**Article I. High School Advisory Council**

St. Croix Falls High School is a 9-12 public school in the St. Croix Falls School District located in Polk and Burnett Counties in northwestern Wisconsin. The school has one principal, one guidance counselor, 25 teaching staff, two paraprofessionals and two office support staff. The student population numbers 325. The school is attached to the middle school and is adjoined by the media center.

**Article II. Mission Statement**

We believe all stakeholders in education have the right to be respected, be heard and be informed as well as have the responsibility to treat others fairly and respectfully, and act on our own behalf.

**Article III. Purpose and Objective**

*The purpose of the high school advisory council is to support, encourage and improve the quality of education and the well-being of students in St. Croix Falls High School by serving as parent leaders in:*

* *Working with administration, staff, parents and community organizations to provide a healthy, safe and supportive environment;*
* *Providing a forum for the discussion of educational programs and services;*
* *Communicating with parents and promoting cooperation between home and school;*
* *Assisting parents in understanding and accessing the system—advocating for students and parents;*
* *Advising the school board, administration and staff on parents’ views on any matter relating to the school—programs, policies and activities;*
* *Promoting the involvement of parents and other community members to build a spirit of cooperation within the school community;*
* *Providing support for volunteer activities and events in the high school.*
* *Surveying all stakeholders to assist in developing the council’s priorities.*

**Article IV. Code of Ethics**

The code of ethics outlines the High School Advisory Council’s expectations of its members and guides their behavior. The code establishes boundaries, clarifies their roles and responsibilities, determine areas of conflict of interest and the manner in which members are expected to interact, in the interests of preserving democratic principles and minimizing and/or managing conflict. \*Advisory Council members are required to sign the code of ethics annually.

**CODE OF ETHICS**

• A member shall consider the best interests of all students.

• A member shall be guided by the council and school board mission statements.

• A member shall act within the limits of the roles and responsibilities of High School Advisory Council as identified by the council’s guidelines.

• A member shall become familiar with the school’s policies and operating practices and act in accordance with them.

• A member shall maintain the highest standards of integrity.

• A member shall recognize and respect the personal integrity of each member of the school community.

• A member shall treat all other members with respect and allow for diverse opinions to be shared without interruption.

• A member shall encourage a positive environment in which individual contributions are encouraged and valued.

• A member shall acknowledge democratic principles and accept the consensus of the council.

• A member shall respect the confidential nature of some school business and respect limitations this may place on the operation of the school council.

• A member shall not disclose confidential information.

• A member shall limit discussions at Parent Advisory meetings to matters of concern to the school community as a whole.

• A member shall use established communication channels when questions or concerns arise.

• A member shall promote high standards of ethical practice within the school community.

• A member shall declare any conflict of interest.

• A member shall not accept any payment or benefit financially through school council involvement.

A robust School Council consists of:

1. **Parent Members** - A parent member is one who is a parent or guardian of a child enrolled at

St. Croix Falls High School. All parent members are eligible to vote in the election of the Executive Committee Members.

The Parent Executive Committee is composed of elected parent members. The three elected positions within the Parent Executive Committee are: two Co-Chairs and Secretary.

All Parent Members are encouraged to:

• Bring a wealth of experience and diversity to the High School Advisory Council and help create a culture of caring, communicating and dealing with issues and challenges

• Participate on any committees established by the Council

• Contribute to the discussions of the Council

• Maintain a school-wide perspective on Council issues and seek to achieve consensus

• Solicit views of other parents and members of the community

• Observe the Council’s code of ethics and established bylaws

**ELECTED PARENT MEMBERS’ ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**Co-Chair positions:** The Co-Chairs of the council are elected by the parent body and must be a parent or parents who are not employed by the St. Croix Falls District School Board or any school district. The Co-Chairs are voting members who, in addition to performing the same duties as other council members perform these specific duties:

1. Uphold the Council’s purpose and mandate by serving as the liaison between parents, teachers and other stakeholders.

a. Brings education and community issues to parents for feedback

b. Regularly communicates with the principal and her appointee and seeks

feedback on Council matters

c. Acknowledges receipt of mail, e-mail and phone messages; brings forward these messages to the appropriate committee or for Council’s decision, if needed.

d. Helps set-up workshops for students and families

e. Communicates regularly with the Parent Council.

