

# **Pedro Menendez High School**

## **School Advisory Council Bylaws**

**Pedro Menendez High School Advisory Council Operation Guidelines**Table of Contents

Council Membership	3-4
Composition of PMHS SAC	
Roles and Responsibilities	4-5
SAC Members	4
Chairperson	5
Co-Chairperson	5
Recording Secretary	5
Principal	5
Vacancies in Membership	6
Council Meetings	6
Procedure of Council Meetings	6-7
Amendments to Council Bylaws	7
Resources	8

### **Council Membership**

The Pedro Menendez High School (PMHS) Advisory Council membership composition is required to reflect the diversity of our school demographics. Parents, guardians and community members will form the majority of our council members while the remaining composition will be members of the PMHS staff. All council members are full and equal partners. They bring before all council members the issues and concerns of the groups they represent and provide liaisons to those groups.

Composition of the school advisory council:

1. The PMHS advisory council must include, but is not limited to the following persons or members:
  - Parents and guardians of students enrolled at PMHS
  - Community representative(s)
  - The school principal
  - Instructional staff member(s)
  - Non-Instructional staff member(s)
  - Students of PMHS
  
2. Non SJCS D employees shall form the simple majority of the council (i.e. 50% +1). The SAC may appoint as many community members as the council members deem necessary, but must have at least one. Community members must be representatives of local business and/or industry, social service agencies, community or non-profit organizations.
  
3. PMHS has chosen not to restrict the total number of members to its SAC. Experience has proven that this Council thrives when it includes people who wish to participate. This creates a special creative energy and a strong sense of purpose. However, the Council reserves the right to determine a maximum size for the council that best meets the needs of its school community.
  
4. It is required that the membership of the council reflect the diversity of the school community it serves with respect to ethnic, racial and economic balance. The council shall consider the issue of balance in the selection of the community representative(s).
  
5. Membership in the school council shall be determined in the following ways:
  - New SAC chairs or Co-Chairs will be nominated by the Principal or other SAC member(s) and a majority vote will be needed to appoint them to that position.
  - All members will be encouraged to promote SAC membership and interested applicants will require a majority vote to be appointed to the council.
  - The principal will be a designated member
  - Instructional staff members will be nominated and appointed by a majority vote.
  - Non-Instructional staff members will be nominated and appointed by a majority vote.
  - Students will be nominated and appointed by a majority vote.

6. Any member who has two (2) unexcused consecutive absences from a SAC meeting may be removed by the council by a majority vote.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Role of the School Advisory Council:

The School Advisory Council (SAC) is an advisory body. It was created to enhance students' learning through the cooperative efforts of parents, staff members, and others in the community. This council will provide advice to the school principal and, if appropriate, to the school board. When available, SAC funding will come from the Florida Department of Education Bureau of School Improvement or allocated funds of the school recognition funds. The SAC will decide how any of this funding will be allocated. These decisions will be based on the data received through reports and needs assessments, and in the best interests of all students at the school.

The SAC must operate within the guidelines of the St. Johns County School Board Policy "School Improvement Teams" (#2.04). Both the council and individual members can incur personal liability if they exceed their mandate as outlined in this Policy.

The SAC represents a very real opportunity for establishing community relationships and for creating a broadened consensus around the purpose of public education and around student learning as the key focus of schools.

Building relationships and consensus requires support from all partners and a commitment to consultation, collaboration and co-operation. Parents, community members, school representatives and school district administrators and trustees must work together for student success.

**Roles and responsibilities of all members of the School Advisory Council:**

- Maintain a school-wide perspective on issues.
- Participate in council meetings and attend council meetings on a regular basis.
- Act as a link between the school council and the community.
- Encourage the participation of parents and community members.
- Establish and review annually the council's goals, priorities, and procedures.
- Hold a minimum of eight meetings per year. All meetings shall be public.
- Communicate regularly with parents and other members of the community to see their views and preferences with regard to matters being addressed by the council, and to report on the activities of the council to the school community.

**Officers:**

Annually, the School Advisory Council elects the following officers: chairperson, co-chairperson, and recording secretary. This will be done on either the last meeting of the year to take effect the following year. Officers can share responsibilities.

Roles and responsibilities of the chairperson:

- Communicate with the principal on a regular basis.
- Write the School Improvement Plan (SIP) after consulting with the SAC and school administration.
- Present the SIP to the Council and community for review and recommendations.
- Support the Principal with his presentation of the SIP to the School Board.
- Organize and conduct SAC meetings
- Make him/herself available to school staff, council members and community members.
- Establish and communicate, in consultation with the Council, a meeting schedule for the year.
- Call school Council meetings.
- Prepare agendas for the meetings in consultation with the principal and Council members.
- Chair the meetings and be responsible for the time management of the agenda.
- Ensure the minutes of the meetings are recorded and made available to the public.

