

# **Joyce Kilmer School Parent Council Bylaws**

*(Adopted: June 1, 2011)*

## **Article I: Name of Organization and Establishment of Bylaws**

The name of this self-governed organization shall be the Joyce Kilmer School Parent Council also known as Kilmer SPC. By a qualifying vote of the SPC under its prior governing Bylaws, these Bylaws have been adopted as the official governing charter of the SPC, superseding and replacing the prior Bylaws, and shall be known as the Joyce Kilmer School Parent Council Bylaws (“Bylaws”).

## **Article II: Role of the Parent Council**

The overall role of the School Parent Council (“SPC”) is to (1) advocate for our children and ensure that parents are kept informed and involved in what’s going on in their children’s school; (2) plan events to enrich and support the community; (3) coordinate and conduct fundraising activities to enhance the opportunities for the students and the educational facilities that are not otherwise provided in the school budget. The Joyce Kilmer School (“Kilmer”) operates at two locations known as the Lower School (located on Baker Street) and the Upper School (located on Russet Road), both in West Roxbury, MA.

## **Article III: Purpose and Responsibilities**

Effective School Parent Councils (SPCs) contribute to a supportive school learning community where school staff and families partner to support the educational development of children.

The School Parent Council is responsible for:

1. Encouraging active parent involvement in school activities
2. Coordinating parent volunteers and promoting volunteer opportunities
3. Raising funds for carrying out projects and programs to enhance the educational and social goals for the Kilmer School
4. Educating and informing parents and guardians of activities, programs and resources in the community to benefit all Kilmer students
5. Supporting and showing appreciation for the Kilmer faculty, staff and students;
6. Sponsoring projects and events for the benefit of all Kilmer students;
7. Serving as liaison and fostering open communication among parents, faculty, and staff; and
8. Establishing regular and ad hoc committees and appointments as required for carrying out the above.

#### **Article IV: Membership**

Membership is open to any parent or legal guardian with a child enrolled in and attending the Joyce Kilmer School.

#### **Article V: Executive Committee: Officers, Terms, and Duties**

An Executive Committee will guide the Joyce Kilmer School Parent Council composed of the following SPC members, listed here in non-hierarchical order as the Co-Chairs, the Treasurer and the Secretary. Each member of the Executive Committee is an Officer of the SPC.

SPC Co-Chairs serve staggered two (2) year terms (one Co-Chair is new each year). The Treasurer and Secretary positions serve one (1) year terms. Officers serve their respective terms ending on June 30th, following the elections held at the June SPC meeting or, in the absence of a newly elected Officer, until successor(s) are elected at a subsequent meeting of the SPC. In an effort to promote and encourage shared leadership in the SPC among Kilmer parents, it is recommended that Co-Chairs, Treasurer, Secretary and Site Council Representatives should not serve consecutive terms in the same position without cycling off for at least one school year whenever possible.

1. **Co-Chairs.** Working together the two Co-Chairs will share responsibility for convening and leading general meetings of the School Parent Council and meetings of the Executive Committee, and ensuring that all Executive Committee members have been provided and are informed of these Bylaws. While not required, the SPC Co-Chairs should (as a team or individually) represent both school buildings whenever possible. The Co-Chairs shall also be designated signers on the SPC checking account.
2. **Treasurer.** The Treasurer has the responsibility for conducting the financial business of the SPC; for maintaining accurate records and producing accurate and timely reports; for collecting and disbursing all SPC funds. The Treasurer is also a designated signer on the SPC checking account. Checks over an SPC authorized amount will require two signatures. The Officers may change the authorized amount by vote of the SPC.
3. **Secretary.** The Secretary is responsible for ensuring that minutes are recorded for each SPC meeting, and that they are made available by the next SPC meeting and that copies are filed in hardcopy at the Kilmer. The Secretary will be responsible for distributing the SPC minutes to the membership as deemed appropriate by the Executive

Committee (e.g., via forwarding to the Kilmer webmaster).

## **Article VI: Other SPC Positions**

### *Section 1. School Site Council Representatives*

The School Site Council (“SSC”) is a committee of parents and staff that serves as the central governing body of the school. There are eight (8) parent SPC representatives (the “SSC Representatives”) and eight (8) Boston Public Schools (“BPS”) staff/teachers, consisting of the Principal plus seven (7) Boston Teachers Union (“BTU”) representatives. The BTU/BPS collective bargaining agreement details the composition and size of the SSC. If the number of BTU bargaining committee members on the Kilmer SSC changes, the number of Parent SSC members will also change to maintain parity. The SSC meets at least monthly.

