

2017

GOTEAMS
STRONG SCHOOLS
START WITH ME!

**ADVISORY
COMMITTEE
HANDBOOK**



ATLANTA
PUBLIC
SCHOOLS

**GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES FOR EFFECTIVE LOCAL
GOVERNANCE OF CHARTER SYSTEM SCHOOLS**

Version and Change Documentation

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I. INTRODUCTION

Atlanta Public Schools (APS) became a charter system on September 25, 2015 to increase student achievement and improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency. APS's Charter contract became effective July 1, 2016. A key component of operating as a Georgia charter system is the establishment of Local School Governance Teams at the 69 APS neighborhood schools. Local School Governance Teams are also known as LSGTs and/or GO Teams.

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.

GO Teams may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the voting GO Team members, establish advisory committees as they deem necessary. All advisory committees will have and may exercise such powers and authority to support the work of the GO Team as delegated by the GO Team. No committee will perform the full duties and responsibilities, or stand in the place of the GO Team. Advisory committees act in a primarily advisory capacity offering assistance and making recommendations to the GO Team for action.

This handbook outlines the governance guidelines, procedures, conflict of interest requirements, and code of conduct for all GO Team Advisory Committees formed in APS. All APS GO Team Advisory Committees shall operate in accordance with the requirements of this handbook at all times.

II. GO TEAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

ARTICLE I: ESTABLISHMENT

Section 1.1. Establishment. GO Teams may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the voting GO Team members, establish such advisory committees as the GO Team deems necessary. To establish an advisory committee, GO Teams must complete and vote on a Committee Establishment Resolution outlining the purpose of the proposed advisory committee, stated goals and objectives of the committee, projected time frame of the committee's work, the designated committee chairperson, and the names of all GO Team Members who will serve on the proposed committee. Each Committee Establishment Resolution should be included in GO Team meeting minutes and sent to the GO Team Office. (See Appendix B for the Committee Establishment Resolution template and sample.)

GO Team Advisory Committees will be composed of the Committee Chair, the principal (or his/her designee) and at least one (1) additional member of the GO Team. There is no limit to the number of committee members allowed. However, no more than three (3) GO Team members can serve on any one advisory committee (committee chair plus two additional members maximum).

GO Team Advisory Committees will be chaired by a member of the GO Team designated by the GO Team Chair.

To Establish a GO Team Advisory Committee:

1. Discuss the establishment of an advisory committee
 - a. Goals/objectives
 - b. Potential committee chair
 - c. Additional GO Team committee members (maximum of two)
2. Draft a Committee Establishment Resolution (See Appendix B)
3. Vote on the Committee Establishment Resolution (majority vote required)
4. Include Committee Establishment Resolution in the GO Team minutes
5. GO Team Chair appoints Advisory Committee Chair
6. Principal appoints his/her designee for the committee (if needed)
7. Determine additional members of the established advisory committee

Section 1.2. Standing Advisory Committees. Every GO Team will have a standing Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee and may create other standing advisory committees by resolution adopted by a majority of the voting GO Team members and with the advice of the GO Team Office. Standing committees act in an advisory capacity offering assistance and making recommendations to the GO Team for action.

Section 1.3. Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee. The Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee keeps the community informed of matters within the GO Team’s area of responsibility, including progress on the school’s strategic plan, budget, and School-Based Solution proposals. The Family Engagement & Communications Committee will participate in an annual meeting for the school community, led by the principal, to provide a report on the school’s performance. This committee will also be responsible for gathering input from the school community about School-Based Solution proposals to be submitted by the GO Team, or any major school initiatives or changes that would require public comment.

The Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee will be chaired by a member of the GO Team designated by the GO Team Chair.

It will be composed of the Committee Chair, the principal (or his/her designee) and at least one (1) additional member of the GO Team. The GO Team may add additional non-GO Team members to serve on the Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee.

Section 1.4. Ad Hoc Advisory Committees. The GO Team may, by resolution adopted by a majority of the voting GO Team members, create ad hoc advisory committees of GO Team members, parents, staff, and community members to assist in developing and reviewing school procedures and programs in support of the school’s strategic plan (see Section 1.1).

The GO Team may find it necessary to form ad hoc advisory committees to work on issues requiring more discussion and research than is practical during its regularly scheduled meetings. Any member of the GO Team may ask that an item be referred to an ad hoc advisory committee, with the GO Team Chair exercising discretion over the number of such committees active at any given time.