Roles and responsibilities of the co-chairperson:

- Chair council meetings in the absence of the chairperson.
- Assist the chair as required.

Roles and responsibilities of the recording secretary:

- Maintain complete records of all meetings in a timely manner.
- Ensure minutes are distributed to the chairperson and made public in a timely manner.
- Maintain a file of all minutes.

Roles and responsibilities of the principal:

- Attend all SAC meetings or designate an assistant principal to represent him/her.
- Seek input from the Council in areas for which it has assigned advisory responsibility.
- Act as a resource on laws, regulations, Board policies and collective agreements.
- Obtain and provide information to the Council so they are able to make informed decisions.
- Maintain regular communication with the SAC chairperson.
- Assist the Council in communication with the school community.
- Encourage participation of parents, students, and others in the school community.
- Ensure that all distributed material from the SAC to the school community are consistent with current School Board policy.
- Present the School Improvement Plan to the School Board with assistance from the chairperson.

**Vacancies in Membership**

Vacancies may occur during the school year for various reasons. These vacancies need not be filled UNLESS they cause an imbalance of non-district employee representation (51% or more). Should this

occur, the non-district members of SAC may search for a new member and vote on his/her admission to the SAC at the next meeting.

### **Council Meetings**

1. Meetings shall be open to all parents/guardians, students and teachers of PMHS as well as to members of the school community who wish to attend. All SAC activities, including subcommittee meetings, are subject to the Government in the Sunshine Law, section 286.001, Florida Statutes.
2. Meetings will usually be held once a month during the school year. There are to be no fewer than eight (8) meetings.
3. Meetings will begin at 4:30 pm and end at 5:30 pm unless the council agrees to extend the time.
4. The date, time and place of the meetings will be decided by a quorum of the first meeting of the school year. Changes to these scheduled dates, times and locations must be decided by a quorum in the monthly meeting prior to the changed date. The calendar of meetings must be submitted to the district Office of Accountability.
5. The agenda for each meeting shall be available for the member's review at least three (3) days before the meeting. A printed version of the agenda should be distributed to all members at the meeting. The SAC shall provide public notice (i.e. newspaper, website) of the meeting times and place, at least one week before the meeting is to occur.
6. While voting is the responsibility of appointed SAC members, all persons in attendance may voice their opinion, own ideas and ask questions. For issues of major concern, the chairperson can be approached and asked for these topics to be added to the agenda at least 3 days before the next scheduled meeting. The time allocated to discuss these topics will be at the discretion of the chairperson.
7. At least three (3) days advanced notice in writing to all SAC members of any matter that is to be voted on must be provided.

### **Procedure at Council Meetings**

1. Absence of Chair or Secretary:
  - The co-chairperson will chair the meeting in absence of the chairperson. The Council will appoint an acting chair/secretary for the meeting if the chairperson, co-chairperson or secretary is unable to attend.
2. Quorum:
  - A quorum to conduct business meeting requires 51% attendance of council members. Of those present, a simple majority rules. Only council members can vote.

3. Absence of Quorum:
  - No motions may be considered or approved.
  - If a majority wishes the meeting to proceed in the absence of a quorum, the council will continue the meeting for purposes of discussion of issues.
  
4. Protocol for decision-making:
  - a. Consensus
    - The school council is advisory in nature and every attempt should be made to reach a consensus.
    - Consensus is a form of group decision making based on the willingness to consent and support. Consensus is reached when all or most members of the Council are willing to accept and support an idea or concept as the best choice.
  - b. Motions – if required
    - Any member of the Council may make a motion at any meeting.
    - Each member of the Council will have one vote on every motion.
    - A member of the Council may abstain from voting on any motion.
    - A motion is approved if a majority of the council members present at the meeting vote in favor of it.
  
5. Public Question Period
  - Each school council meeting agenda should contain a Public Question Period.
  - People attending the meeting, who are not school council members, can make a recommendation to the Chair that a particular item be placed on the subsequent agenda.

### **Amendments to the Bylaws**

Amendments to the Operational Guidelines require:

- 75% representation of approved and appointed members and a 75% majority vote in favor of the amendment.

**Resources**

PMHS SAC Bylaws 2001-2015  
School Advisory Council State of Florida, Department of Education  
Florida State Statute School Laws  
St. Johns County School District Office of Accountability