SSC Representatives are responsible for: attending all SSC meetings, communicating any and all relevant SPC concerns and/or issues to the SSC, and for keeping the SPC updated and informed of relevant information from the SSC. SSC Representatives are elected by the SPC body and are encouraged to attend all scheduled SPC meetings or at a minimum rotate attendance. There are two types of SSC Representatives, Voting Members and Non-voting Alternates (an “Alternate”). There are six (6) Voting Members serving in staggered three (3) year terms where two Voting Members are elected each year.

*Non-Voting Alternate members.* The SSC shall also include two (2) parent alternates, who will serve one (1) year terms. These Non-Voting Alternates (ranked “First” and “Second”) may vote in place of an absent Voting Member only if a quorum of the SSC Voting Members has not been reached. In the event a vacancy is created due to the departure of a Voting Member, the First Alternate will fill the vacancy becoming a Voting Member and the Second Alternate will become the First Alternate. The SPC will then conduct an election to fill the vacant Second Alternate position. In addition, the SSC may also include associate, non-voting members such as community partners, or representatives from other employee groups within the school.

While not required, SSC Representatives should be elected so that families from the Upper and Lower schools are equally represented whenever practical. Parents should endeavor to elect SSC voting members and Alternates who are representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the Kilmer student body, and who also represent other populations at the Kilmer, including minority and special needs families.

### *Section 2 SPC Sub-committees*

Sub-committees shall be created as needed. The SPC Co-Chairs may appoint chairs of these committees. It is expected that persons who hold these special SPC positions will attend most of the SPC meetings and communicate regularly with the SPC Executive Committee. Any conflict or issues regarding the performance of these other SPC positions should be communicated to the SPC Executive Committee for resolution.

## **Article VII: Elections and Recalls**

### *Section 1. Elections*

Elections shall be the first order of business during the June meeting. Elections shall be decided by a simple majority vote of the membership, subject to the presence of a Quorum. A Quorum is defined as the presence of twelve (12) SPC members of which at least two (2) SPC Officers need to be present. Following the election, new Officers and SSC Representatives shall take office. Their terms shall begin on July 1<sup>ST</sup>. In the event a position is unfilled as a result of the June election, the current occupant of the position remains seated in their position until an election can be held in September at which point the newly elected person will assume the position in question.

Upcoming elections shall be discussed at the May SPC meeting. Any SPC member can be nominated for a position on the Executive Committee or as an SSC Representative. However, only one member of a family may be elected to the Executive Committee. The nomination period begins at the May SPC meeting including the day of the June election. At the May meeting, a nomination form will be available for SPC members listing the positions, a brief description of the responsibilities and terms. The nomination form will be backpacked directly after the May meeting to all Kilmer families so that SPC members not in attendance can enter their nomination for a SPC Officer or SSC Representative position or nominate another SPC member. Candidates must be present at the election. Only parents present at the election may vote for those nominated.

Prior to the vote the roles and responsibilities in Article V of these Bylaws will be read by the Secretary so that all potential candidates understand the position(s), the requirements of the position(s), and what is expected of the individual seeking the office.

Voice mail messages will also be made reminding families of the SPC and SSC positions and elections, and outlining their opportunity to participate. Information regarding the vacancies will be sent home with each student and receive mention in the Monday Letter, our school newsletter.

Each family is entitled to one vote for each position and elections will be by paper ballot. The Secretary is responsible for distributing ballots.

The names of all council members will be published in the first school newsletter following the elections. The City of Boston will be informed of the annual elections and with the names, addresses and phone numbers of the new Officers by June 30 of each year.

## *Section 2. Recalls and Removal of Officers and SSC Representatives*

Executive Committee members and SSC Representatives can be removed from their elected position for failure to carry out the outlined responsibilities detailed above. It should be noted, however, that removal from office should be considered a solution of last resort and when other options have been exhausted or have failed. To request a vote to remove an Executive Committee member or SSC Representative from a position, a formal proposal must be submitted in writing to the Executive Committee stating the reason for the removal and signed by at least five (5) members of the SPC who have attended at least 50% of the SPC meetings held to date that school year (the "Recall Proposal"). The Executive Committee shall then be required to distribute the Recall Proposal to the entire SPC membership stating the reason for the removal via a notice sent home through Kilmer students and via the SPC other usual communications methods, at least two (2) weeks prior to the next SPC general meeting. Only one signature per household will be permitted on the Recall Proposal.

