

**NEW YORK CITY PUBLIC SCHOOL PS199-M
SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM BY-LAWS**

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by the PS 199 School Leadership Team

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These are the by-laws of the School Leadership Team (“SLT”) of New York City Public School 199-M (the “School”).

ARTICLE 1 — ORGANIZATION, AUTHORITY AND LIMITATIONS

- 1.1. **Organization:** The SLT was created and constituted pursuant to the 1996 school governance legislation and the initiative by the Chancellor of the Board of Education of the City of New York to bring accountability and leadership to the level of the schools.
- 1.2. **Authority:** The SLT shall carry out all the functions of a School Leadership Team (as it is now known or may be known in the future) as provided by the New York City Department of Education.
- 1.3. **Limitations:** The SLT shall be subject and subordinate to all binding school system requirements and federal, state and local laws applicable to its operations and functions.

ARTICLE 2— PURPOSES

- 2.1. **Purpose:** The SLT will function as the management team of the School, representing the School’s professional staff, parents and community. The SLT’s goal is to ensure that children are provided with quality education through increased teacher and parent participation and heightened self-esteem for the entire School community.
- 2.2. **Mission:** The SLT shall review, refine and, as necessary, revise or replace the School’s Mission Statement; shall foster and enable achievement of the School’s mission; shall articulate general and specific policies and goals for the School; and shall develop, implement and enforce policies and procedures designed to further the School’s mission and reach its goals on behalf of its students. The School’s current Mission Statement is attached as Appendix 1.

ARTICLE 3— MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. **Composition of SLT:** The SLT shall be composed of a minimum of ten (10) and a maximum of sixteen (16) voting Members, as provided below, with an equal number of Staff and Parent Members. For purposes of these By-Laws, “voting” includes having a binding voice in reaching decisions.
- 3.2. **Mandatory Members:** The three Mandatory Members of the SLT, each of which shall be full voting Members, are the Principal of the School, one co-president of the Parent Teachers Association (“PTA”), and the United Federation of Teachers (“UFT”) Chapter Leader, or their designees. If any

Mandatory Member has designated someone else to serve in his/her position on the SLT, all references in these By-Laws to that Mandatory Member shall mean that Member's designee.

- 3.3. **Staff Members:** In addition to the two Staff Mandatory Members, there shall be six Members who are members of the Staff, as defined here. "Staff" means in these by-laws those who work in the School. The method of selecting the other six Staff Members shall include these features: They shall be chosen by the Staff in a fair and unbiased manner, after reasonable notice and advertisement among the Staff, following procedures selected by the Staff. As far as possible, Staff members will be representative of classroom teachers from different grades, cluster teachers, paraprofessional and out-of-classroom staff.
- 3.4. **Parent Members:** In addition to the one Parent Mandatory Member, there shall be seven Members who are parents. "Parent" or "parents" means in these by-laws a parent, guardian and/or a person in parental relation to a child or children in the School, and/or persons who act in loco parentis (in place of a parent or legal guardian with whom the child resides, or who has been designated by the parent or legal guardian) regarding the child's education, in accordance with the Chancellor's regulations. The method of selecting the seven other Parent Members shall include these features: They shall be chosen by secret ballot by the parents of children enrolled at the School at the time of the election, in an open election, after reasonable notice and advertisement among the parents, following procedures selected by the PTA.
- 3.5. **Members' Duties:** Members shall devote the time and effort necessary to do the work of the SLT and its Committees and Subcommittees, and to prepare in advance for, regularly attend, and fully participate at, meetings of the SLT and of Committees, Subcommittees and other units of the SLT to which the Member is assigned.
- 3.6. **Communication with School Community:** Each Member shall endeavor to develop and maintain regular, reliable, two-way communication with people within the School community. In particular, Parent Members shall report to, and elicit information and opinions from, the parents of children enrolled in the School; and Staff Members shall report to, and elicit information and opinions from, people working at the School. Email contact details for the Chairperson/s will be provided on the website.
- 3.7. **Member Development:** Each Member shall participate in organized instruction and other formal and informal development efforts designed to enhance the Member's ability to carry out the Member's functions on the SLT.
- 3.8. **Membership Terms:** Staff Membership (other than the UFT Representative) and Parent Membership (other than the PTA Co-President) shall be for term of two years, except that a Member shall serve until his or her replacement is seated and except as provided below. Elections shall be held for the seats that are expiring each year, such that approximately one-half of Staff Members and one-half of Parent Members are elected each year. If necessary to balance the terms so that approximately one-half of the Staff Members and one-half of the Parent Members are elected each year, the PTA or the Staff may on occasion designate that an open SLT position is for a one-year term. The UFT Representative and PTA Co-President shall have SLT Membership terms that are the same as their terms as Representative or Co-President. There are no term limits.
- 3.9. **Elections in May:** SLT Parent Membership elections (not necessarily including the UFT Representative or PTA Co-President) shall be held in May of each year, with the term to begin on July 1st of that calendar year. A minimum of 10 calendar days' notice is required prior to the PTA's election of its SLT parent members. All elections must be advertised widely, with reasonable

