



## **Guidelines for the constitution and functioning of the Parent Advisory Committee, 2022-23**

### **Rationale and Context:**

Why is the partnership between the parents and school important?

It has been well established that collaboration between parents and the school has a significant and positive impact on the learning and development of children. When parents are aligned with the school's vision and are actively engaged in supporting its mission and core values, they contribute towards creating a harmonious and positive ethos in the school. This helps in improving children's morale, attitude, academic achievement, behavior, social adjustment, and, most importantly, helps them become productive and responsible citizens of society.

Furthermore, this partnership between the parents and the school, helps build trust and positions them to set high expectations for their children. A well-structured partnership program improves the school, strengthens families, and increases student achievement and success.

Maharishi School, therefore, wholeheartedly endorses parental engagement in the education of their children, and invites parents to participate in the school's learning experience in a positive and constructive way. We encourage the parent community to provide feedback and suggestions with regard to the school curriculum and processes, engage with the teachers during the presentation of learning experiences, and contribute their own expertise and experience to enrich the school's educational program.

### **Aims and objectives of the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC):**

In order to provide a focus to parent engagement the school initiates a parent advisory committee to serve as a link between the school and the wider parent community. Its objectives are:

- To facilitate on-going communication between the school and the wider parent community
- To provide an opportunity for Maharishi parents to share their ideas and mutual concerns on every facet of school life
- To endorse, recommend and encourage parental collaboration on school initiatives
- To support, endorse and propagate the school's vision, mission, core values and its central focus on Consciousness-Based Education

### **Fundamental principles governing the nature and the constitution of the PAC:**

1. The PAC is not a statutory, registered body. It is convened at the invitation of the school in recognition of its commitment to parent-school collaboration.

2. The PAC is an advisory body. It communicates mutual concerns, recommends possible solutions and shares innovative ideas that might benefit the school.
3. The school is not bound to accept the recommendations of the PAC, and will act on the recommendations based on its discretion and feasibility, keeping in mind the interests of all stakeholders.
4. The PAC will consist of one representative parent from each grade of the school. The PAC will be led by a chairperson. The tenure of each member of the PAC will be for one year. At the time of re-convening the PAC, should there be no new nominee for the position of Grade Representative of a particular grade, and there is overwhelming parental support for a representative to continue in office for another year, this may be taken into consideration in the appointment process . However, during the period of tenure, the grade representative may resign in case of an inability to continue discharging the required responsibilities.
5. The PAC will be represented by a chairperson selected/recommended by the Head of School in consultation with the Leadership Team.
6. The Leadership Team will be responsible for the final selection of PAC members.

#### **Functions of the PAC:**

- Establish channels for communication from parents to school and school to parents on any feedback concerning whole school issues
- Ensure information exchanged between parents and the school is clear and linked to student growth.
- Maintain the dignity of the school while interacting with the wider parent body.
- The grade representative only informs the school about issues that are larger than individual students. They would be expected to direct all individual student concerns to the teacher first.
- We request the grade representatives to support the school in encouraging parents to assist with classroom support, field trips, fund raising, organizing parties and other school events
- Help collaborate with the community, by:
  - Helping in coordination of resources and services for the school, including organizing sponsors for school events, interacting with cultural and civic organizations, colleges, universities and businesses as appropriate.

#### **Who can become a member of the PAC:**

1. Parents (mother, father, legal guardian or local guardian) of Maharishi School students can become PAC members.
2. One PAC member per family.

#### **Criteria to become a grade representative on the PAC:**

1. The nominee should have a positive outlook. His or her motivation for being a part of the PAC should be to work with the school in a proactive and positive manner for the upliftment of the school.

2. There should be evidence of the nominee having been a friend and supporter of the school, accepting and propagating the school's vision, mission and core values.
3. Furthermore, a member of the PAC may be required to withdraw from the committee, if, in the opinion of the PAC and the school, they fail to discharge the required responsibilities satisfactorily or conducts themselves in a manner that is not in the best interest of the school and the PAC.