2. Arranges, chairs and hosts council meetings

a. Prepares draft agendas for both Executive and General Meetings and forwards to Secretary for distribution

b. Reviews draft minutes and advises Secretary of changes

c. Ensures that all approved motions are communicated and enforced

d. Maintains Council calendar, with the help of possible Communication Committee.

e. Creates a year-end report for the school community about the current school

year’s accomplishments, requirements for upcoming school year, ongoing projects, etc.

3. Provides guidance and support to the Committees

a. Follows-up with Committees on a regular basis and assists in its formation, if necessary

4. Oversees resolution of any conflicts and any school issues that may arise.

a. Facilitates an unbiased forum for issues that require Council’s attention b. Holds people accountable, following-up on actionable items

**Secretary:** The Secretary is elected by the parent body and must be a parent or parents who are

not employed by the St. Croix Falls School Board. He/She is a voting member who, in addition to performing the same duties as other council members performs these specific duties:

1. Attends all Council meetings.

2. Keeps written minutes of each meeting, outlining the major threads of discussion. The minutes should list those in attendance at meetings; detail any decisions that have been made, anyone who stands aside from a consensus decision and specific tasks that were assigned, including the name/s of the person/s who committed to performing a specific task/s.

3. Shows the written minutes to the Council for review and revision.

4. Distributes a copy of the final version to each of the members of the Council.

5. Keeps files updated with agendas, minutes and other Council documents in the high school office.

**Parent Executive Board Members at large – Three Parents will:** be elected to the executive board and each will be voting members.

1. Contributes to the discussion of the Parent Council.
2. Solicit views from other parents to share with the Parent Council.
3. Chair 0r Co-Chair the committees established by the Parent Council.
4. Communicate information back to the Parent Council.
5. Observe the Council’s code of ethics and established bylaws.

**PRINCIPAL’S ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

The school principal is an important link between the council and the school. ***In fact, a meeting cannot be considered a meeting of the school council unless the principal or the principal’s assigned representative is in attendance.*** However, the principal is not a voting member of the council.

1. Distributes promptly to each council member material identified by the Parent Board for distribution to Parent Council members and posts the material in a school location accessible to parents;

2. Acts as a resource to the council on laws, regulations and board policies;

3. Attends all Parent Council meetings, unless this responsibility has been delegated;

4. Considers each recommendation made by the Parent Council to the principal and returns to the council with the action taken in response to the recommendation;

5. Solicits views on matters pertaining to the establishment or amendment of school policies and guidelines\* relating to student achievement, accountability of the education system to parents and the communication of those plans to the public;

6. May participate on any committees established by the Parent Council;

7. May solicit the views of the Parent Council on any matter;

8. Observes the council’s code of ethics and established bylaws.

**School Staff Representative** - Any high school teacher or staff member is eligible to seek election for the one teacher/non-teacher position on the Parent Council. He or she is to be elected by other teachers and staff in the high school. The teacher/non-teacher position cannot be filled by the principal.

**SCHOOL STAFF REPRESENTATIVES’ (one from teaching or non-teaching staff) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Contribute to the discussions of the Parent Council;

2. Solicit views from their staff groups to share with the Parent Council;

3. May participate on any committees established by the Parent Council;

4. Communicate information back to their staff groups;

5. Observe the council’s code of ethics and established bylaws.

**Student Representative(s) –** Must be a High School Student. Preferably two students from each grade and preferably 1 female and 1 male from each of the four grades. These representatives will be elected by their respective grades and will not be current members of the student council. Students can be included in the committee work of a Parent Council, subject to Parent Council bylaws. **Student Representatives as a whole body are one voting unit of the Parent Council. Furthermore, since council meetings must be open to the public, interested students are welcome to attend.**

**STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE(S)’ ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Contributes to the discussions of the Parent Council;

2. Solicits the views of other students to share with the Parent Council;

3. May participate on any committees established by the Parent Council;

4. Communicates information from the council to other students;

**5.** Observes the council’s code of ethics and established bylaws.

**Community Representative(s)**. The council must ***appoint*** one community representative, who cannot be a school employee, current or retired and cannot hold any other political office. The Community Representative is a voting member of the Parent Council.

**COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE(S)’ ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Contributes to the discussions of the Parent Council;

2. Represents the community’s perspective;

3. May participate on any committees established by the Parent Council;

4. Helps build partnerships and links between the school and the community;

1. Observes the council’s code of ethics and established bylaws.

**River Valley Representative**. A River Valley Alternative School parent. The position is appointed

by the principal.

