



# **CAMPUS ADVISORY COUNCIL BYLAWS**

Approved by the District Advisory Council  
Executive Committee

*Last Revised, May 2017*

*(Available online at: <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/cac>)*

## **Article I: Establishment**

*Section One. Statute and Policy.* Each school in the district is required in Chapter 11, Subchapter F, of the Texas Education Code, to establish and maintain a campus-level advisory committee. Accordingly, Campus Advisory Councils (CACs) of the Austin Independent School District are established by the Board of Trustees in policies BQB(Legal) and BQB(Local) and maintained by the Superintendent. Under policy BDF(Local), the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies, designated by the Superintendent, provides general oversight of CACs.

*Section Two. Limitations.* A CAC shall be an advisory body, and shall serve to provide guidance and counsel and such other assistance as specifically listed in state law and district policy to the Principal. A CAC shall have no power to expend public funds, enter into contracts, or otherwise place obligation or liability upon the district.

*Section Three. Bylaws.* It shall be the responsibility of the District Advisory Council (DAC) Executive Committee and DAC Coordinator, in consultation with the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies, to establish and amend the CAC Bylaws.

*Section Four. Audits.* According to policy BQB(Regulation), the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies shall conduct annual audits of a select number of CACs to assess compliance with CAC Bylaws. The Principal and CAC Co-Chairs shall cooperate with the audit process.

## **Article II: Purpose and Responsibilities**

According to state law and district policy, the CAC shall have the following responsibilities:

1. To hold regular meetings.
2. To provide input into campus-level decisions pertaining to the areas of planning, budgeting, curriculum, staffing patterns, staff development, and school organization.
3. To address all pertinent federal requirements.
4. To provide assistance to the Principal in reviewing district and campus data and in preparing the annual Campus Improvement Plan, including the campus staff development plan, and addressing dropout prevention as appropriate.
5. To hold one public meeting per year after receipt of the annual campus performance report from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) for the purpose of discussing campus performance and performance objectives.
6. To ensure that systematic measures are in place to obtain input from the community, parents, and staff, and to provide information to those persons and organizations regarding the work of the CAC.
7. To provide comments on campus-level waiver requests to the Board of Trustees prior to Board approval of such waiver requests to the Commissioner of Education.
8. To provide advice and counsel in the development of the process and performance criteria for appraising teachers, if the district chooses not to use the appraisal process and performance criteria developed by TEA.

### **Article III: Meetings**

*Section One. Regular Meetings.* The CAC shall hold its first meeting of the year in August or September, in synch with the beginning of the school year. At a minimum, the CAC shall hold eight regular meetings per year, unless subject to Section Four of this Article. Members shall be given sufficient notice of regular meetings. Regular CAC meetings shall not conflict with regular meetings of the DAC (which are on the third Tuesdays of the month).

*Section Two. Additional Meetings.* If necessary, the Principal and Co-Chairs, or a majority of the CAC, may call additional meetings. Members shall be given sufficient notice of additional meetings. Additional meetings shall not conflict with regular meetings of the DAC.

*Section Three. Committee Meetings.* The CAC may establish committees from time to time on any matter as deemed necessary or appropriate. Committee memberships shall not constitute a quorum of the CAC. The CAC Co-Chairs may designate a committee chair to facilitate committee meetings. Unless otherwise directed by the CAC Co-Chairs, committee meetings shall be held at the discretion of the committee members. Committees shall report findings or recommendations to the CAC.

*Section Four. Cancellation of Meetings.* If necessary, the Principal and Co-Chairs may cancel any meeting of the CAC with good cause (i.e., inclement weather or other adverse conditions), and determine if the meeting should be rescheduled. Members shall be given the reason for meeting cancellations, and be given sufficient notice of cancelled or rescheduled meetings.

*Section Five. Open Meetings.* All regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC shall be open to the public. Committee meetings may or may not be open to the public, at the discretion of the Co-Chairs. At all meetings that are open to the public, the Co-Chairs shall accommodate visitors according to the district's "Citizens Communications and Visitor Guidelines" (available on the CAC webpage at: <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/cac>). Under these guidelines, visitors may be asked to sit in a designated area. At all meetings open to the public, deliberation shall not take place on any item not specified on the posted agenda – items may be pulled or postponed, but items cannot be added.

*Section Six. Citizens Communications.* For all regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC, time at the beginning of the meeting shall be set aside for citizens communications. This time is specifically for non-members to make comments to the CAC. The Co-Chairs may limit the time for citizens communications and the time given to individual speakers. The Co-Chairs shall ensure that the district's "Citizens Communications and Visitor Guidelines" are applied. Under these guidelines, except for requests for clarification, dialogue shall not occur between speakers and members. If the CAC is interested in hearing more from a speaker, the speaker may be invited to a future meeting and placed on the agenda specifically for that purpose. Or, the CAC may call a special meeting specifically for the purpose of open dialogue with non-members (e.g., a "community conversation"), but it must be posted for discussion on a specific topic or topics.