Such advisory committees shall operate for a finite time frame dissolving automatically upon completion of the assignment. The recommendations of an ad hoc advisory committee may be brought to the GO Team for action.



ARTICLE II: MEMBERSHIP AND DUTIES

Section 2.1. Membership. GO Team Advisory Committees shall have the following membership structure:

- (a) The principal or his/her designee will serve as an ex officio member of all committees.
- (b) The chair of each advisory committee will be a member of the GO Team designated by the GO Team Chair.
- (c) The Go Team can appoint additional members, including other GO Team members as well as parents/legal guardians, community members, non-supervisory instructional staff, and students.
- (d) No more than three (3) GO Team members can serve on any one advisory committee (committee chair plus two additional members maximum).
- (e) There is no limit to the number of committee members allowed.

Section 2.2. Qualifications. Each GO Team Advisory Committee member must meet the following criteria to maintain eligibility to serve.

- (a) All members of GO Team Advisory Committees are subject to a level 2 background check. The school district will determine if the background check is satisfactory for service. See Regulation GAK(1)-R(1) Criminal Background Check for more information.
- (b) All members of GO Team Advisory Committees must be in good standing with the school and the district.
- (c) Parent/guardian committee members must be the legal parent/guardian on record of a child attending or who will attend the school during at least ½ of their term of service on the GO Team.
- (d) A parent/guardian member may also be an employee of the school or the district.
- (e) A non-supervisory instructional staff member may also be a parent/guardian of a student at the school.
- (f) Community members are individuals who are invested in the school or the neighborhoods it serves in some way. Community members may be representatives of existing or new partner organizations, alumni, or concerned, engaged citizens. A community member may also be the parent/guardian of a student at the school.
- (g) Each GO Team Advisory Committee member must be at least eighteen years of age, with the exception of student members who may serve when appropriate to the work of the advisory committee.

If at any time a member does not meet the above qualifications, the member will be ineligible to continue service and can be removed.

Section 2.3 Performance of Duties. It is the responsibility of each GO Team Advisory Committee member to perform his or her responsibilities faithfully, carefully, and with good intentions. All members of the committee (including the principal) must be diligent and must hold each other accountable by being prepared for meetings, participating in discussions, asking questions, and holding high expectations for themselves and others.

All GO Team Advisory Committee members will hold each other accountable to their stated goals and to assisting and making recommendations to the GO Team for action, remembering that no committee will perform the full duties and responsibilities, or stand in the place of the GO Team.

ARTICLE III: ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Section 3.1. Meetings. Meetings will be held at such times and places as the advisory committee will determine. All advisory committee meetings must be held outside of school instructional hours to protect student instructional time and employee work hours. Such meetings are subject to the requirements of the Georgia Open Meetings Law (See Appendix A for additional information), which include:

- The meeting time, date, and location must be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting (at school and on the school website). However, standard practice for APS GO Team Advisory Committees will be for schools to post committee meeting notices at least seven calendar days before the meeting.
- The meeting agenda must be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting (at school and on website). However, standard practice for APS GO Team Advisory Committees will be for schools to post meeting agendas at least seven calendar days before the meeting (at school and on school website). Draft form is acceptable for agendas posted a week prior to the meeting. (See Appendix C for a sample meeting agenda.)
- In lieu of meeting minutes, a Committee Report must be presented by the committee chair at the next scheduled GO Team meeting. (See Appendix D for the Committee Report template and a sample.)
- Committee Reports must then be included in the GO Team’s meeting minutes for the meeting in which it was presented to the GO Team.

Section 3.2. Georgia Open Meetings Law. GO Team Advisory Committees are subject to the requirements of the Georgia Open Meetings Laws. (See Appendix A for additional information.)

Section 3.3. Notice. Notices of scheduled GO Team Advisory Committee meetings will be posted publicly in the school and on the school’s website at least one week in advance, and provided to the public via all appropriate school communication channels as required by the Open Meetings Act. Each notice will state the date, time, and location of the meeting and the general nature of the topics that will be discussed and the decisions that will be made.

Section 3.4. Reports. After each meeting, GO Team Advisory Committees must complete a Committee Report to be presented by the committee chair at the next scheduled GO Team meeting and included in that GO Team meeting’s minutes. Committee Reports will provide the GO Team with updates on the Advisory Committee’s activities and progress towards their stated goals and objectives. (See Appendix D for the Committee Report template and sample.)