**RIVER VALLEY ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PARENT** **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. Contributes to the discussions of the Parent Council;

2. Represents the River Valley School’s perspective and is a voting member of the Parent Council;

3. May participate on any committees established by the Parent Council;

4. Helps build partnerships and links between the school and the River Valley School;

1. Observes the council’s code of ethics and established bylaw

**Article V. Election Procedures and Bylaw**

Elections must take place within the first thirty days of each school year. While this approach may seem logical for a sense of continuity, the risk of excluding new parents from the process is too great. Since September is a busy time for parents and educators, the elections plan below shows the timelines leading up to election.

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|  | **Timelines for the School Council Election beginning in 2015 - 2016** |
| **May/June** | * A committee is established to deal with the school council election of parent members. The co-chairs must forward the election information package (***School Council Election of Parent Representatives***) to the principal well in advance of the election |
| **Mid-August** | * In the welcome-back-to-school package, the principal includes in the school mailing the ***School Council Election of Parent Representatives*** which includes election forms, deadline for submitting nominations to the school, who is eligible, the election date and other election information |
| **Early**  **September** | * The Principal posts election information on the parent website and in an accessible area in the school * Parents return nomination forms to schools |
| **Early to Mid- September** | * A list of parent nominees with brief biographies is published on the school’s website, e-mailed out via the e-newsletter or sent home, with a reminder of the election date and information on the election process. |
| **Mid- to end**  **September** | * The ballot box is prepared for the election of parent representatives, and arrangements are made for volunteers to help voters at the voting areas. |
|  | * The election of the teacher, non-teacher and student representatives may take place at the same time or shortly after the election of parent representatives. |
| **Late September to early October** | * The first meeting of the “new” Parent Council takes place and meeting dates, times, and locations for the upcoming year are determined. (The first meeting of the “new” Parent Council must take place within thirty-five days of the start of school.) * The names of the “new “ Parent Council members are publicized to the school community within thirty days of the election, as are the dates, times and locations of future meetings. |

**ELECTION PROCEDURE BYLAWS**

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| **School council election committee.** | The current Parent Council will establish a Parent Council election committee. The committee must ensure that a new council is in place within thirty days of the start of the school year in September. The committee should have representation from parents, teaching/non-teaching staff, students and community representatives  (6 seats total = 6 votes) |
| **Considerations for the school council election process.** | In any given year, the term of office for all 6 parent-elected positions are a staggered two year term. With the two co-chairmen positions being filled on opposite election years. Appeals related to the Parent Council election process or results shall be resolved by the Parent Council election committee. If the situation is not resolved, the school principal and the chairs of the outgoing council shall jointly make a ruling. |
| **Election of parent/guardian representatives** | 1. Parents/guardians of students enrolled at the school are eligible both to vote for and to run as parent candidates. Self-nomination will suffice. The additional qualifiers or quotas may restrict eligibility of a minimum of one run as a parent candidate. Candidates should be prepared to provide a brief biography and must not be employed by the school board. Parent of students from each grade and preferred two (ie: one parent of a sophomore, one parent of a junior, and one parent of a freshman) 2. Nomination forms shall be filed by all parent-candidates for elected positions on the Parent Council. Parents may nominate themselves or other parents from each grade. 3. Information about candidates shall be made available to the school community at least one week before the election. 4. No individual campaign literature for school council elections may be distributed or posted in the school. 5. School resources, both human and material, may not be used to support particular candidates or groups of candidates. 6. The Election Day proceedings shall be publicized by the principal at least fourteen days prior to the election. 7. The Election Day proceedings shall be supervised by the principal. 8. Elections for Parent Council shall be conducted by secret ballot. 9. All eligible voters shall be entitled to cast one vote for each of the candidate positions available. 10. Ballots shall be counted by the principal in the presence of at least two parents who are not election candidates. 11. If there is a tie, the winner shall be determined by lot.   (1 seat total = 1 vote) |
| **Election of the teaching/non- teaching staff** | 1. The principal, in consultation with the election committee, will make the necessary arrangements for the teaching/non-teaching staff to be elected. 2. Anyone assigned to the staff of the school (full- or part-time) other than the principal or a vice-principal may be a candidate |
| **Election of the**  **Student representative**  **(for elementary schools)** | 1. The principal will consultation with the election committee, will make the necessary 2. All students excluding current student council members may be a candidate. (8 seats total = 1 vote) 3. Student may vote for the 2 representatives from their respective class only. (ie: a freshmen votes for the two freshmen representatives, etc.) 4. Election day proceedings shall be supervised by the principal. 5. Elections for student representatives shall be conducted by a secret ballot. 6. Ballots shall be counted by the principal in the presence of at least two students who are not election candidates. 7. If there is a tie, the winner shall be determined by a lot. |
| **Selection of community representatives** | All appointments of community representatives to the school council are to be by majority vote at a meeting of the school council.  (1 seat total = 1 vote) |

**Filling Vacancies**

A vacancy in the Executive Council may be filled by special election. Should a vacancy occur on the Executive Council, the council is not prevented from exercising its authority; it can continue to operate as long as there is a quorum and the 2/3 majority of voting council members are parents.