*Section Seven. Quorum.* For all regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC, a quorum shall be the majority of the current membership (vacancies are not counted for the purpose of determining a quorum). Meetings may still be held without a quorum for purposes of presentations or discussion. However, no consensus decision or vote of the membership shall take place without a quorum.

*Section Eight. Attendance.* Member attendance shall be monitored by the Co-Chairs, who shall work with members to try and resolve any attendance problems. More than three unexcused absences within a one-year period may result in dismissal by the Co-Chairs. Excused absences

include, but are not limited to, personal or family illness, emergency situations, jury or military duty, or representing the school or district. (See Article VI, Section Three, pertaining to Appeals.)

*Section Nine. Actions.* Actions refer to consensus agreements or formal votes of the CAC. Preferably, actions shall be through consensus. However, if a clear consensus cannot be obtained, actions shall be through a majority vote. Each member shall be entitled to one vote per motion. Proxy voting and absentee ballots shall not be permitted; a member must be present to vote.

*Section Ten. Agenda Development.* Agenda items for regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC shall be determined by the Co-Chairs in consultation with the Principal. Also, a majority of the CAC may place an item on an upcoming agenda.

*Section Eleven. Agenda Content.* Agendas for regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC shall include the date, expected start and end times, location, citizens communications, and topics to be addressed. (Sample agendas are available on the CAC webpage, at: <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/cac>.) There shall be no generic headings on the agenda – such as “New Business,” “Old Business,” or “Other Business” – unless there are bullets under such headings to specify what is to be addressed. As stated under Section Five of this Article, deliberation shall not take place on any item not specified on the posted agenda – an “open agenda” is not allowable. However, it is allowable to have a posted item such as “Brief Announcements from Members.”

*Section Twelve. Agenda Posting.* At a minimum, agendas shall be posted in a place readily viewable by the public at all times (e.g., a main entrance door with a glass panel). Agendas shall be posted at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. It is also highly encouraged that CAC meetings be more widely announced through such campus media as bulletin boards, websites, newsletters, email distribution lists, and marquees.

*Section Thirteen. Minutes.* For all regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC, minutes shall be prepared. Minutes shall include the location of the meeting, times for call to order and adjournment, member and other attendance, a record of any actions, and a high-level summary of the meeting proceedings (i.e., minutes are not intended to be lengthy accounts of the meeting, rather highlights). Minutes must be approved by the CAC.

*Section Fourteen. Records Maintenance.* At a minimum, agendas and approved minutes shall be maintained by the campus for a period of two years, and made available for viewing by the public upon request. At a minimum, these records must be maintained in paper copy in the school’s main office. It is also highly encouraged that these records be maintained in electronic format.

## **Article IV: Membership**

*Section One. Restrictions.* The following restrictions apply to CAC membership:

1. Parent members must stand in parental relation to a student currently enrolled in the district. Parent representatives shall not also be employees of the district.
2. Professional staff representatives must be assigned to the CAC’s school. Professional staff representatives are not campus administrators, and are primarily classroom teachers. At least two-thirds of the professional staff representatives must be classroom teachers. At least one professional staff representative must have an

expertise in Special Education. Only if these requirements have been met may professional staff representative positions be filled by other professional staff.

3. Classified staff representatives must be assigned to the CAC's school.
4. The business representative must be able to speak on behalf of a business. Businesses do not include public-sector agencies, but may include non-profit or not-for-profit entities. The business representative need not live or work within the district. The business representative may also be a parent (in such case, the person must be listed twice on the CAC membership roster, under each category).
5. The community representative must live within the district and be at least 18 years of age. The community representative shall not also be a parent or district employee. The community representative may be from a public-sector agency.
6. The community representative and the business representative shall not be the same person.
7. The following persons may not serve on a given school's CAC at the same time:
  - Both parents or guardians of a student in that school
  - A student in that school and his parent or guardian
  - Sibling students in that school
  - Other close relatives

*Section Two. Member Selection.* The Principal shall select the professional staff representative required to have an expertise in Special Education. The Principal and Co-Chairs shall work together to select parent, community, and business members, either as new members or as incumbent members wishing to continue to serve. Candidates for these positions must submit to the campus office a completed CAC membership application form (available on the CAC webpage at: <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/cac>). Although received applications must be considered, submitting an application does not in itself guarantee a position on the CAC. It is highly encouraged that the Principal and Co-Chairs establish and consistently apply written member selection considerations (example considerations are available on the CAC webpage).