ARTICLE IV: CODE OF CONDUCT

GO Team Advisory Committee members must abide by the GO Team guidance regarding conflict of interest, code of ethics, confidentiality, and gifts and solicitations that can be found on pages 25-29 of the Local School Governance Teams Handbook. All advisory committee members must also abide by the GO Team guidance regarding non-discrimination and compensation, which can be found on pages 7 and 10 of the Local School Governance Teams Handbook, respectively. Please refer to the Local School Governance Teams Handbook for more details.

CONTACT US

Thank you for your willingness to contribute to the success of your school's GO Team. Participating on a GO Team Advisory Committee can be challenging, but is also a very rewarding experience. On behalf of the GO Team Office at Atlanta Public Schools – thank you! It is through the GO Team Members, parents, staff, and community members who serve on GO Team Advisory Committees that shared governance is successful! This handbook will continue to evolve as new types of committees emerge, as matters require greater clarity, and as suggestions come forward. If your committee needs assistance at any time, please contact the GO Team Office at GOteam@atlanta.k12.ga.us.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A: Open Meetings Law

GO Team Advisory Committees are subject to the Open Meetings Act located at OCGA (Official Code of Georgia Annotated) § 50-14-1, et seq.

Under the Open Meetings Act, a meeting is defined as a quorum of the members of the GO Team or any committee of its members at which any public matter, official business, or policy is to be discussed or presented, or at which official action is to be taken, or recommendations on any public matter, official business, or policy are to be formulated, presented, or discussed.

All meetings are open unless otherwise provided by law. Regular meetings of a GO Team Advisory Committee must have:

- Notice given to the committee members at least seven calendar days prior to a meeting (OCGA § 20-2-86[f]);
- The meeting time, date, and location must be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting (at school and on school website). However, standard practice for APS GO Team Advisory Committees will be for schools to post committee meeting notices at least seven days before the meeting;
- The meeting agenda must be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting (at school and on website). However, standard practice for APS GO Team Advisory Committees will be for schools to post meeting agendas at least seven days before the meeting (at school and on school website). Draft form is acceptable for agendas posted a week prior to the meeting (See Appendix C for a sample meeting agenda);
- In lieu of meeting minutes, a Committee Report must be presented by the committee chair at the next scheduled GO Team meeting (See Appendix D for the Committee Report template and a sample);
- Committee Reports must be included in the GO Team's meeting minutes for the meeting in which it was presented to the GO Team; and
- Regular meetings may be cancelled or postponed without notice.

Note: Failure to include an item on the agenda that becomes necessary to address during the meeting does not prohibit the GO Team Advisory Committee from considering and acting upon the item.

Visual and/or sound recording of GO Team Advisory Committee meetings is permitted.

A meeting may not be closed in order to discuss whether or not to close a meeting.

Violation of Open Meetings Act

1. Anyone knowingly and willfully conducting or participating in a meeting in violation of the Open Meetings Act is guilty of a misdemeanor and, upon conviction, punished by a fine not to exceed \$1000.00. Alternatively, a civil penalty may be imposed by the court in any civil action brought pursuant to this chapter against any person who negligently violates the terms of this chapter in an amount not to exceed \$1,000.00 for the first violation. A civil penalty or criminal fine not to exceed \$2,500.00 per violation may be imposed for each additional violation that the violator commits within a 12 month period from the date that the first penalty or fine was imposed.
2. Superior courts have jurisdiction to enforce the Open Meetings law; the Georgia Attorney General has the authority to bring law enforcement actions, criminal or civil.
3. If a superior court determines that a GO Team has not complied with the Act, the court will—unless special circumstances exist—assess in favor of the complaining party reasonable attorney's fees and other litigation costs.

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED COMMITTEE ESTABLISHMENT RESOLUTION FOR YOUR REFERENCE

GO TEAM COMMITTEE ESTABLISHMENT RESOLUTION

The ABC Middle School GO Team shall have a **Family Engagement & Communications** Advisory Committee, consisting of the principal or his/her designee, designated chair, and additional members appointed by the GO Team. No more than three (3) GO Team members can serve on any one Advisory Committee (committee chair plus two additional members maximum).

The committee chair shall attend all meetings of the committee. The Advisory Committee shall serve in an advisory capacity, offering assistance and making recommendations to the GO Team for action. The Advisory Committee shall not have the authority to act on behalf of the GO Team.

