

# West Linn-Wilsonville School District 3J

## Policy IFCA-AR

Updated: August 2023

### 21st Century Schools Councils

Policy IFCA states that the purpose of 21st Century Schools Councils (aka Site Councils) is to increase student achievement. And that when a group of people who represent different parts of an educational community come together to work in a collaborative manner to improve education, student achievement will increase.

“The duties of a 21st Century Schools Site Council shall include but not be limited to:

- The development of plans to improve the professional growth of the school’s staff;
- The improvement of the school’s instructional program;
- The development and coordination of plans for the implementation of programs under this chapter at the school; and
- The administration of grants-in-aid for the professional development of teachers and classified district employees.” [ORS 329.704(1)]

Per statute, ORS 329.704 subsection (5), “If a school district board determines that a school site is unable to fulfill the requirements of this section or the needs of a school site require a different composition, the school district board shall establish the 21st Century Schools Councils in a manner that best meets the educational needs of the district.”

The District and Board believe that the duties of a Site Council as described in ORS 329.704 can be effectively fulfilled in a different manner through current K-8 parent-teacher group structures or high school monthly forums. Each school’s annual Work Plan outlines:

- goals and strategies to improve the school’s instructional program;
- professional development to support the implementation of the goals and strategies in the Work Plan; and,
- assessment data that describes past, current and aspirational outcomes for students’ academic and social-emotional growth.

Concurrently, local parent-school organizations (e.g. National PTA) have adopted National Standards for Family-School Partnerships that include standards such as, “supporting students’ academic, social and emotional success in schools, including looking at assessment data and monitoring progress”. (Standard 3)

Therefore, West Linn-Wilsonville School District applies ORS 329.704 subsection (5) to implement school councils in a manner that better meets the educational needs of the district, which is through K-8 PTA/PTO Meetings and High School Monthly Forums that ensure parent input and engagement in each school's Work Plan.

### **K-8 Monthly PTA/PTO Meetings**

In WLWV K-8 schools, structures for parent involvement are already in place through the PTO/PTAs. These organizations are no longer focused solely on "fundraising"; rather, they are a non-profit, public school partner, open to all parents in the community with open meeting laws, oversight, and accountability. These organizations represent their school communities and are a forum for regular voice and feedback on educational topics.

The National PTA Standards for Family-School Partnership, *Standard 3: Support Student Success*, asks school leaders to build the capacity of families and educators to collaborate to support students' academic, social and emotional learning. And to provide an understandable and accurate picture of student progress, using multiple measures (classwork, rubrics, observations, assessments).

K-8 principals will use their PTA/PTO meetings for monthly education-related engagement sessions that allow for learning, conversation, advocacy, input and feedback. As much as possible, PTA/PTO monthly agenda items will be noticed in time for public participation. PTO/PTA monthly minutes are made available for public review. PTA/PTO monthly newsletters will be encouraged to highlight meeting topics for the parent community to stay informed.

School newsletter articles will also provide notice to PTA/PTO meetings and highlight, as much as possible, topics at those meetings.

As teacher liaison(s) are part of the structure of PTA/PTO meetings, these forums become opportunities for parent and teacher voice and collaboration. The meetings include opportunities for parent input regarding the goals, actions and outcomes identified in each school's School Work Plan.

### **High School Monthly Forums**

High Schools, which do not have PTA/PTO structures, will host monthly education-related forums (some in-person, others may be virtual) that allow for learning, conversation, advocacy, input and feedback. Several of these monthly forums will also include parent input on the development and progress-monitoring of each school's School Work Plan.

### **Parent Engagement Throughout the Year**

Other smaller or more informal conversations can occur during Coffee Talks, evenings/chats, virtual forums, or small advisory group conversations. School or district surveys can also be a way to gather input, voice and feedback. Newsletter articles are broad and strategic ways to summarize and inform the whole school community about the topic before or after one of the monthly meetings.