



GUIDELINES

March 2009

1. FOREWORD

- 1.1 These guidelines came into force on 1 March 2009 and will remain in force for an undetermined period.
- 1.2 Words which take the singular form should be understood as also including the plural and vice versa; and words which refer to the masculine gender should also be understood as referring to the feminine gender.
- 1.3 The headings of the paragraphs of these guidelines serve only as a point of reference and should not in any way influence the interpretation of any of the guidelines they relate to.
- 1.4 These guidelines can only be changed if an absolute majority of the PRC is in favour of such a change and if the School Management and School Board agree to it.

2. ELECTION OF PARENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

2.1 General

- 2.1.1 The PRC should consist of at least five and at most twelve members. They should represent all grades of the school.
- 2.1.2 In principle the PRC should be elected from class parents' representatives for a term of twelve months at an election meeting of class parents' representatives. A member may be re-elected according to the specific re-election rules 2.2.4 and 2.2.5

2.2 Right to vote

- 2.2.1 The PRC is elected within the first school term at the general meeting of class parents' representatives.
- 2.2.2 The PRC is elected from the class parents' representatives for a term of twelve months. However, this term of office only ends when the new PRC convenes.
- 2.2.3 All class parents' representatives are eligible for election. Excluded are teachers, School Board members and administrative staff. Spouses of teachers, School Board members and administrative staff can, however, be elected to the PRC although they



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cannot occupy the positions of chairperson or vice-chairperson. In principle both marriage partners can be elected to the PRC.

2.2.4 Should a PRC member be prepared to serve for another twelve months in addition to his initial twelve months' term of office, he can stand to be elected as an ordinary school parent by the PRC general meeting without being an official class parents' representative. If he is willing to serve a further twelve months, he has to inform the election official at least two weeks before the election by means of an appropriate form, which he has to complete and hand to the school secretary. This form, appended to the guidelines as "Attachment A", can be obtained from the school secretary.

2.2.5 If a PRC member is prepared to stand again for election after this second term of office, he can only do this as an officially elected class parents' representative.

2.3 Notification of election

2.3.1 By means of a circular the principal or his representative invites to the PRC election all class representatives from the playgroup to Grade 13 (respectively to Grade 12 from 2010), as well as the other candidates who applied in writing for permission to take part in the election.

2.3.2 The invitation has to be in writing and must be issued a week in advance. If learners have to hand the invitations to those entitled to vote, a proof of receipt has to be required.

2.3.3 Should fewer than five persons entitled to vote attend the election meeting, the principal or his representative extends invitations to a second election meeting within the next two weeks. Should there again be fewer than five persons entitled to vote, the election falls away as well as the representation on the PRC; this has to be pointed out when the second invitation is extended.

2.4 Basic voting principles

2.4.1 The principal or a representative selected by him is the electoral officer.

2.4.2 All class parents' representatives who attend the election are entitled to vote. Those other candidates who have written permission to participate but who do not hold the position of class parents' representatives do not have the right to vote.



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- 2.4.3 Everybody who is entitled to vote has one vote for each election. Those entitled to vote can only cast their vote personally.
- 2.4.4 Absent candidates are eligible when written permission for their candidature has been submitted to the electoral officer (Attachment A).
- 2.5 Voting procedure
- 2.5.1 Enfranchised members enter their names and surnames on an attendance list. The candidates who stand for the election who are not class parents' representatives and are not enfranchised enter their names and surnames as non-enfranchised on the attendance list.
- 2.5.2 The scribe is elected from among the members by a show of hands. He/she remains enfranchised and eligible.
- 2.5.3 The electoral officer establishes how many enfranchised members are present and explains the voting procedure. He receives the nominations, checks the eligibility of the nominees and announces their names. Present nominees declare their acceptance of candidature.
- 2.5.4 PRC members are elected in a ballot.
- 2.5.5 The elections are basically secret. In the case of a secret ballot the enfranchised members receive a ballot paper for each round. The maximum number of candidates to be entered on the ballot paper is the same as the number of persons to be elected. If a candidate's name has been entered more than once on a ballot paper, he/she is regarded as having been entered once only. Ballot papers which do not clearly indicate the intention of the voter are invalid.
- 2.5.6 A public election may only be conducted if an enfranchised member has proposed it and if all enfranchised members present agree to it. A public election is conducted by a show of hands. Every candidate has to be elected individually.
- 2.5.7 The electoral officer determines the number of votes returned, and the valid and invalid papers returned for every candidate. The twelve candidates who have drawn the highest number of votes are the elected candidates.