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|  | **QUORUM**: The majority of voting-members of the Executive Committee,( including Co-chairs, Secretary) must be present to have a duly constituted meeting of the Parent Council.  Participation by teleconference will be considered full presence and Parent Council may vote to allow for business to occur via electronic participation (i.e. email voting). Non-voting members are not counted for deciding if there is a quorum. |

The council members should be aware that a Quorum must be present when a vote is taken or if decisions are made. Should the number of parent members on the council fall below a 2/3 majority, the council will need to take steps to fill those vacancies.

If a vacancy occurs in the office of the co-chairs or any other officer of the council, it is to be filled in accordance with this bylaw.

Vacancies occur in Parent Council membership for various reasons:

* Not all positions on the school council were filled after an election
* A member resigns
* A member is unable to fulfil the roles and responsibilities (e.g., due to illness)

**Term of Office**

The term of office for parent members shall be **two years** and must be followed by a **one year stay down** from the Parent Executive Committee before running for another voted position. The first year of this Parent Council will have 1 co-chair and 2 Parent Executive Council members w/1 year terms each, to establish the “staggered” terms of office. All other members’ term of office, i.e. Teaching/Non-teaching staff, Student Representative(s) and Community Representative(s), shall be for **one year.**

**Article VI. The Executive**

The Parent Executive Board is composed of the following:

• Co-chairs

• Secretary

• 3 Parent Executive Board members at large

• Principal or his/her delegate *(non-voting member)*

• Teaching/non-teaching staff

• Student Representative(s)

• Community Representative(s)

To find out more about the roles and responsibilities of the Parent Executive Committee members, please refer to **Article IV**.

**Article VII. Conducting Meetings**

**Timetable of Meetings**

1. At the first meeting of the new school year, a timetable will be created which states the meeting dates agreed to for that school year.

2. A copy of these dates and times will be posted and will be included in communication(s) to the families of the school.

3. Advertise meetings in school and via e-newsletters, noting important or special agenda items.

**The Meeting Location**

Parent Councils are entitled to hold their meetings at the school\* and it is expected that there will be no charge for the use of school space for this purpose. As Parent Council meetings must be open to the public the meeting location(s) must be accessible and convenient to all members of the school community, including those with disabilities.

**Developing an Agenda**

• Provide a place on the agenda for welcoming guests and introducing new people and non members;

• Remember to include “declaration of conflict of interest” at the beginning of the agenda (see

“Conflict of Interest” in Article XIII);

• Review the minutes of the previous meeting and include items that need revisiting (“business arising from the minutes”);

• Determine if there is any “old business” or updates that should be included;

• Include time for all committee reports;.

* Determine what “new business” should come before the council;

• Include time for brief reports from the principal, student, staff and community representatives;

• Include a period of time for general questions.

• Establish a deadline for the submission of agenda items to allow enough time to develop the agenda, post it in the school and send it out to council members with minutes from the previous meeting at least a week before the meeting.

**Keeping Minutes of Council Meetings**

Parent Councils must keep minutes of all council meetings and these must be available at the school for examination by anyone without charge\*. Minutes are usually recorded by the Council Secretary and are to be kept at the school for a minimum of four years. An electronic copy can be accessed in Accurate minutes provide Parent Council members and the school community with a brief but clear summary of what went on at a meeting, including decisions, future plans, reports and who is responsible for what. School council minutes should note discussion areas but should not include the discussions themselves. Minutes should also include a list of those attending the meeting and those who are absent.

**MEETINGS BYLAW:**

1. The Parent Council will conduct at least four general meetings per year that are open to the public and in a location accessible to the public.

2. The first meeting must be held within the first 35 days of the current school year.

3. An agenda should be set by the Parent Executive Committee and circulated in advance.

4. All general meetings start at 6:30 pm and end at 8:30 pm.

5. All meetings are conducted within the *Robert’s Rules of Order*. All speakers and opinions are respectfully heard. Decisions are made only when there is a quorum (a majority of the members are present AND a majority of those present are parent members).