A vote to remove an Executive Committee member or SSC Representative will take place at the first SPC meeting following the notification of the entire SPC membership. Prior to voting to remove the Executive Committee member or SSC Representative, the SPC members initiating the recall vote will be allowed to present their reasons. The Executive Committee member or SSC Representative in question will then be permitted the opportunity to make a statement in response. Finally, any of the other members of SPC present at the meeting will then be permitted to make a brief statement as to why they believe that the Executive Committee or SSC Representative member should or should not be removed from office. Once all members who wish to do so have made their statements, a vote to remove will take place according to the same voting guidelines detailed in Article VII, Section 1, Paragraph 1 of the Bylaws. The decision to remove or not to remove the Executive Committee member or SSC Representative will be decided by a simple majority vote. In the event of a tie, the Executive Committee member or SSC Representative will not be removed from his/her elected position.

If the majority of the SPC membership voted to remove the Executive Committee member or SSC Representative from their elected position, the removal will be effective immediately, and the SPC may vote to replace the vacant position as soon as a viable replacement candidate(s) is nominated. In the case of a SSC Representative being removed, the vacancy will be filled by the First Alternate as provided for in Article VI, Section 1 of the Bylaws. The partial year served on the

Executive Committee will not be counted as a full year, as pertaining to the term limits outlined above.

If a vote to remove an Executive Committee member or SSC Representative from their elected position is not approved, then there will be a moratorium on voting for the removal of the same Executive Committee member or SSC Representative for the remainder of the school year, except in a situation in which the Executive Committee member consistently fails to attend the general SPC meetings (missing two or more meetings without cause.)

Resignation or Removal of SSC Member are also covered under the SSC Bylaws: Under the SSC Bylaws, SSC members are expected to attend meetings regularly and to participate actively. Members who wish to resign should do so in writing to the SPC Co-Chairs and SSC Co-Chairs. Members who fail to attend more than three SSC meetings in a school year without reasonable cause may be removed by a two-thirds vote of the remaining members. The member shall be notified in writing one week in advance of a regular SSC meeting of the SSC's intention to discuss removal at that meeting.

A vacancy created by the resignation or removal of an SSC Parent Voting Member may be filled by a Parent Alternate as provided under Article VI, Section 1 of SPC Bylaws, or if no alternate is available, by a special election at the next SPC meeting after the vacancy is announced in the Monday Letter and through the SPC email list. In the instance that a vacancy occurs at the end of a school year by a departing SSC member unable to fulfill the remaining year(s) of their term, an election will be held by the SPC to fill the remainder of the term (i.e. one or two years), to maintain the staggering of the SSC member terms.

### **Article VIII: Meetings**

The regular monthly meetings of the organization shall be held monthly on a regular schedule as determined by the Co-Chairs and voted on at a meeting of the SPC. Special meetings may be called, as needed, by the Executive Officers.

Notice of all meeting dates and elections shall be sent to the school population.

Commitment of financial resources requires a simple majority present at a scheduled SPC meeting. However, commitment of a sum greater than \$2000, requires the presence of a Quorum as defined in Article VII, Section 1.

The Executive Committee will meet as needed throughout the school year and for at least one meeting prior to the start of school to plan for the transition into the new school year. It is expected that Executive Committee members will attend most SPC Executive Committee meetings and SPC meetings. Executive Committee meetings will focus on setting SPC meeting agendas, communicating

with general memberships, and addressing questions of governance.

Minutes of all Joyce Kilmer School Parent Council meetings shall be recorded and available in the SPC binder in the Principals office.

#### **Article IX: Nonpartisan Policy:**

Nonpartisan Policy: The Kilmer SPC is a nonpartisan body, and as such does not engage in any Partisan Activity. A Partisan Activity means affiliating with any political party or supporting candidates for political office. While members of the SPC may support Partisan Activities as individuals, they may not utilize the names of The Joyce Kilmer K-8 School, The Kilmer SSC, The Kilmer SPC, or any SPC affiliated committees or subcommittees for Partisan Activities of any kind. Nothing in this Article shall be construed to limit the ability of parents or students as individuals to advocate for the needs of this school.

#### **Article X: Amendments**

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote subject to the presence of a quorum, but Bylaws changes may not be voted upon in the same meeting as they are proposed. A month before the proposed changes are to be voted on, a draft of the changes will be discussed at the SPC meeting and copies of the draft made available for those who wish copies. A Quorum, as defined in Article VII, Section 1, must be present to change the Kilmer SPC Bylaws or a vote taken to retire and replace them.

#### **Article XI**

Roberts Rules of Order are the default procedures for this organization.