Trust Lands Election Policy

Policy Number: 3506

I. Purpose

The Summit Academy Board of Trustees recognizes the needs and values of the Trust Lands Council and their service to the Community. This policy is intended to create an orderly, common procedure for replacing Summit Academy Trust Land Council members.

II. Policy

A. Charter Trust Lands Council Requirements

a. The number of council members who are parents or grandparents of students enrolled at the school shall exceed all other members combined by at least two. Parents or grandparents must have a student actively enrolled at Summit Academy Schools to be eligible to run or serve on the council.

b. Summit Academy Trust Lands council shall consist of the specific number of parents/grandparents. In addition, membership may also include staff members, School Executive Director, and other members that desire to serve on the Council.

B. The Trust Lands Council shall consist of 6 members comprised of both school employees and non-employee parents or grandparents of enrolled students.

a. School Employees

i. The principal of the school is required to be on the Council and is one of two or more school employees on the Council.

ii. Additional school employees are nominated for the Council from the employees of the school.

iii. If a vacancy occurs mid-term within the school employees for any reason, the Council shall seek nominations from the school staff and a replacement shall be appointed by the Council to finish the term.

iv. If a member is absent from two consecutive meetings, the Chair will notify the member that if the member does not attend the next meeting, the Council will consider the seat vacant.

b. Non-employee Parent/Grandparent

i. Four non-employee parent/grandparents of enrolled students are nominated for the Council by the parents of enrolled students at the school.

ii. There must be two more non-employee parent/grandparents than school employees on the Council.

iii. If a vacancy occurs mid-term within the parent group for any reason, the Council shall seek nominations from the parents of enrolled students and a replacement shall be appointed by the Council to finish the term.

c. Only one member from a household shall be on the Council at one time unless there is not enough parent interest, in which case the Council will vote to make an exception.

d. Terms
    i. Each member of the Council serves a two-year term with the expectation of the principal who must serve regardless of terms.
    ii. Terms of Council seats and leadership roles begin and conclude with the last day of school.
    iii. Terms are staggered so that approximately half the non-employee parent/grandparents of enrolled students on the Council are elected every two years.
    iv. A school employee or non-employee parent/grandparents council member may only serve two consecutive terms on the council.

III. Election of Non-Employee Parent/Grandparent Council Members

A. On or before September 1 of each year, the Principal will notify parent/grandparents about Council membership opportunities and the necessary steps to become a member. Notification will be posted at the Campus location.

B. If the number of interested individuals exceeds the number of open positions an election will take place. If an election is required, the school will notify families of the election process at least 10 days before voting commences.
    a. Only parents of students currently attending the school are eligible for voting
    b. Each parent will be given one vote regardless of the number of family members that attend the school.
    c. Voting by secret ballot will be done in person and instructions for voting include when voting opens/closes, submission information as well as the candidates list will be included in the election notification notice described in paragraph 4A above.
    d. Absentee voting not allowed.
    e. The Campus Principal will oversee the election to ensure compliance with the election procedures.

C. If the number of interested individuals is less than or equal to the number of open positions, an election is not required.

D. Parent/Grandparent Terms shall be for a period, or two years and members are eligible for re-election.

IV. Election of School Employee Council Members

A. When a vacancy occurs with a school employee member position, the Council takes nominations from current employees of the school.

B. The Council will take nominations for new school employee members on or before September 1 of each year.

C. The school principal will be responsible for ensuring the school employees know about the vacancy/ies on the Council, the nomination process including the dates, and the election process at least 10 days prior to commencement of voting.

D. If no school employee candidates volunteer or there are not enough volunteer candidates to fill open spots, the principal will nominate at least two candidates per open spot and then the employees will vote.

E. The election will follow the ranked-choice process

V. Officers

A. Once established, the Council members shall elect from its membership a parent /grandparent of a student enrolled at the school to serve as Chair and Vice Chair. The principal may not hold an officer position.

B. The council shall elect from its members in its January meeting of every odd calendar year.

C. The Council Vice Chair, assisted by current Council members shall oversee leadership elections.
   a. The Vice Chair shall contact each Council member to
      i. Inquire as to their willingness or desire to serve as Council Chair or Vice Chair.
      ii. Accept their nominations(s) by other Council member(s) to serve as Chair or Vice Chair.
   b. In the event the current Chair vacates his/her position prior to the end of his/her term, the Vice Chair shall assume the position of Chair to finish the term.
   c. In the event the current Vice Chair vacates his/her position prior to the end of his/her term, the Council shall elect one of its members to finish the term.

VI. Ranked-Choice Voting

A. The ranked-choice voting process unfolds as follows for single-winner elections including open seats and leadership positions:
   a. Voters rank the candidates for an open seat or leadership position by preference on their ballots.
   b. If a candidate wins an outright majority of first-preference votes (i.e., 50 percent plus one), he/she will be declared the winner.
   c. If, on the other hand, no candidate wins an outright majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated.
   d. All first-preference votes for the failed candidate are eliminated, lifting the second-preference choices indicated on those ballots.
   e. A new tally is conducted to determine whether any candidate has won an outright majority of the adjusted voters.
   f. The process is repeated until a candidate wins a majority of votes cast.
   g. In the event that more than one Council seat or leadership position is open, only one election will be held.
      i. When the results are tallied, the first seat will go to the candidate who wins based on the ranked-choice proves described above. Then the winner's name will be removed from the original voting data file as if that person had not been a candidate.
      ii. The election is tallied again to get a second winner
      iii. This process will continue for each open seat or position until all seats and positions have been filled.

VII. Quorum

A. A quorum consists of a majority of the current members of the Council.

VIII. Council Responsibilities

A. In accordance with state board rule regarding charter trust land council expenditures and funding

limits, a Council shall

i. Work with student(s), families, and educators and hold at least an annual discussion with school administrators to develop and incorporate safety principles at the school level.
ii. Provide input to the school's principal on a positive behavior plan.
iii. Review academic data and identify the most critical academic needs of the school.
iv. Consult on the Teacher and Student Success Plan. The Council will evaluate how the previous year's funds were used and suggest goals for future allocation of funds.
v. Prepare an action plan called a "School LAND Trust Plan" (LAND stands for "Learning and Nurturing Development; hereafter referred to as "the Plan") to address the needs and meet the goals identified.
    1. The Plan will identify the appropriate expenditures. (See Utah Code 53G-7-1206 4(a) and State Board Rule R277-477-4 (1) and (2).)
    2. The goals and expenditures must match.
    3. The LAND Trust funds do not all have to be spent each year; however, the complete use of funds each year is recommended.
vi. Submit the Plan for the upcoming school year and the Progress Report for the current school year on the USBE School LAND Trust website when due.
vii. Monitor implementation of the Plan to ensure its success and provide ongoing support in implementation of approved plans.
viii. Amend the Plan during the year if the needs and goals are not being met or if they are adjusted.
ix. Give input on the following plans. The LAND Trust funds may not be used for these plans. This Council is not responsible for the structure or implementation of these plans.
    1. School Safety Plan.
    2. Safe Technology and Digital Citizenship Plan.
    3. Positive Behaviors Plan.
    4. Child Access Routing Plan (53G-4-402 (17)(a-d)).
x. Advise and recommend Summit Academy and LEA administrators regarding the school and its programs (i.e., the school attendance policy, school breakfast) relating to the students' school environment.

IX. References

53G-7-1203
53G-4-402 (17)(a-d)).

X. Attachments

N/A

XI. Revision History and Approval Date

Version 1: October 17, 2024: Original Date of Approval
Version 2: October 22, 2026: Update to Format and Spelling.