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- 2.5.8 In the event of a tied vote a final ballot is conducted. If no decision is reached, the electoral officer tosses a coin.
- 2.5.9 The electoral officer announces the results, which he has established to the present enfranchised members. If the successful candidate is present, he/she announces his acceptance. If he/she is not present, the electoral officer has to inform him/her as soon as possible. He/she must declare within a week of having received the notice that he/she accepts office.
- 2.5.10 The election results are announced by circular.
- 2.6 Minutes
- 2.6.1 Minutes have to be kept of the election. They should reflect:
- 2.6.1.1 the venue and time of the election
 - 2.6.1.2 the reason for the election
 - 2.6.1.3 the names of the electoral officer and the scribe
 - 2.6.1.4 the number of enfranchised members present
 - 2.6.1.5 the names of the candidates proposed (nominations)
 - 2.6.1.6 the method of voting
 - 2.6.1.7 In the case of a ballot: number of ballot papers returned; valid and invalid votes cast; number of valid votes cast for each candidate.
 - 2.6.1.8 In the case of voting by show of hands: the number of votes returned for each candidate.
 - 2.6.1.9 The election results
 - 2.6.1.10 A remark about unusual occurrences.
- 2.6.2 The electoral officer and the scribe must sign the minutes.



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2.6.3 The electoral officer must hand in the minutes at school reception where they must remain in safekeeping for the duration of the term of office of the persons elected.

2.7 Contesting the election

2.7.1 Objection, contesting the election

2.7.1.1 Any enfranchised member may contest the validity of an election in writing within two weeks after the election. Reasons have to be provided and the objection has to be submitted to the electoral officer or the principal.

2.7.1.2 The principal and the School Board decide on the objection.

2.7.1.3 In the decision on the objection

2.7.1.3.1 the results of the election may be reconsidered,

2.7.1.3.2 the election of a class parents' representative or chairperson of the PRC may be declared invalid.

2.7.1.4 An election can be declared invalid, if essential regulations of the electoral procedure were violated in the preparation leading to the election, the procedure of the election or the announcement of the election results; and if there had been no such violation, if the outcome of the election might have been different.

2.7.2 Results of Invalidity, re-election

2.7.2.1 If the election of a PRC member is declared invalid, such declaration does not affect the validity of the actions of the person elected or of the school interest group until such a time as the invalidation has been declared.

2.7.2.2 If the entire PRC election is declared invalid, the election loses all validity and has to be repeated.

2.7.2.3 If an election has been declared invalid, it has to be repeated.

3. OBJECTIVES AND FUNCTIONING OF THE PARENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL



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- 3.1 The PRC has as objective to promote and help shape the education and teaching programme of the entire school.
- 3.2 For this purpose the PRC must advise the school, make suggestions and put forward proposals especially regarding
 - 3.2.1 the general regulation of school life and the organising of events that promote cooperation between the school and parents,
 - 3.2.2 maintaining discipline in the school and improving external school relationships,
 - 3.2.3 the introduction of new learning and teaching aids, as well as the equipping of school libraries and other teaching facilities for the learners,
 - 3.2.4 questions relating to excursions and class trips,
 - 3.2.5 questions relating to school uniforms, the lost property office, cultural exchange with partner schools, the school kiosk or cafeteria, etc. .
- 3.3 The PRC has to be included in all essential measures of the School Management relating to the educational and teaching programme of the entire school.
- 3.4 The PRC chairperson or his/her deputy represents the PRC *vis-avis* the principal and other school interest groups:
 - 3.4.1 The school principal and/or his deputy must inform the PRC of all matters he dealt with that are of general interest to the school. Thus it is desirable that the PRC chairperson and/or his/her deputy meet the school principal and/or his deputy every two weeks (except when there is no school) for a mutual exchange of information. Similarly the principal and/or his/her deputy are invited to formal PRC meetings for the purpose of exchange of information.
 - 3.4.2 The chairperson of the School Board and his/her deputy must inform the PRC of all matters they dealt with that are of general interest to the school. Thus it is desirable that the PRC chairperson and his/her deputy attend the formal meetings of the School Board for a mutual exchange of information. Similarly the chairperson of the School Board and/or his deputy are invited to formal PRC meetings for the purpose of exchange of information.