advance notice given. SLT elections must be held after the PTA elections in the spring (Chancellor's Regulation A-660).

- 3.10. **Removal of Members:** Any Member other than a Mandatory Member may be removed from the SLT upon consensus of the Members present at an SLT meeting (exclusive of the Member whose removal is the issue). The affected Member may attend and be heard at the SLT meeting or meetings at which his or her removal is considered. Members may be removed only for repeated failures, after written warnings, to carry out his or her duties or for repeated actions, after written warnings, inimical to the proper functioning of the SLT or the School. The basis or bases for the removal shall be expressly stated. The call for such consensus may be made only if there has been at least two weeks' written notice that such removal would be an issue at the meeting.
- 3.11. **Membership Vacancies:** Vacancies in Staff and Parent Memberships shall be filled for the unexpired portion of the term as quickly as possible by selection held by the Staff or PTA, respectively.

ARTICLE 4— OFFICERS

- 4.1. **Officers Generally:** All SLT Members are encouraged to participate in the leadership of the SLT. To that end, the leadership positions shall be shared among up to two or more individuals each year. Each Member is strongly encouraged to volunteer for one office during such Member's two-year SLT term.
- 4.2. **Process of Selecting Officers:** At the first SLT meeting of each new school year, volunteers will be solicited for officer positions for the coming year. It is highly recommended that Members are strongly encouraged to refrain from holding the same office two years in a row. If more Members are interested in serving in a particular office than the number indicated below for that office, then the Members to hold that office will be selected by drawing names (as in from a hat). Members who share an office can determine among themselves how to divide the responsibilities of that office throughout the year (e.g., rotate each week, each month, each semester).
- 4.3. **Officers:** The SLT shall have the following officers with the following functions, duties and responsibilities. With the exception of the Principal, SLT officers shall be selected from among SLT Staff and Parent Members annually by the SLT at the first meeting in the new school year.
 - 4.3.1. **Principal:** The School's principal has a unique role on the SLT. As the instructional and administrative leader of the School, the Principal is responsible for fostering an environment in which collaborative decision-making can work. The Principal shall ensure that the perspectives of the entire School community are brought into decision-making, and that fellow SLT Members have the necessary information and support to identify problem areas and successful areas, to find solutions and improvements, and to make good decisions. The Principal shall share his or her knowledge, expertise, experience and, when necessary, reservations about SLT proposals. The Principal shall ensure that information needed for educational planning, budgeting and review of student data are assembled and available to the SLT. The Principal shall provide the SLT with information about all other units and processes in the School, ensuring that the School community knows the roles and responsibilities of each. The Principal, along with the Chair and the Facilitator, shall determine the agenda in advance of each meeting.
 - 4.3.2. **Chair:** Up to two Members shall serve as Chair each year. The PTA Co-President shall not be eligible to serve as Chair. The Chair shall have general oversight and coordination responsibility. The Chair shall disseminate information about and from the SLT to the

School community, including providing a brief summary of the SLT's work at each general PTA meeting. The Chair, along with the Principal, shall establish the regular meeting schedule, and the Chair will provide notice of each meeting to the Members. The Chair shall ensure that appropriate pre-meeting work; preparation and notification have been done and given. The Chair, along with the Principal and the Facilitator, shall determine the agenda in advance of each meeting.

