



GO Team

Parkside Governance

In 2015 Atlanta Public Schools (APS) became a charter system, which allows us to govern more strategically at the local school level—ultimately leading to higher student achievement and greater organizational effectiveness and efficiency. Local School Governance Teams (GO Teams) are a key component in the charter system. GO Teams work with school leadership and the community to help determine the long-term direction of the school, design innovative solutions to increase student achievement, and serve as school ambassadors to the local community.

Parkside’s GO Team operates under the control and management of the Atlanta Public Schools Board of Education and has the authority to fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Approve the school strategic plan and monitor its implementation
- Make suggestions regarding school operations decisions that support the school strategic plan
- Provide feedback on and approve the annual school budget recommendations
- Develop innovative ideas for school-level flexibility through the School-Based Solutions process and Flexibility Waivers within the cluster
- Provide input into school-based curriculum selection and accompanying instructional materials
- Participate in the selection of a new principal, in the case of a vacancy
- Provide annual feedback on principal performance to the Associate Superintendent

The GO Team is made up of educators, parents, and community members:

- Three parents (elected by parents): Dave King, RM Lathan, and Kristy Gomez
- Three teachers (elected by teachers): Ms. Bell, Mr. Dubose, and Dr. Jackman
- Two members of the community (nominated by the principal): Bill Mickler and Nikki Frazier
- One swing seat (nominated by the rest of the team): Ms. Wagner

GO Team Accomplishments 2016-2017:

The GO Team accomplished the following activities during this school year:

- Developed and approved Parkside’s Strategic Plan. Highlights include:
 - Accelerated focus on and investment in reading and comprehension
 - Accelerated focus on and investment in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program
 - Commitment to School Garden Learning: Our garden officially transitioned from ‘Hobby’ to ‘Curriculum’ status! This curriculum will be added during the 2017-2018 school year.

- Provided feedback and approved the school budget for the 2017-2018 school year. Notably, this marked the first time that Parkside faculty strategically impacted the school budget. As a result, we set aside funds for:
 - Two Assistant Principals
 - Discretionary spending allotments for teachers
 - Instructors for the school garden curriculum
 - Used austerity bonus to pay for two additional paraprofessionals
- Conducted Parkside's Principal Selection Panel, including in-person interviews with eight Principal candidates, which resulted in the Superintendent's appointment of Principal Foster from our Top 3 selection. We're excited about working with Mr. Foster and can't wait to get started on the 2017-2018 school year!
- Created Parkside's Grants Committee, which identifies and applies for grants that align with our Strategic Plan. Special thanks to Jeremy Wilhelm, Monika Boyer, Tori Zimmerman, Melanie Jones, and Dr. Jackman for leading our first official governance sub-committee!
- Achieved 100% fulfillment of GO Team memberships, with the approval of two outstanding Community Seat members. Thanks Bill Mickler and Nicki Frazier for your participation!
- Redeveloped the school website and updated The GO Team page for easier access to our Strategic Plan, meeting details, and contact information.
- Produced 'Here's to the Crazy Ones' video to rally Parkside's transformation. The video is posted on our website: <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/7360>

GO Team Goals for 2017-2018:

The GO Team will focus on the following goals for the next school year:

Improved Communication

- We're working with the PTA Communications Team to improve communications and to align with Parkside's overall communications strategy. One aspect of this collaboration includes having a PTA representative attend GO Team meetings and vice-versa.
- We're working with the district to set up a unique Parkside GO Team email address. Parents will be able to use this email address to reach all GO Team members.
- We're reaching out to faculty, parents, and the community. Standard GO Team meetings are conducted in accordance with Roberts Rules of Order, which means that non-member attendees aren't provided a platform to address members at the meetings. Therefore,
 - GO Team representatives will host 2-3 Town Halls throughout the year, in order to encourage and solicit real-time feedback from faculty, parents and the community.
 - The GO Team will place a Comments & Suggestions box in the main office, in order to encourage and solicit anonymous feedback from faculty, parents and the community.
 - Surveys will be conducted throughout the year to gather feedback on decisions that may impact our Strategic Plan (e.g. homework loads)

Improved Involvement

Parkside's success depends on faculty, parent, and community involvement. In order to facilitate involvement, the GO Team will recruit non-GO Team members to form active sub-committees, similar to the Grants Committee mentioned in the accomplishments above. These sub-committees will report, provide feedback, and field action items at each monthly GO Team meeting.

School Based Solutions and Flexibility Waivers

To take full advantage of the flexibility that being part of a systems of charter schools provides, Parkside needs to identify and develop its own School-Based Solutions. The intent of School-Based Solutions (SBS) is to improve student achievement through academic and/or organizational innovation. Before we can begin, the GO Team must undergo training and be certified to engage in the SBS process.

SBS requests are strategic proposals designed to allow Parkside to operate in dramatically different ways. These requests may require waivers from district policy or procedures or state law, regulations, or policy. A successful SBS proposal to the district must align with the school's strategic plan, provide evidence of sound research or indicators of the proposal's likelihood of success, and address critical factors around the plan's implications on budget, personnel, operations, etc.

An example of an SBS request would be a proposal that allows Parkside's custodial staff to report directly to the principal, instead of to the district. This SBS request would ensure that the school is maintained in a way that meets the needs and expectations of the principal. It is a small, but focused, way to pull the governance of Parkside back to the school itself.

After development, all SBS proposals must undergo a 20-day public comment period organized by the GO Team, be approved by a two-third majority vote of the GO Team, and receive the recommendation of the school's Associate Superintendent before being submitted to the Office of Policy and Governance for the final review and approval or denial by the Superintendent.

Developing School Based Solutions requires herculean efforts. Yet, they exemplify the very outcomes that GO Teams should be empowered to produce.

Thanks for your feedback, patience, and involvement, as we continue to make Parkside the school of choice for our community, and have a great summer!

Sincerely,

Dave King
GO Team Chair