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3.5 The members of the PRC are the link between the PRC and the class parents' representatives. Each PRC member represents the PRC to the class parents' representatives allocated to him and he has to inform them regularly about general and non-confidential aspects of daily school life.

4. CHAIRPERSONSHIP AND MEMBERSHIP OF THE PARENTS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

4.1 Election of the chairperson of the PRC

4.1.1 The PRC elects for its period of office and within the first school term its chairperson and deputy from among its members. The principal invites the PRC to this election. The election may also be held immediately after the PRC election.

4.1.2 The election of the chairperson and his deputy takes place in two separate rounds by show of hands, unless at least one PRC member requests a secret ballot.

4.1.3 Only those PRC members who are present are enfranchised. A simple majority suffices.

4.1.4 If the PRC does not have a quorum for the election, the principal or his deputy will call an electoral meeting within two weeks and in the invitation he will point out that the number of members attending the second meeting will be irrelevant to this election.

4.2 Leaving office, promotion, by-elections, representation, cooperation

4.2.1 A class parents' representative retires from his/her office,

4.2.1.1 if his/her child is no longer in the class,

4.2.1.2 if he/she stands down from office,

4.2.1.3 when he/she has been absent twice without formal permission from parents' council events or meetings,

4.2.1.4 when the PRC for compelling reasons expresses its mistrust in a member and unanimously decides that the member should leave office.



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- 4.2.2 If a member leaves office, the candidate with the next highest number of votes in the PRC constituent assembly is promoted.
- 4.2.3 If there were no more candidates for the PRC election, the PRC may elect a new member from among the class parents' representatives or former PRC members by a simple majority. Within a week the newly elected PRC member has to notify the PRC chairperson and the principal in writing that he/she accepts the election.
- 4.2.4 If, after the next person has moved up, the number of members drops below the minimum number of members as determined by the constitution, a new election must be held for the PRC's remaining term of office. If the remaining term of office is less than three months, no further election takes place.
- 4.2.5 After the PRC chairperson or his/her deputy has retired, the PRC elects a new chairperson or deputy for the remaining term of office. In the case of such a new election regulations 4.1.2 to 4.1.4 are applicable.
- 4.2.6 It is up to the PRC to ask the school members' support as regards certain fields of work, activities, PRC projects, etc.

5. GUIDELINES FOR PRC MEETINGS

5.1 Number of meetings

- 5.1.1 The PRC chairperson or his/her deputy calls the formal or informal PRC meetings as required.
- 5.1.2 In the course of the school year (excluding the election meetings)
 - 5.1.2.1 at least one formal meeting per school term; and
 - 5.1.2.2 at least one informal meeting per school term have to be called.

5.2 Calling meetings

5.2.1 Formal meetings

- 5.2.1.1 The PRC chairperson or his/her deputy sets the dates of the meetings by arrangement with the principal or his deputy.

5.2.1.2 In principle the venue should be the German School, but the PRC may determine a different venue.

5.2.1.3 The PRC chairperson or his/her deputy discusses the date and choice of another venue with the principal or his/her deputy.

