members of the Vandalia Elementary School staff.

B. Election of Vandalia Elementary School staff representatives

Representatives of school staff shall be elected by their respective groups and voted on by secret ballot. The nominees, voted on by their respective groups will then be presented to the entire staff for approval, also by secret ballot. In the case of a tie at the respective group level, both names will be put on a secret ballot for a staff vote.

Section 3. Voting Rights

Decisions will be made by consensus when possible, with a majority vote of 51% as a fallback option. Each VLT member will make voting decisions on the best interests of students and the school as a whole. In the event the chair determines after reasonable time that a decision cannot be made by consensus, a vote will be taken. Voting and discussion will be conducted using Roberts Rules of Order. An affirmative vote of 51% of the members present shall constitute a majority. Each representative has one vote and agrees 100% to support the VLT decisions. The decision-making role of the leadership team will respect each member's contributions and will evolve with the support and participation of the school's principal, staff and parents. Each member has one vote, and votes as directed by the majority of members in that team member's constituency.

Consensus is not a vote. Consensus is a polling process to ensure that members can support the position that is taken. The process for assessing consensus is set forth in attachment "A", the "Fist to Five Strategy" taken from Learning By Doing: A Handbook for Professional Learning Communities at Work by Richard Dufour. When consensus does not occur, the majority vote

fallback option of 51% will be implemented. Decisions are made by consensus where possible. Failing a consensus, a matter under discussion will be tabled until the next regularly scheduled meeting or a specially called upon emergency meeting where 51% vote shall suffice.

Article IV. Roles

LEADERSHIP POSITIONS:

As the instructional and organizational leader of the school, the principal is ultimately responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school and effective implementation of the school improvement process. This is required by GCS policy which states that the LT is not designed to usurp the legal authority of the principal and as the instructional and organizational leader of the school; the principal is ultimately responsible for the implementation of the school improvement process.

However, effective implementation by definition must include the sharing of responsibilities and decision-making with other members of the leadership team. To this end, the following leadership positions would be established for each School Leadership Team at the beginning of each school year: Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Recorder.

Each team should elect these positions. Any team member other than the school principal may serve as an officer on the Vandalia Leadership Team. Below is a list of responsibilities for each of these positions: The following officers are elected by the leadership team from its membership to serve one year terms: Chair, Co-Chair, and Recorder.

CHAIRPERSON:

Primary Duties:

- Meets regularly with principal to discuss school issues and develop meeting agenda using the Standing Meeting Agenda found in Article V, Section 5
- Request agenda items for meetings.
- Leads meetings and facilitates distribution of agenda to all team members of the Vandalia Leadership Team
- Reminds team members about meetings at least one week in advance
- Assists in completing reports due for the team
- Facilitates the public notification of meetings
- Start and end meetings promptly

Any staff member or parent may present an issue to the leadership team in writing. For each issue, the leadership team may decide that it needs referral to an individual (e.g. Principal) or to another school committee or group. The leadership team can create a task force to address an issue not covered by existing committees. The person initiating the issue can be invited to discuss the issue with the leadership team providing the issue is an appropriate matter for leadership team review and discussion. All people who submit issues will receive a response and be told to whom their issue was referred.

Additional Duties:

- Make sure roles are assigned for the day's meeting.
- Welcome members and introduce any guests.
- Remind members of group norms.
- Ensure that minutes are being kept
- Open discussion on current agenda items.
- Encourage decision making through consensus.
- Summarize each meeting, reviewing key actions and decisions; check that all members have the same clear understanding of all decisions.
- Review the time, date and location of the next meeting and any items that will require action prior to the next meeting.