#### **Criteria for selection of the Chairperson:**

1. The nominee should have been a parent of a Maharishi School student for at least one year.
2. The nominee should champion the school's vision, mission and core values.
3. The nominee should be able to motivate and guide the PAC team, and encourage members to be professional and dignified in their collaboration with the staff and management of the school in serving the larger interest of the school without personal interest or gain.

#### **Responsibilities of the grade representatives of the PAC:**

1. The Grade Representative is expected to dedicate time and energy to this commitment throughout the year.
2. Attend PAC meetings throughout the year as per the schedule.
3. Maintain close contact with parents of the respective grades and with other members of the PAC, to be aware of and be sensitive to issues that need to be taken up with the school.
4. Work closely and professionally with the school leadership team to resolve minor whole class/school issues to pre-empt escalation.
5. Present to the PAC chairperson issues and concerns that need to be discussed at PAC meetings.

#### **Responsibilities of the chairperson of the PAC:**

1. The primary responsibility is to ensure that the fundamental objectives of the PAC are fulfilled:
  - a. Providing a link between the school community and the parent community at large.
  - b. Ensuring that the parent community is actively engaged in the school's education program in a positive, productive and dignified way.
2. Supporting the school's vision and mission
3. Concerns are clearly conveyed to the school.
4. Regular attendance of PAC members at PAC meetings
5. Ensuring all interactions between PAC members, the parent community and school staff are conducted with mutual respect and dignity.

#### **Process of forming the PAC:**

In order to ensure a perception of transparency and fair play among the larger parent community, the process of forming the PAC will be as follows:

1. The Head of School will send out a mail to all parents outlining the rationale and objectives of the PAC along with announcing open PAC positions, the criteria for selection of the PAC grade

- representatives, a brief description of the duties entailed, and details of the election process.
2. Parents will be invited to nominate themselves to fill vacancies for the position of the Grade Representative of the grade in which their child is studying. Nominations should be sent by email to the Head of School.
  3. Nominees will be required to submit, along with their nominations, a brief note outlining the contribution they believe they can make to the effective functioning of the PAC.
  4. The Head of School in consultation with the Leadership Team will select the members of the PAC.
  5. In the event of there being no nomination from parents of a particular grade the school may suggest a suitable parent from the concerned grade.
  6. The parent body at large will be informed of the selection of the PAC.

### **Meetings of the PAC:**

1. The PAC will meet with the school leadership team, including the Head of School, three times in the year (September, January and May).
2. Minutes of the meeting will be recorded by a member of the school's staff. The minutes will be approved by the Head of School and the PAC Chairperson before being shared with members of the school within a week of the meeting.
3. Discussion points for impending meetings will be exchanged between PAC members and the school team at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled meeting date to allow for adequate preparation. Some of the issues raised for discussion may be resolved prior to the meeting, thus saving time at the actual meeting for productive discussion. Unless being considered an emergency, no matter should be discussed at a PAC meeting unless it has been submitted for consideration earlier. Notice of the impending meeting and the final agenda for the same will be issued to all concerned three days before the scheduled date of the meeting.
4. Ideally, PAC meetings should cover a wide range of issues, pertaining to the general improvement of the school's program, highlighting parental involvement in this process. Feedback regarding shortcomings and gaps in the school's educational or administrative processes should be presented against this wider background. PAC members may also share positive feedback about aspects of the school they are satisfied with.
5. Specific complaints and grievances should be presented at a PAC meeting only if these issues have been presented to the Head of School and the leadership team earlier, and have not provoked a satisfactory response. Any issues concerning individual children are to be handled through direct contact between parents and school by prior appointment.

### **Areas beyond the purview of the PAC:**

- Board meetings and decisions of Maharishi School
- Budget processes of the school
- Decisions pertaining to Human Resource policies of the school, including staff recruitment
- Annual performance evaluation of teachers
- Observing and assessing teachers as part of the evaluation process
- Curriculum planning, assessing and evaluating lesson plans of teachers

*However, suggestions and feedback in these areas by parents are welcome. \*\*\*\*\**