5.2.1.4 It is desirable that besides the council members themselves at least one representative of all other relevant school interest groups participates in formal PRC meetings. To the formal PRC meetings the following are invited: the members of the PRC, the principal, his deputy, the members of the School Board, the members of the Teachers' Representative Council and the prefects. In addition, teachers of the school, class parents' representatives and experts may be invited.

5.2.2 Informal meetings

5.2.2.1 Informal PRC meetings may be called by the PRC chairperson or his deputy or at the request of at least one third of PRC members. The meetings have to be arranged within three weeks by the PRC chairperson or his deputy.

5.2.2.2 In principle the venue should be the German School, but the PRC may determine a different venue.

5.3 Invitations to PRC meetings

5.3.1 Formal meetings

5.3.1.1 The PRC chairperson or his deputy calls meetings by circular or electronically via the school.

5.3.1.2 The invitation must contain the following information:

5.3.1.2.1 the date, time and venue of the formal meeting;

5.3.1.2.2 a list of invited PRC members;

5.3.1.2.3 the agenda of the meeting.

5.3.1.3 The time allowed for invitations is one week, starting from the date it is sent.



- 5.3.1.4 In cases of emergency the invitation can be extended orally, and the time allowed for invitations may be disregarded.
- 5.3.1.5 The PRC may add further items to the agenda at the start of the meeting.
- 5.3.2 **Informal meetings**
- 5.3.2.1 The PRC chairperson or his deputy have one week, starting from the date of issuing the invitation, to invite the members of the PRC to informal meetings and they have to do so in writing. In cases of emergency the invitation can be extended orally, and the time allowed for invitations may be disregarded.
- 5.3.2.2 The invitation contains information about the date, time and venue of the informal meeting.
- 5.3.2.3 The invitation should contain an agenda. In cases of emergency this may also be communicated orally to PRC members.
- 5.4 **Passing of resolutions**
- 5.4.1 At the start of a meeting the chairperson of the PRC has to determine whether it has the power to pass resolutions. It has this competence when more than a third of the PRC members are present. Not entitled to vote are PRC members who are supporters as described in terms of paragraph 4.2.6 or who attend a meeting as guests in terms of paragraph 5.6.1.
- 5.4.2 Voting is by a show of hands unless a decision has been made to have a secret ballot. A secret ballot is conducted by means of ballot papers.
- 5.4.3 When explicitly provided for otherwise, decisions are taken according to the votes of the majority of members present. Every enfranchised member present has one vote.
- 5.4.4 In the case of a tied vote, the chairperson's vote decisive.



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5.5 Minutes

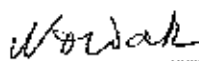
- 5.5.1 Minutes have to be kept of formal and informal PRC meetings. The PRC may in general or in particular cases arrange for a scribe.
- 5.5.2 The minutes have to reflect especially the following: time and venue of the meeting, number of enfranchised members, motions carried or defeated, proportions of votes cast, etc. .
- 5.5.3 Within three weeks after the meeting the minutes should be submitted to all relevant groups who have an interest in the school for their attention and be approved in terms of the following formal or informal PRC meeting.

5.6 Public participation

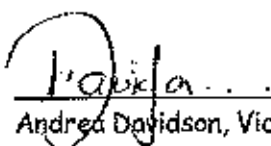
- 5.6.1 PRC meetings are not open to the public. The PRC chairperson may invite guests.
- 5.6.2 The PRC may decide to treat certain advisory issues as confidential.

Deutsche Internationale Schule Johannesburg, March 2009.

The Parents' Representative Council



Hanne Nowak, Chairperson



Andrea Davidson, Vice-Chairperson



Attachment A

I hereby declare myself willing to stand for election as member of the Parents' Representative Council on _____ (Date of general meeting of Class Parents' Representatives):

First name and surname : _____

Guardian of : _____

Already member of the PRC?
Yes (in which year/) / no? _____

Class Parents' Representative?
Yes (for which year?) / no? _____

Telephone number : _____

E-mail : _____

I shall attend/not attend the election.

Johannesburg, on _____

(Signature)