4.3.3. Facilitator: Between two and four Members shall serve as Facilitator each year. The Facilitator's primary task is to maintain an orderly discussion during meetings and to move through the agenda. The Facilitator shall keep the group focused on a common task; assure that Members and other participants follow the ground rules; and ensure fair and equal treatment for all constituencies attending the meetings. The Facilitator shall ensure that the SLT stays focused on educational issues and other matters in furtherance of the School's mission, and that Members have the necessary information to guide their planning. The Facilitator shall assure that voices of all SLT Members who wish to be heard are heard. The Facilitator, along with the Principal and the Chair, shall determine the agenda in advance of each meeting. The outgoing facilitator will transition to the incoming facilitator.

4.3.4. Secretary: Up to two Members shall serve as Secretary each year. A member may serve successive terms if elected by the SLT. The Secretary shall take minutes of the meetings and record attendance. The Secretary shall record tasks assigned to individuals and record future agenda items. The Secretary shall distribute copies of the minutes to the SLT Members in advance of the next SLT meeting; to the School's Parent Coordinator, the School's web site master and the DOE, once they have been approved by the SLT. The Secretary shall also keep the SLT's attendance records and hard copies of meeting minutes.

4.3.5. Other Officers: The SLT may choose to create other offices and name Members to serve as those officers, and may remove any office so created.

4.4 Term of Office: An Officer remains in office for one year and until his or her successor has been chosen. Upon a vacancy in an office, the SLT shall select a new officer as promptly as possible. Members are strongly encouraged to refrain from holding the same office two years in a row to allow other Members to perform a leadership role.

4.4. Removal of Officers: A Member may be removed from an SLT office (other than the office of Principal) upon decision of the Members of the SLT present at the meeting, provided that written notice of the proposal to remove an officer or officers has been given at least two weeks in advance of such decision.

ARTICLE 5— COMMITTEES AND SUBCOMMITTEES

5.1. SLT Committees: The SLT may create and disband standing, temporary, ad hoc and other committees, task forces or other units, as the SLT deem appropriate from time to time.

5.2. Standing Committees: The Parents as Partners Committee aims to enhance communication between the school and parents on curriculum by organizing events such as the Parents as Partners event, coordination of the distribution of curriculum materials and partnering with the PTA on curriculum presentations and communications, etc. The Parents as Partners Committee should consist of a minimum of one SLT teacher member and one SLT parent member.

- 5.3. **Committee Membership:** Committee membership shall be determined by the SLT. To the extent reasonably possible, any SLT Member who wants to be on a committee shall be assigned to that committee. To the extent possible, all Committees and Subcommittees shall have an equal number of Staff Members and Parent Members.
- 5.4. **Non-SLT Committee Members:** Interested people who are not Members of the SLT may, at the choice of SLT, be named to Committees (and from there, subcommittees) of the SLT.
- 5.5. **Committee Chairs:** The SLT shall select the Chair of all committees. At least one Co-Chair must be an SLT Member.
- 5.6. **Subcommittees:** The membership and Chair of a Subcommittee shall be determined by the committee to which it reports.
- 5.7. **Committee Reports to SLT:** To the extent reasonably possible, Committees shall make advance written reports and other presentations to the SLT so that all SLT Members have a reasonable opportunity to consider Committee proposals and recommendations in advance of the SLT meeting at which the Committee's work will be considered. Such reports and presentations should include the views of any Members with a different viewpoint, preferably in their own words, and a full discussion of options that were considered but rejected by the Committee.