*Section Three. Member Election.* Other than the professional staff representative required to have an expertise in Special Education who is selected by the Principal, professional staff members must be elected by their peers. Students and classified staff representatives must also be elected by their peers. The Principal shall ensure that such elections are held as necessary. However, an election is not necessary if there is no competition for the membership positions. If needed, the Principal may solicit additional individuals for membership.

*Section Four. Membership Diversity.* Membership of the CAC shall strive to reflect the geographic, ethnic, gender, and economic diversity of the school community.

*Section Five. Non-Voting Members.* The Principal shall serve on the CAC as a non-voting member. One other campus administrator may also serve as a non-voting member; the total number of non-voting members shall not exceed two. Non-voting members shall not serve as CAC Co-Chairs.

*Section Six. Standard Voting Membership.* The following shall be the standard voting membership of the CAC, in accordance with the requirements of Section One of this Article. One of these voting members shall also be the PTA President or PTA member designated by the PTA President:

1. Six parent representatives.
2. Six professional staff representatives.
3. One classified staff representative.
4. One community representative.
5. One business representative.
6. For high schools, two student representatives. Middle schools may have student representatives.

*Section Seven. Exceeding Standard Voting Membership.* The Principal and Co-Chairs may determine whether the standard voting membership in Section Six of this Article is exceeded. In so doing, the Principal and Co-Chairs shall ensure that an equal number of professional staff and parent representatives, and shall ensure that at least two-thirds of the professional staff representatives are classroom teachers. The total number of classified staff representatives shall not exceed two.

*Section Eight. Term of Service.* Unless subject to the provisions of Sections Nine or Ten of this Article, the term of service for a member shall be for two years, beginning the first CAC meeting of the school year (however, most CACs go through member selection and election processes prior to this). Members may serve multiple terms, but renewed membership is not automatic. Members interested in serving an additional term must go through the normal process as applicable to that position (which may require submittal of an application or placement on an election ballot).

*Section Nine. Vacancies Due to Member Resignation or Dismissal.* If a member resigns or is dismissed, the position shall be filled within a reasonable time. Irrespective of the membership category, any vacancies covered under this Section are handled by the Principal and Co-Chairs (i.e., no elections are required).

*Section Ten. Vacancies Due to Change in Member Status.* If a member no longer meets the restrictions stated in Section One of this Article, if up to one year remains in the member's term, the member is allowed to serve out the remainder of the term; if the member chooses not to serve out the remainder of the term, the position shall be filled within a reasonable time. If more than one year remains in the term, the member shall not continue to serve, and the position shall be filled within a reasonable time. Irrespective of the membership category, any vacancies covered under this Section are handled by the Principal and Co-Chairs (i.e., no elections are required).

*Section Eleven. Role of the Principal.* The Principal shall be a non-voting member of the CAC. The principal may preside over CAC meetings only in the event that both Co-Chairs are absent. In a coordinative role, working with the Co-Chairs, the Principal shall ensure: that CAC membership is established and maintained as required; that CAC meetings are scheduled and held as required; that CAC agendas are provided with required minimum content; that the CAC receives the information and resources as are necessary and reasonable to accomplish its charge; that CAC records are maintained, shared with campus staff, and made accessible to the public upon request; and that new CAC members receive training as required. In ultimately making decisions affecting the campus, the Principal shall carefully consider input from the CAC. Should any decision of the Principal differ from the input provided by the CAC, the Principal shall explain his or her reasoning to the CAC.

*Section Twelve. Member Training.* The Principal and Co-Chairs shall coordinate to ensure that CAC members receive training at least once a year through one or more of the following means: member self-training using materials on the CAC webpage; campus-based training using materials on the CAC webpage; training conducted at the campus by the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies (upon request of the Principal and Co-Chairs).

*Section Thirteen. Conflict of Interest.* No individual shall be nominated for or hold a position on the CAC if that individual has a direct pecuniary interest in the recommendations of that committee and decisions made by the district. Even the appearance of a conflict of interest should be avoided if at all possible. A lone agenda item shall not be cause for the elimination of an individual's membership; however, any such individual shall refrain from participation in decisions and voting as to that issue. Any cases of conflict of interest shall be referred to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies for possible action.

*Section Fourteen. Conduct.* The district welcomes freedom of expression and debate. However, CAC members shall conduct themselves, in meetings and at all other times, with courtesy and respect to fellow members, district parents and students, district staff and Trustees, and members of other district advisory committees. In meetings, members must be recognized by the Co-Chairs before speaking, and otherwise respect the order maintained by the Co-Chairs. Unless otherwise authorized by the CAC, members shall not speak for the CAC; and, unless otherwise authorized by the administration, members shall not speak for the district. Members, by their comments and/or actions, shall not reflect badly on the CAC. Any cases of misconduct shall be referred to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies for possible action.