6. All meeting minutes must be kept at the school for a minimum of four years.

7. All activities must be in compliance with the SCFSD policies.

**Article VIII. Conflict of Interest Bylaw**

A conflict of interest in the Parent Council is any situation in which the individual’s personal or pecuniary interests may be incompatible with his or her responsibilities to the Parent Council. Conflicts of interest may be actual or perceived.

A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived, or potential:

• **Actual**: When a Parent Council member has a private interest that is sufficiently connected to his or her duties and responsibilities as a council member that it influences the exercise of these duties and responsibilities.

* + **Perceived**: When reasonably well-informed persons could reasonably believe that a Parent Council member has a conflict of interest, even where, in fact, there is no real conflict of interest.
  + **Potential**: When a Parent Council member has a private interest that could affect his or her decision about matters proposed for discussion.

**Conflict of Interest Bylaw:**

1. A conflict of interest may be actual, perceived or potential.

2. Members of the council shall declare a conflict of interest in matters that they, members of their families, or business entities in which they may have an interest, stand to benefit either directly or indirectly by decisions of the council.

3. A member shall exclude him- or herself from discussions in which:

• a conflict of interest is likely to result;

• the member’s ability to carry out his or her duties and responsibilities as a member of the school council may be jeopardized;

• the council member, his or her relatives, or a business entity in which the member may have an interest, may gain or benefit either directly or indirectly as a result of actions that may be taken by the principal or board in response to advice that the council provides to the principal or to the board.

4. A member shall not accept favors or economic benefits from any individuals, organizations or entities known to be seeking business contracts with the school.

**Article IX. Conflict Resolution Bylaw**

1. Council members are elected to serve the school community and will demonstrate respect for their colleagues on council at all times.

2. If a council member or members become disruptive during a meeting, the co-chair shall ask for order.

3. If all efforts to restore order fail or the unbecoming behavior continues, the co-chair may direct the individual council member(s) to leave the meeting, citing the reasons for the request.

4. The removal of a member for one meeting does not prevent the council member from participating in future meetings of council.

5. The incident shall be recorded and submitted to the Superintendent of Schools within one week of the meeting.

6. When the co-chair has requested the removal of a member or members from a meeting, the co- chair shall request that the disputing members of council participate in a special meeting, the purpose of which will be to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to the dispute. Such a meeting may be a private meeting and shall not be construed as a meeting of the council.

7. The co-chair may request the intervention of an independent third party to assist in achieving a resolution to the dispute. An independent third party may be a board official or another individual mutually agreed on by the parties involved in the dispute.

8. Any resolution reached at the meeting to resolve the conflict shall be signed and respected in full by all parties to the agreement.

**Article X. Constitutional Amendments**

Amendments to these bylaws may be repealed or enacted by two-thirds of the votes cast at a General

Meeting called for the purpose of considering an amendment or the repeal of an amendment.

**Article XI. Definition of Terms**

**Administrator** – An Administrator shall mean the principal or his/her designate at SCFSD.

**Amendment** – A change made to a regulation or a law.

**Bylaws** – The rules adopted by an organization for the regulation of its operation and proceedings. Bylaws must not conflict with the statute or charter by which the organization is created.

**Constitution** – The document that defines the structure of an organization and sets out the principles according to which it is governed.

**Executive Committee** – Executive Committee shall mean the SCFHS Advisory Executive Committee as defined in **Article VI**.

**Executive Meeting** – Executive Meeting shall mean one of the meetings of the SCFHS Advisory Executive

Committee as defined in **Article VII**.

**Executive Meeting without Administration** - Executive Meeting without Administration shall mean one of the meetings of parent-members only of the Executive Committee.

**Parent** - A Parent shall mean a parent, guardian or any other caregiver legally recognized as acting in place of the parent of a child enrolled at SCFHS.

**Policy** - A principle, direction or course of action adopted by an institution.

**Quorum** – The minimum number of members of an organization that must be present at a meeting to make the proceedings legitimate and official.

**Regulation** – A rule made and approved under an act of the Legislature. Regulations extend acts: some outline detailed directives while others serve as vehicles to communicate annually changing provisions.

**Roberts Rules of Order** – A formal system of meeting procedures designed to assist organizations to operate in a smooth and orderly fashion.

**SCFHS** – St. Croix Falls High School