ARTICLE 6—MEETINGS

- 6.1. **Meetings Generally:** The SLT shall meet at least monthly during the academic year. Meetings may also be called as needed on reasonable notice by the Chair, the Principal, or one-quarter of the then-current SLT Membership. The SLT shall schedule regular meetings at the beginning of the academic year for the entire academic year. Reasonable written notice must be given for all regular meetings.
- 6.2. **Meeting Location:** Meetings shall be held at the School, unless there is a particular need to hold a meeting elsewhere or unless the SLT chooses to hold one or more meetings elsewhere.
- 6.3. **Meeting Time:** Meetings shall be held at times and for durations best designed to permit the greatest possible participation by Members and, secondarily, other people who might be interested in attending.
- 6.4. **Open Meetings:** In keeping with the Open Meetings Law, meetings shall be open to any Members of the General and School community, press, invited guests, consultants, presenters, etc. However, the Facilitator or a majority of Members present may choose to move the SLT into an “executive session”, located in a private room, when all or a portion of the meeting is devoted to sensitive issues such as matters that could imperil public, student or staff safety; matters that disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or an informer; information relating to current or future investigations (including investigations conducted by SCI, OSI or OEO, or School-Based Investigations), discussions regarding proposed, pending, or current litigation (including court cases and cases pending before administrative agencies, such as the EEOC, SDHR, and CCHR); discussions involving the medical, financial or employment history of a person or matters leading to the appointment, promotion, demotion, discipline or removal of a person; and the preparation, grading or administration of examinations. Minutes taken during executive sessions shall consist of a record or summary of any determination or final action that is taken, and the date and vote thereon. All

visitors intending to attend an SLT meeting will contact the Principal or SLT Chairperson/s to indicate their interest in attending at least 24 hours prior to the meeting. The Principal or Chairperson/s will inform the visitor if an “executive session” is planned and arrange access through security. The reason for closing all or any portion of a meeting shall be publicly stated in general terms, avoiding any specific information that would be inappropriate for public exposure at that time. At the start of each meeting the facilitator will acknowledge visitors and review the visitor protocol. New agenda items may not be introduced to the meeting without the prior agreement of the Principal and Chairperson/s. Visitors may speak if and when recognized by the Facilitator but may not participate in decision making. Priority for speaking will be given to SLT members.

- 6.5. **Retreats, Etc.:** The SLT may hold retreats, conferences, etc., for its members as it deems useful and appropriate. The SLT may, but need not, request reimbursement from School funds for the expenses of some or all of the SLT Members to participate in such retreats, conferences, etc.
- 6.6. **Agenda:** Each meeting shall have a written agenda prepared and circulated reasonably in advance. Agenda items shall reflect the interests, concerns and suggestions of the Members.
- 6.7. **Minutes:** Minutes of each SLT meeting shall be approved at the subsequent meeting. Minutes of each Committee and Subcommittee shall be approved by such Committee or Subcommittee and distributed to all SLT Members.
- 6.8. **Quorum:** To have a quorum of the SLT, each of the following conditions must be met:
 - 6.8.1. At least one-half of the current Members are in attendance.
 - 6.8.2. At least three Staff Members are in attendance.
 - 6.8.3. At least three Parent Members are in attendance.

ARTICLE 7—WORK STYLE; DECISION-MAKING AND AGENDAS

- 7.1. **Written Reports in Advance:** To permit the best possible consideration of issues and to streamline SLT meetings, the research, background work and drafting will be prepared in advance by individuals, Subcommittees, Committees or other units of the SLT, and presented wherever possible in written form, to the Membership. Wherever possible, such materials should be circulated sufficiently in advance of the meeting at which the issue will be discussed to permit each Member to study the materials and consider the issues before the meeting.
- 7.2. **Decision Making:** The SLT and any Committee or Subcommittee of the SLT shall use a consensus-based decision-making process as its primary means of making decisions. Such process is described in Appendix 2. As stated in Appendix 2, the failure to reach consensus does not mean that the SLT cannot reach a decision on a given matter. In the event of a failure to reach consensus after a good faith effort engaged in for a reasonable period of time, binding decisions shall be made by the vote of 2/3 of all of the current Members, as described in Appendix 2. If less than 2/3 of all of the current Members vote in favor of a particular matter, the matter will have failed.
- 7.3. **Annual Agenda:** The SLT as a whole will determine the general annual agenda of the SLT.
- 7.4. **Weekly Agenda:** Prior to each meeting, the Chair will solicit agenda topics for the next SLT meeting from the Members. The Chair, the Principal and the Facilitator will determine the agenda for the meeting, and the Chair will distribute it to the Members. The Chair, the Principal and the Facilitator will use reasonable efforts to complete the agenda so that the Chair can provide Members with at least 24 hours advance notice of the agenda for each meeting. For the first meeting of each school

year, the Principal will determine the agenda with assistance from the outgoing Chair and Facilitator if they are continuing SLT Members.