Meetings of the Advisory Committee shall be scheduled and publicly noticed by the committee chair. A written report of its actions shall be presented by the chair to the GO Team at the next scheduled GO Team meeting.

The proposed Advisory Committee has the following goals/objectives:

- a) Keep the community informed on primary GO Team responsibilities, including progress on the school's strategic plan, budget, and School-Based Solution (SBS) proposals.
- b) Participate in the annual school community meeting.
- c) Engage community stakeholders by gathering their input on proposed SBSs to be submitted by the GO Team and on any other major school initiatives and changes.
- d) Plan quarterly events to increase family and community engagement in the school community.

The proposed Advisory Committee will operate as a standing / ad hoc committee (circle one).

Expected Committee Time Frame: Academic Year 2017-2018
Standing - academic year / Ad Hoc - expected time necessary to complete goals/objectives

<u>Principal Name</u>	<u>8/7/17</u>	<u>GO Team Chair Name</u>	<u>8/7/17</u>
Principal	Date	GO Team Chair	Date
<u>Committee Chair Name</u>	<u>8/7/17</u>		
Advisory Committee Chair	Date	Date Submitted to GO Team Office: <u>8/9/17</u>	

APPENDIX C: Sample Meeting Agenda

**ABC Middle School GO Team
Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee
Meeting Agenda – October 10, 2017 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.**

7:30 – 7:35 Call to Order

Welcome
Review of Agenda

7:35 – 8:15 Discussion Items

GO Team Feedback on last Committee Report (Committee Chair)
Fall Festival Preparation Progress Update
Annual School Community Meeting – Planning Next Steps
School-Based Solution Parent Focus Groups – Objectives, Recruitment, Logistics

8:15 – 8:25 Recommendations to GO Team

Update on Committee Goals/Objectives
Recommendations for Action
Questions for GO Team on Next Steps

8:25 – 8:30 Announcements and Adjournment

Next Meeting Time/Date

APPENDIX D: Committee Report Template

GO TEAM COMMITTEE REPORT

School: _____

Committee Name: _____

Committee Chair: _____

Date of Meeting: _____

Date of Next Meeting: _____

Members Present:

Summary of Meeting Activities:

- (item)
- (item)
- (item)

Goals/Objectives Completed:

- (item)
- (item)

Goals/Objectives In-progress/Pending:

- (item)
- (item)

Recommendations to the GO Team:

- (item)
- (item)

Questions for the GO Team:

- (item)
- (item)

Other Comments/Announcements:

- (item)
- (item)

Submitted By: _____ Date: _____

THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED COMMITTEE REPORT FOR YOUR REFERENCE

GO TEAM COMMITTEE REPORT

School: *ABC Middle School*

Committee Name: *Family Engagement & Communications Advisory Committee*

Committee Chair: *GO Team Member Name*

Date of Meeting: *October 10, 2017*

Date of Next Meeting: *November 7, 2017*

Members Present:

**GO Team Member 1 (chair)*
Member 4

**GO Team Member*
Member 5

GO Team Member 3
Member 6

Summary of Meeting Activities:

- *Reviewed previous Committee Report presentation to GO Team*
- *Checked in with October 28th Fall Festival event progress to determine any remaining tasks*
- *Continued planning the committee's presentation for the Annual School Community Meeting and outlining the additional resources needed for the event - assigned committee members to follow up*
- *Began discussion of School-Based Solution Parent Focus Groups focusing on objectives and logistics*

Goals/Objectives Completed:

- *Planned first community event, the upcoming Fall Festival, to increase family and community engagement in the school community (objective is to hold at least four events yearly).*
- *Scheduled Parent Focus Groups on SBS proposal.*

Goals/Objectives In-progress/Pending:

- *Participate in the annual school community meeting.*
- *Engage community stakeholders by gathering their input on proposed SBSs to be submitted by the GO Team and on any other major school initiatives and changes (SBS Parent Focus Groups).*
- *Complete Parent Focus Groups and finalize Focus Group Report Out.*

Recommendations to the GO Team:

- *This committee recommends the GO Team discuss the creation of a bi-monthly Family Engagement online newsletter to support our objective to keep the community informed about GO Team work.*

Questions for the GO Team:

- *How many GO Team members can commit to volunteering at the Fall Festival to become more familiar faces and build relationships with community members?*
- *What communication tools should we use to advertise the Fall Festival?*

Other Comments/Announcements:

Submitted By: *Committee Chair Name* Date: 10/17/17 (*date of next scheduled GO Team meeting)