CO-CHAIRPERSON:

- Runs the meeting when the chairperson is absent
- Assumes all responsibilities of chairperson in the event that the chairperson is unable to complete term

RECORDER:

- Is responsible for taking minutes at all meetings that clearly reflect the activities of the School Leadership Team
- Distributes minutes to all VLT members no later than one week after the meeting
- Posts minutes of each School Leadership Team meeting in a designated place that is visible to parents and teachers, including the school's website
- Maintains copies of minutes and quarterly/annual reports, VLT Handbook and other important documents

Requirements of meeting minutes:

- The date, time and place of the meeting as per the meeting notice, and the time the meeting was called to order
- A statement of the approval of the minutes from the previous meeting
- A list of all committees, subgroups and individuals that gave reports and any recommended action
- A list of all individuals and groups who addressed VLT
- A list of all decisions reached by consensus and all motions approved or defeated by vote; this shall include the exact wording of any motions
- Items that were placed on the agenda for the next meeting
- The time the meeting was adjourned.

TEAM MEMBERS:

- Attend Meetings regularly
- Represent the interests of constituent group - not just their own
- Determine how to engage stakeholders in meaningful ways in school affairs

- Commit to working collaboratively with team
- Brings issues and concerns of constituent group to team meetings and communicates the activities and decisions made by VLT to their constituent group
- If assigned a role, abide by the responsibilities and time-lines assigned to that role

Article V – Meetings

Section 1. Meeting day and time

The standing regular meeting day and time will be determined by consensus of the VLT members prior to September 1st of each academic year. The VLT will meet at least once per month. Standing regular meeting days and times will be posted on the VLT web page (noting any changes due to a holiday or scheduled workday). Meetings will take place in the Vandalia Elementary School Media Center unless noted otherwise. VLT meetings must be held at times that are convenient for parents to attend.

Section 2. Meeting Minutes

- Minutes of meetings should be posted within one week in a place that is visible to all staff and parents, which must include the school's webpage
- Team members should review meeting minutes with all represented staff members within a week of their dissemination
- Copies of the minutes must be given to all team members.
- An annual report should be submitted by the principal to the Executive Director and the Board of Education detailing the progress of the implementation of the School Improvement Plan

Section 3. NC Open Meeting Law

- VLT meetings fall under the Open Meetings Law of North Carolina. The law dictates the following and VLT shall abide by the law
- VLT shall file a notice of the day, time and place of all regular meetings.
- If a regular meeting time is changed, VLT shall file a notice of a new meeting at least seven days prior to new meeting
- VLT shall abide by the following requirements for Special Meetings – specifically called meetings that are held on different days and at different times during the year than regular meetings requires one of the following two methods of notification: post a notice or mail/deliver a notice to every person of VLT and those requesting the special meeting. In both cases, notice must be given 48 hours prior to the special meeting and notice must contain day, time and location of meeting. A notice may be posted on a centrally located bulleting board or on the door of the meeting place. If notices are mailed to interested persons, the intent is to provide at least 48 hours notice.

Section 4. Quorum

Two-thirds shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. If at any meeting of VLT less than a quorum is present, a majority of those present may adjourn the meeting without further notice, until a quorum is obtained.

Section 5. Majority

A majority is defined as 51% for any vote/motion to pass except for any motion involving a bylaw change or an issue listed as Special Order on the agenda.

Section 6. Standing Meeting Agenda

VLT shall use the following agenda format for all meetings:

A. Welcome

(All members and special guests. Read/refer to group norms)

B. Reading and approval of minutes.

(Motion to approve is not necessary. The minutes are either approved as read or as corrected, but without a vote.)

C. Approval of meeting's agenda.

(Agenda approved as presented or corrected with approval by majority vote.)

D. Standing Committee Reports.

(Budget, Standing Committees, any correspondence.)

E. Reports of Special/Sub-Committees.

(Each report may conclude with a motion that VLT must address.)

F. School Improvement Plan progress review

(Quarterly)

G. Special Orders.

(Any motion which was adopted as a Special Order which guarantees that the motion will be dealt with before the meeting is adjourned.)

H. New Agenda Items, Unfinished Business and General Orders.

(Any issue which was not concluded, postponed, or was tabled during the prior meeting. The secretary's minutes should inform the facilitator which items to add to this section.)