*Section Fifteen. Undue Advantage.* CAC members shall not use their position to gain or attempt to gain an undue advantage for themselves or anyone else. (As examples, it would be considered an undue advantage if a person included his or her membership in the CAC in the reasoning for allowing a student entry into a particular program; however, it would not be considered an undue advantage for a person to include CAC membership on his or her resume.) Any cases of undue advantage shall be referred to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies for possible action.

## **Article V: Co-Chairs and Secretary**

*Section One. Election of Co-Chairs.* The CAC shall elect from its voting membership two Co-Chairs, each to serve one-year terms. However, an election is not required if there is no competition for a position. Co-Chairs may serve multiple terms. Co-Chair elections may occur at the end of the previous school year, but shall occur no later than the second regular meeting of the current school year.

*Section Two. Co-Chairs.* One Co-Chair shall be an employee of the district and one shall not. The responsibilities of the Co-Chairs shall include:

1. With the Principal, developing agendas for regular and other plenary CAC meetings.
2. Presiding at all meetings of the CAC (note that information on effective leadership and basic parliamentary procedure is available on the CAC webpage, at <https://www.austinisd.org/advisory-bodies/cac>):
  - Calling meetings to order and adjourning meetings
  - Ensuring that the posted agenda is followed (items on the agenda may be pulled or postponed, but not items may be added)
  - Ensuring that the district's "Citizens Communications and Visitor Guidelines" are followed

- Ensuring that meetings are conducted in an orderly manner according to basic parliamentary procedure
  - Recognizing members or other attendees to speak
  - Declaring members or other attendees out of order
  - Ensuring that members have equal opportunity to speak (the presiding Co-Chair may need to limit the time given to members to speak)
3. Monitoring member attendance and working with members to try and resolve any attendance problems.
  4. Signing all letters, reports, and other communications on behalf of the CAC.
  5. With the Principal, selecting parent, community, and business members.
  6. Performing other responsibilities as may be prescribed by the CAC.

*Section Two. Secretary.* The Secretary shall prepare minutes for all regular and other plenary meetings of the CAC. Any member of the CAC, voting or non-voting, may serve as Secretary on a volunteer basis. There is no set term of service for the Secretary, and service as Secretary may be on a shared or rotating basis.

*Section Three. Presiding Co-Chair.* On all posted agendas, one presiding Co-Chair shall be identified for each item on the agenda. This is to ensure that there is no confusion as to which Co-Chair is responsible for maintaining order during a particular agenda item.

*Section Four. Co-Chair Vacancies.* In the event of a Co-Chair vacancy, the CAC shall promptly elect a successor to complete the term of office.

*Section Five. Removal of Co-Chairs.* The Co-Chairs serve at the will of the CAC. A two-thirds majority of the CAC may at any time remove a Co-Chair. Such action in itself does not equate to dismissal from the CAC, and is therefore not appealable under Article VI, Section Three.

## **Article VI: Assistance and Intervention**

*Section One. Assistance.* For assistance in interpreting or applying the CAC Bylaws, the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies shall be consulted.

*Section Two. Intervention.* The Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies may work as appropriate with the applicable Principal and/or Associate Superintendent to address specific issues or concerns. The Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies may attend CAC meetings to observe and/or participate. The Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies may be requested by the applicable Associate Superintendent or Chief Schools Officer to serve in an intervention role and, in such capacity, may preside over CAC meetings.

*Section Three. Appeals.* If a member is dismissed from the CAC under Article III, Section Eight, the member may appeal to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies for possible action.

*Section Four. Waivers.* The Principal and Co-Chairs may request a possible waiver from a specific section or sections of CAC bylaws to the Coordinator of District Advisory Bodies for consideration. However, statutory and policy requirements are not waivable.

*Section Five. Request for DAC Agenda Item.* The CAC Co-Chairs, on behalf of a majority of the CAC, may request that an item be placed on the DAC agenda. Such requests must be of a district-wide nature, or pertaining to multiple campuses, not individual campus concerns. (A request form is available on the CAC webpage at: <http://archive.austinisd.org/inside/cac/>).



## **Article VII: New Schools**

*Section One. Interim CAC.* For new schools, the Principal shall be responsible for selecting all members and Co-Chairs to serve on an interim CAC for the first year of operation of the school. Beginning the second year of operation of the school, the Principal shall ensure that a CAC is seated according to the provisions of Articles IV and V.