- 7.5. **Discussion Time Limits:** The Facilitator shall make a determination of the maximum reasonable time available to discuss any issue, or come to resolution of any question. Time durations or deadlines may be fixed, both in the long term by the full SLT (such as for completion of particular projects or questions) and in the short term by the Facilitator (such as for moving meetings efficiently). To that end, time limits for discussion may be set either in the agenda in advance of a meeting, or during the course of the meeting itself, provided that time limitations and deadlines are designed for full and efficient consideration and resolution, and not to encourage or hinder any particular result. Any topics that were not fully addressed to the satisfaction of the Members as a whole will be carried over to the next meeting.

ARTICLE 8—AMENDMENTS

- 8.1. **Annual Review:** These By-Laws shall be reviewed annually at the first meeting of the school year.
- 8.2. **Amendments:** These By-Laws may be amended by a decision of the SLT, provided that written notice of proposed amendments has been given at least one month in advance of such decision.

APPENDIX 1

P.S. 199 Mission Statement

Our school motto is “Work Hard. Be Kind.” We commit to the following:

To foster a lifelong love of learning.

To support children in becoming their best selves both academically and personally.

To empower children to understand, respect, and appreciate the diversity in our community and the world.

To sustain a strong community of pedagogues, administrators, and parents that collaborate to create a safe, joyful, and productive learning environment.

APPENDIX 2

Making Decisions by Consensus

Consensus is a process for group decision-making. It is a method by which an entire group of people can come to an agreement by gathering and synthesizing the input and ideas of all participants. Through consensus, the group works to achieve better solutions while also building communication and trust. At its best, consensus-building is an inclusive, affirmative approach to coming to a decision. Decisions reached by consensus have the advantage of carrying the authority of good-will and support of all participants in the process. A decision made by consensus is acceptable to all, but is not necessarily

one that each Member thinks is best. Some people in the group may not even be sure the decision will work. Yet at the end of the process, everyone should feel that his or her position on the matter was understood and given a proper hearing.

During discussion, a proposal is put forward. It is amended and modified through more discussion, or withdrawn if it seems to be moving toward defeat or a dead end. During this discussion period, participants should articulate their differences clearly and ask for clarification if they do not understand. Those who disagree with the proposal have a responsibility to put forth alternative suggestions. Everyone in the process has a right to express his or her ideas. At the same time, everyone has a responsibility to assure that others have a chance to speak and be heard. Each participant should keep an open mind during each presentation, respecting and trying to understand as fully as possible the views of the other participants. The goal is to find a creative solution that synthesizes the ideas and concerns put forward by all Members of the group.

When a proposal seems to be well understood by everyone and no one asks for additional changes, the Facilitator asks if there are any objections or reservations. If there are no objections, after any appropriate time for further reflection, there is a call for consensus. If there are no objections, the decision is reached. A proponent of the measure or the minute taker shall restate, for the understanding of everyone present and to be included in the minutes, exactly what was agreed upon and carried.

On the verge of a decision, Members may express disagreements or objections in several ways. It can be non-support (e.g., "I don't see the need for this, but I'll go along"); reservation (e.g., "I think this may be a mistake, but I can live with it"); standing aside (e.g., "I personally can't do this, but I won't stop the others from doing it"); or blocking (e.g., "I cannot allow this to go forward. It is fundamentally wrong in my view").

If many people express non-support reservation or stand aside, there is no consensus. If one or more Members express a block, the group explores what additional information might be necessary to move forward with more discussions. If the blocking Member(s) and/or the other Members of the group determine that no further discussion is likely to meet the concerns of the blocking Member(s), then consensus has failed.

Reaching consensus is normally desirable, but in the event consensus cannot be reached after a good faith effort engaged in for a reasonable period of time, binding decisions will be made by the vote of 2/3 of all of the current Members. When a vote is required, the vote of Members who are not present at a meeting can be solicited by email prior to the next meeting, provided that the issue on which the vote is being taken is presented in a fair and balanced way. The Chair shall be responsible for soliciting such additional votes and all emails pertaining to such solicitation shall be addressed to all SLT Members. If 2/3 of all of the current Members vote in favor of the matter, the matter will have passed. If less than 2/3 of all of the current Members vote in favor of the matter, the matter will have failed.

Adapted from the Board of Education's Chancellor's Plan for School Leadership Teams (November 1998), Appendix 3.