I. New Business.

(Announcements, speakers, Representative concerns.)

J. Adjournment

(Facilitator summarizes meeting, reviewing key actions and decisions. Checks that all members have the same clear understanding of all decisions. Reviews the time, date and location of the next meeting and any items that will be followed up or newly discussed at the next meeting. Calls for a motions for the meeting to be adjourned.)

Article VI – Committees

Section 1. VLT Committees

Members of the VLT shall have the authority to establish Special or Standing Committees as needed to meet the purpose of VLT as stated in Article II. Committee members and chairs are to be appointed and agreed upon by consensus. A majority of any committee, if more than two members, may fix its place and time of meetings. All committees shall report back to VLT as requested.

Section 2. Faculty/Staff Committees

School committees should send written reports of considerations, recommendations, etc. to the leadership team whenever, necessary or suitable. *See above.* For each issue, the leadership team may decide that it needs referral to an individual (e.g. Principal) or to another school committee or group. The leadership team can create a task force to address an issue not covered by existing committees. The person initiating the issue can be invited to discuss the issue with the leadership team. All people who submit issues will receive a response and be told to whom their issue was referred.

Purpose of Faculty Committees

Faculty Committees will be formed for the following purposes, each pertaining to the subject matter of the Committee:

- To investigate and implement programs and other opportunities for enrichment for students and the Vandalia Elementary School community at large;
- To seek out and apprise the principal and leadership team of staff development opportunities
- To be knowledgeable about the North Carolina curriculum K-5, and support the faculty in teaching the curriculum
- To encourage and facilitate parent involvement and other outreach into the community.

Duties of the Faculty/Staff Committee Chair

The Chair is responsible for creating the agenda for the Committee meetings, communicating regularly with Committee members as to the business of the Committee as well as the time and place for meeting, and designating a Committee member to keep minutes of the meetings. Sharing committee minutes with leadership team members and reporting information to leadership team at the next meeting

General Guidelines for Committees

- The Committees will normally meet monthly, with the first meeting to be held no later than the end of September of the new school year.
- The Committees are responsible for advising the Faculty as to programs and initiatives the Committee would like to implement.
- The Committees through their liaisons will keep the VLT informed as to their work and seek input from the members of the VLT.
- The VLT or the Principal may direct a Committee to implement or refrain from implementing a program or initiative.

Article VII – Parliamentary Authority

VLT will operate under the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

Article VIII – Amendment of Bylaws

VLT Bylaws may be amended with two-thirds of the collected VLT votes if a prior notice has been given during the prior meeting. Otherwise, it shall require a majority of Vandalia Elementary School Faculty and Staff to amend any Bylaw.

ATTACHMENT “A”

FIST TO FIVE STRATEGY

5 Fingers	I love this proposal. I will champion it.
4 Fingers	I strongly agree with the proposal.
3 Fingers	The proposal is okay with me. I am willing to go along.
2 Fingers	I have reservations and am not yet ready to support this proposal.
1 Finger	I am opposed to this proposal.
Fist	If I were king or queen, I would veto this proposal, regardless of the will of the group.

“The facilitator for the process ensures that everyone understands the issues under consideration and how to express themselves through fist to five. All members of the staff are then asked to express their position simultaneously by raising their hands with the appropriate indication of support (that is, the number of fingers best expressing their level of support). Each participant is then able to look around the room to ascertain the support for the proposal. If participants do not support the proposal, or the vote is too close to determine the will of the group at a glance, the proposal does not go forward. Pilot projects may be run, more time can be taken to build shared knowledge, and in time the proposal may be presented again; however, if support is not readily apparent, the standard of consensus has not been met. If, however, it is evident by looking around the room that it is the will of the group to move forward (the number of hands with 3, 4, and 5 fingers clearly outnumber those with 2, 1, and fists), consensus has been reached and all staff members will be expected to honor the decision.” (Dufour, pp. 166-167).