

**Portland Waldorf School
Parent Association
Lower School Parent Council Mandate**

*The healthy social life is found
When in the mirror of each human soul
The whole community finds its reflection
And when in the community, the virtue of each one is living*

The PWS Lower School Parent Council (LSPC) is formed by Parent Association (parent body) volunteers. Parent Council is self-mandated, represents the Parent Association (PA) and is responsible for supporting the work of the Faculty and College of Teachers, Board of Trustees, and Administrative team (the governing bodies of the school). PC is active in a year-round, on-going capacity.

The primary work of LSPC is Community Building. **The mission of LSPC is to create and support programs, activities, and initiatives that foster and enrich the Portland Waldorf School community.**

To achieve this, we work to:

- Enliven and enrich community life through festivals, activities, fundraising and parent education
- Facilitate communication among parents, faculty, and administration, including the understanding of communication processes and shepherding parents toward resolution of concerns and questions
- Support faculty in building the community's understanding of Waldorf Education
- Create awareness and organization for the volunteer needs of PWS
- Strengthen support networks and community connection for both new and long-term PWS families

This work may look like, but is not limited to:

- Leading organization of Autumn's Harvest Fest and Spring's May Faire
- Support of monthly and special occasion Parent Teas
- Co-ordination of and member participation in New Parent Liaison program
- Managing sales of Scrip, Wreaths, and other events to raise money which funds community projects and activities
- Tending Bakers Dozen volunteer list
- Hosting parent education talks and events
- Hosting Re-Wear community clothing exchange
- Parent-to-parent communication for, support of, and PC presence at all-school community meetings, work parties, Back-to-School Night, Open Houses, Grandfriends Day, Winter Market, Handmade for the Holidays, Spring Auction, Festivals, and other school events
- PC presence on and shared responsibility for PWS Communications Committee and Advisory Council (new in 2017)
- PC presence at open meetings of the Board of Trustees

STRUCTURE

LSPC comprises two representatives from each grade in the Lower School. There are five working groups which reflect LSPC's current areas of focus. Each group is coordinated by Co-Leads. These groups are:

Early Childhood Support Circle

This group's focus is the welcoming and integration of our newest families, our younger students, and supporting the EC faculty.

Festivals Circle

LSPC is responsible for organizing Harvest Festival and May Faire.

Resources Circle

This encompasses all fundraising activities and the financial responsibilities of LSPC

Business Circle

This group coordinates LSPC meetings, messaging and communications.

Community Support Circle

Parent education, community engagement, and hospitality are the focus of this working group.

In addition to Circle Co-Leads, LSPC selects liaisons to the Board of Trustees, Advisory Council, Communications Committee, and High School Parent Council.

PARENT COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

LSPC representatives are volunteers. Each class has at least two voting reps who commit to serve on the Council for at least a two-year term, September to September.

The Council meets monthly, year round, with occasional closed sessions called as needed, as well as a yearly retreat.

Three times a year the Lower School Parent Council and the High School Parent Council meet jointly.

PARENT COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE EXPECTATIONS

Our primary task is to represent the Parent Association, secondly we represent PWS to the broader community. We perform both tasks with integrity and professionalism.

There are three basic responsibilities of a PC rep:

- Reliable attendance at monthly meetings
- Timely and relevant communications to and from the parents of your represented class, in the form of email and/or class meetings
- Volunteer for PC events, festivals, and special projects and encourage and organize others to do the same

Beyond these responsibilities, a Representative strives to:

- Follow through on commitments
- Represent your class parents beyond own interests
- Be familiar with PWS Parent Handbook and general school policies
- Maintain confidentiality when the need arises
- Commit to working with consensus decision making

PARENT COUNCIL CO-LEAD ROLES

Each working group is lead by two people who have served on the Council for at least one year. In addition to the above, the Co-Leads take on the responsibility to plan and execute the work of their Circle. The Co-Leads' terms should be 'overlapping' so that there is always an experienced Leader serving each Circle.

During the Spring Evaluation each Co-Lead will have the opportunity to reflect on the challenges and successes of the past year, as well as to re-evaluate their desire to continue to lead a Circle.

MEETINGS - FORM AND PROCESS

All members of the Parent Association are welcome to attend meetings.

Agendas and general meeting prep is handled by the Business Circle, although all LSPC members are invited to take a turn facilitating a meeting.

Monthly meetings will predictably include

- Approval of Minutes - Minutes will be emailed to all members. There will be a 48 hour period during which changes or corrections can be made. Minutes will then be finalized and posted.
- Introductions and Announcements
- Reports from Circles, Advisory Council, College, Board, and Admin
- Discussion of current parent culture and concerns
- Often a special topic or guest to the Council
- Any member of LSPC may make motion on which to vote.

Parent Council decisions are made by consensus, and require a quorum of 60% of PC members to be official. If necessary, voting by phone, email, or proxy is acceptable.

LSPC meetings are attended by PC Reps, and liaisons from the High School Parent Council, College of Teachers, the Board of Trustees, and Admin team.

ANNUAL EVALUATION

Fall: Review Mandate to ensure it reflects the intentions and activities of PC for the following year, and communicate to governing bodies of the school.

Spring: Circle Co-Leads undertake a self-evaluation, and provide a report of the work/events supported by each Circle to the governing bodies of the school and receive feedback and requests for the following year.

***May wisdom shine through me
May love glow within me
May strength permeate me
That in me may arise
A helper of humankind
A server of holy things
Selfless and True***

—Good Working!

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