

Buncombe County Schools Guidelines to School Improvement and Bylaws of Community High School School Improvement Team

Buncombe County Schools Guidelines to School Improvement

Purpose: Each school must have a School Improvement Team (SIT) that develops the School Improvement Plan (SIP). This plan should identify the school's efforts to improve student performance and reach the educational goals of the school board.

References: G.S. 115C-105.27

Development and Approval of School Improvement Plans: Buncombe County Schools Board Policy #3430 adopted May 7, 2015 and revised May 5, 2016.

Resource: NC School Improvement Planning Implementation Guide from the State Board of Education and DPI (2009-10).

Timeline: A School Improvement Plan (SIP) may be in effect for no more than two years. The plan will be reviewed and/or revised each year with mid-year conferences conducted by curriculum staff. Teams will revise and update plans as needed.

School Improvement Team Meetings shall follow all legal requirements stated in G.S. 115C-105.27. As a public body, the SIT will comply with Open Meetings Law (G.S. 143-318.10) in regard to its meetings. SIT meetings shall be advertised each semester on the school website and by notifying the Superintendent's office for notification purposes. SIT members shall be emailed meeting notices at least 48 hours prior to the meeting, and written minutes (after careful review) will be posted on the school website in a timely manner. The SIT does not hear personnel or student complaints. It is our recommendation that the SIT team decides when it is appropriate to hear from guests who attend the SIT meetings.

A closed session shall only be held when confidential student information is discussed. To protect student confidentiality, it is recommended that Parent Representatives be excused from a closed session. If closed session is required, use the following statement:

Chairman: I will entertain a motion for the SIT to go into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 for the following purposes:

Under subsection (a) (1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged and confidential student information pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232g (FERPA).

The SIT team will consist of the principal, representatives of the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, teacher assistants and parents of students attending the school. Each group of school personnel will elect representatives from their prospective group by secret ballot. Parents (at least 2) are to be elected yearly in accordance with GS 115C-105.27. Parents serving on School Improvement Teams shall reflect the racial and socioeconomic composition of the students enrolled in that school and shall not be members of the building level staff. SIT meetings shall be held at a convenient time to assure substantial parent participation.

Written minutes are required for the purpose of what topics were discussed and what actions were taken. It is not a “blow by blow” account for informing someone who was not in attendance. Minutes should be posted to the school website after careful review, in a timely manner. Written minutes are also required for closed session meetings; however, those minutes shall be withheld from public inspection and not published on the school’s website.

The school improvement process allows for input from stakeholders, including parents and student representatives. This collaboration affords the opportunity to support the instructional programs and meet the needs of all students.

BYLAWS OF THE COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

CHS Mission and Vision

CHS Mission: At Community High School we provide students with equitable opportunities to find their purpose and grow to their full potential in a safe and caring learning environment supported by staff, parents, families, and the community.

CHS Vision: Our students will become successful, responsible citizens in an ever-changing global society.

Article I – Name

The name of the Community High School (CHS) Site Based Leadership Team shall be the School Improvement Team (SIT).

Article II – Purpose

This committee is established pursuant to State of North Carolina Statutes 115C Article 8B. The purpose of the SIT is to examine the structure and function of Community High School with the aim of improving student performance by dealing with issues directly and indirectly related to instruction and school environment by improvement through local flexibility and control.

Section 1 CHS SIT Duties

- Develop, approve, present and maintain a school improvement plan (SIP) to be reviewed biannually and updated annually (at a minimum) to address:
 - academic, health, safety, and discipline goals
 - the needs of students identified as “at risk” of academic failure or of dropping out
- Prepare a budget and staff development plan that align with the SIP
- Serve the interests of CHS stakeholders

FUNCTIONS OF SITE-BASED LEADERSHIP TEAM:

School improvement is a collaborative process supported through general statute 115C Article 8B with representation of all stakeholders. This process is focused through the development of a School Improvement Plan, generated by an elected body, the School Improvement Team. The team is composed of teachers, staff, parents, administrators and other key stakeholders.

