

Nelson Waldorf School Parent Council Guidelines: A Living Document

Feb 10, 2010

I. VISION

The Nelson Waldorf School Parent Council (NWSPC) embraces the vision of an engaged and valued parent body in service of the actualization of the school's mission.

II. MISSION

The mission of the NWSPC is to design, hold, guide, and facilitate the participation of parents in service of the Faculty and Board of Directors of the Nelson Waldorf School (NWS).

III. CORE VALUES

The NWSPC adopts as its fundamental values a commitment to working with the underlying principles of Waldorf Education as developed through the Faculty and Board, and a commitment to generate, welcome, and honour parents' participation in the life of the school.

IV. STRUCTURE AND MEMBERSHIP

All parents of children enrolled at the NWS are **General Members** of the NWSPC. General Members can be involved with the NWSPC in a variety of ways, including attending meetings, taking on active roles in NWSPC activities and projects, bringing suggestions and concerns to the NWSPC, alerting the NWSPC to fundraising opportunities, etc.

The NWSPC **Steering Group** consists of parents who take on leadership roles to provide structure and oversight for NWSPC activities and projects. Membership of the Steering Group is open to all General Members, and will typically consist of 5-10 parents at any time. There is no requirement that Steering Group members commit to serving for particular time periods and all parents are welcomed to join the Steering Group as and when their interest and availability permits. Thus, it is expected that Steering Group membership will evolve over time. That said, it is hoped that Steering Group members would attend most NWSPC meetings and/or provide leadership in the organization of NWSPC activities and projects. It is also hoped that Steering Group members would let their colleagues know within an appropriate time frame of any desired changes in future levels of involvement.

V. ACTIVITIES

Regular Meetings – All parents are invited to attend NWSPC meetings, which are expected to take place once a month during the school year. Steering Group members will typically attend most meetings, as will a member of the Faculty (in the role of Faculty-Parent Council Liaison) and the General Administrator. Specific roles at each meeting (e.g., Chair, Secretary, Time-keeper, etc.) will be rotated among current Steering Group members each meeting. One role that should remain constant

throughout the year is that of **Treasurer**, who manages the NWSPC's finances and bank account.

Social Inclusion Coordinating Group (SICG) – NWSPC members serve on the SICG together with a member of the Faculty and act as liaisons between the NWSPC Steering Group and the SICG. The SICG guides the Social Inclusion process at the NWS.

Fundraising Steering Group (FSG) – NWSPC members serve on the FSG together with members of the Faculty, Board, and Administration. The FSG evaluates fundraising proposals, makes recommendations to Faculty, seeks parent and staff volunteers for task groups to organize fundraising events, and makes recommendations on the use of funds.

Marketing Support – NWSPC members support the Faculty and Administration with tasks associated with marketing, advertising, and enrollment initiatives.

Parent Council Class Representatives – NWSPC members serve as Parent Council Class Representatives for each class, providing a means for parents to bring suggestions and concerns to the NWSPC Steering Group, and for information about NWSPC activities and projects to be communicated to parents. The role of NWSPC Class Representative can be filled by the “regular Class Rep” or by another parent in the class.

Webpage and News E-zine – A member of the NWSPC Steering Group updates the NWSPC webpage on the NWS website and writes/sends out the monthly NWSPC News E-zine each month during the school year. The E-zines contain interesting and useful information about parent activities and opportunities at the school.

Parent Handbook Updating – NWSPC members work with NWS staff to update the Parent Handbook each year.

All-School Welcome and Celebration – Members of the NWSPC Steering Group work with Faculty to support the All-School Welcome and Celebration at the beginning of each school year.

Grocery Card Program – NWSPC members administer the Grocery Card Fundraising Program with the Kootenay Coop, SaveOn Foods, and Safeway. The program requires parent volunteer support: an *administrator* to purchase the cards from each store when current supplies of cards are low, to pass the cards onto sellers, and to deposit proceeds in the NWSPC bank account; *sellers* to hold cards for parents to purchase and to pass proceeds back to the administrator; and a *bookkeeper* to maintain a spreadsheet showing cards bought/sold, profits, etc. Cards are also made available for purchase through the NWS administration. The FSG determines how funds raised are to be allocated at the beginning of the school year.

Applying for Grants – NWSPC members seek out and apply for grants and other funding opportunities, for example, the \$20,000 grant acquired in 2009 to build the lower school Natural Playground, and the \$1,370 community gaming grant for Parent

Advisory Councils (application deadline: June 30 each year). The creation and maintenance of a “grant database” would be a worthwhile goal.

Festivals and Events – NWSPC members work with NWS staff to organize and run NWS Festivals and Events. The NWSPC Steering Group solicits parent volunteers to provide leadership in the organization of parent-led Festivals and Events, such as the Halloween Journey, Winter Faire, and Kinderhouse MayFest. This does not include school-led Festivals and Events, such as Michaelmas, Martinmas/Lantern Walk, Advent Spiral Walk, St. Nicholas, Santa Lucia, and Carnaval (parents are often involved in running these school-led Festivals and Events, but leadership for these comes from the school rather than the NWSPC).

Documentation for Festivals, Events, Fundraising, etc – NWSPC members work with NWS staff to create and update electronic documentation for NWS Festivals, Events, Fundraising (including both all-school fundraising and class-specific fundraising), etc.

Building and Grounds Projects – NWSPC members volunteer to organize and carry out specific projects associated with the NWS buildings and grounds. Examples include: playgrounds, festival supply room, library and resource room, meeting room for faculty and new families, costume room, parent room, NWSPC display area, third kindergarten space, Kinderhouse storage room, etc.

Annual Fundraising Campaign – The NWSPC Steering Group solicits a parent volunteer to assist the Administration and Faculty with the Annual Fundraising Campaign each year. The creation and maintenance of an “alumni database” would be a worthwhile long-term goal.