Article III – Membership

Section 1 MEMBERSHIP OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM

The CHS SIT shall include:

- The principal and assistant principal
- Instructional personnel
- Instructional support personnel (media specialist membership required, or his/her designee)
- 1 teacher assistant (when possible)
- 2 parent representatives (when possible)
- 2 student representatives (when possible)

Section 2 ELECTION AND TERMS OF SERVICE FOR MEMBERS

Section 2.01 Members shall be elected as follows:

- A. With the exception of principal, assistant principal, parent and student representatives, SIT members shall be nominated and approved by CHS faculty and support personnel.
- B. When possible, SIT membership shall consist of at least one faculty member from each department.
- C. Each department will vote for their representative by secret ballot.
- D. The election by each group shall be counted and witnessed by at least two members of said group and then reported to the current School Improvement Team chairman.
- E. Final SIT membership shall be determined by anonymous vote (i.e. secret ballot).
- F. Elections shall take place at the beginning of the school year and the term of office shall begin the meeting following elections.
- G. Beginning Teachers can give written notice to the principal if they want to join SIT and are voted in.

Section 2.02

If during a term, any member of the SIT shall resign, be transferred, be dismissed from employment at CHS, or change teaching positions within the school which would no longer permit the member to represent the group that elected him/her, then the group that he/she represented shall select another representative to be nominated and approved by the particular group to complete the former member's term according to section 2.01.

Section 2.03 Terms:

- SIT members shall serve during the academic calendar year
 - SIT members are responsible for communicating important agenda items and decisions.
- All members shall serve two-year terms; no term limits apply.
- SIT members may nominate themselves or be nominated by CHS staff; there is no limit to the size of SIT; all CHS staff are eligible.

Section 3 OFFICERS OF SIT

The officers of the SIT shall be a chairperson, chairperson-elect (Co-chair) and secretary.

Section 3.01

The chairperson will be responsible for developing the agenda for meetings and co-facilitating meetings with the principal.

- A SIT chairperson shall be nominated and approved by SIT members (majority vote) at the start of each academic year; no term limits apply.
- The SIT Chairperson has additional duties that include, but are not limited to, preparing the SIT agenda, initiating votes, and time-keeping.

Section 3.02

The chairman-elect and Co-Chair shall be elected from the certified members of the SIT within the first 60 days of school.

- A. Elections will be held by secret ballot or unanimous consent within the SIT committee.
- B. The chairman-elect will serve for two years then automatically succeed to the co-chairmanship.
- C. Co-Chairperson has additional duties that include, but are not limited to, preparing the SIT agenda, initiating votes, and time-keeping.

Section 3.03

The secretary shall be elected from members of the SIT at the meeting to serve for a term of two years.

- The SIT Secretary has additional duties that include, but are not limited to, taking attendance, and recording and sharing/posting minutes.

Section 4 VOTING RIGHTS

Decisions will be made by consensus, when possible, with a majority vote of 51% of a quorum as a fallback option. A quorum shall consist of 50% membership +1 member of the elected SIT committee. Each SIT member will make voting decisions on the best interests of students and 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 Robert's Rules of Order. An affirmative vote of 51% of the members present shall constitute the majority. Each representative has one vote and agrees 100% to support the SIT decisions. 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. When consensus does not occur, the majority vote fallback option of 51% will be implemented. Decisions are made by consensus when possible.

Article IV – Meeting

Section 1 MEETING DAY AND TIME

- a. The committee shall meet monthly during the school year, unless weather or calendar events prohibit the meeting.
- b. Additional meetings of the committee may be called by the chair, the principal, or by a majority of the members of the committee.
- c. A summer meeting (retreat) may be held at a time and place determined by the principal and the chair.
- d. Approved minutes of meetings should be posted in a place that is visible to all staff and parents, which may include the school's webpage.
- f. SIT meeting agendas shall be prepared by the SIT chairperson
 - o Any CHS stakeholder may request in writing/via email that items be added to the agenda.
 - o Additional agenda items may be added at the discretion of the chairperson.

Section 2 NC OPEN MEETINGS LAW

SIT meetings fall under the Open Meetings Law of North Carolina. NC General Statute Chapter 143 Article 33C.

Article V – Committees and Subcommittees

SIT COMMITTEES

Members of the SIT shall have the authority to establish Special Committees as needed to meet the purpose of SIT as stated in Article II.

Article VI – Amendment of Bylaws

SIT Bylaws may be amended with two-thirds of the collected SIT votes if prior notice has been given during the prior meeting and a quorum is present, as defined in section 4. It shall also require a 51% majority of Community High School faculty and staff to amend any Bylaw.