

## **Parental co-operation at the German School Nairobi**

### **Preamble:**

1. Parental co-operation at the German School Nairobi serves as a medium of communication between the parent body, the Board, the School Management and the Students' Council.
2. The principal aim of this co-operation is to encourage and further strengthen a good relationship between parents / students and the school, as well as to ensure regular communication between the two parties.
3. This co-operation serves to bring parents / guardians and teachers in closer contact with each other regarding all educational issues.  
To fulfil this goal, a Parent Representative is chosen in each class, as well as in each Kindergarten group. These representatives form the Parents' General Committee, out of which the Parents' Sub-Committee is elected.
4. Duties of the Parents' Representatives include:
  - To exchange experiences, as well as discuss questions that are pertinent to both the school and the home, such as the development of the class, grade criteria, lesson organisation, school rules, holiday regulations, organisation of events within and outside the school.
  - To actively support the school in the carrying out of its educational duties.
  - Assist with the integration of parents and students who have recently moved to the school.

### **I. Parents' Representative**

#### **1. Definition**

The parents / guardians (henceforth referred to as parents) of the children in a class form the parent body of this class. From this body, they elect one parent as the Parent Representative, as well as a Deputy Representative for the duration of one academic year. Similarly, from the various groups in the Kindergarten, a Representative and a Deputy are chosen for the duration of the academic year.

#### **2. Duties and responsibilities**

The Parents' Representative will be informed by the school about relevant issues regarding individual classes or the Kindergarten groups, such as difficulties with the school day, new students in the class etc.

The Representative of each sub-section of the school (i.e. members of the Parents Sub – Committee (See Section III), inform the Parent Representatives about any development / issues in their respective sections.

The duties of the Parent Representative include:

- To represent the interests of parents of the school / Kindergarten groups (henceforth referred to as classes)
- To promote co-operation between parents and teachers
- To inform the parent body about relevant topics stemming from the Parents General Committee or the Parents' Sub-Committee.
- To call for a second / further parents' evenings.

### **3. Parents Evenings**

The parent body of each class meets at least twice a year at a parents' evening.

#### **3.1 First Parents' Evening:**

The first Parents' Evening takes place within the first 4 weeks of the new academic year, during which the Parent Representative and his / her Deputy are chosen.

The invitation for this meeting will be sent out at least a week in advance, by the Class Teacher or the Head of the Kindergarten. Invitations will be sent by e-mail or fax.

#### **3.2 Further Parents' Evenings**

The Parent Representative, in accordance with the Class Teacher will send an invitation with an agenda to the parents at least 8 days in advance. A further meeting can only be called if deemed necessary by either 1/3 of the parent body, by the Class Teacher or by the School Management.

In additional meetings, there is no compulsory quorum required. All parents present may make the decisions as per the agenda topics. Decisions are made on a simple 'majority wins' basis. If there is a tie in votes, the proposal must be rejected. Voting is generally carried out openly. However, should the parent body request it, it may be carried out by secret ballot.

### **4. Election of the Parent Representative**

#### **4.1 Quorum**

To make up the quorum, a minimum of 1/3 of the parents of the respective class are required to be present (see I 4.2). If less than 1/3 of the parents are present, another election meeting must be held within a week. In this second election, the quorum of 1/3 of the parents is not required. All parents present may make the necessary decisions.

#### **4.2 Election regulations:**

As long as there are 2 candidates, elections can take place by secret ballot. A candidate may be available for re-election.

Teachers of the German School Nairobi, the head of the Kindergarten or the Administration, as well as Board members cannot stand for elections.

The above rule can be deviated from, when the election is carried out by secret ballot, and there a unanimous vote for the candidate. In this case, no abstentions are acceptable.

Parents with more than one child in the school may represent one class only.

The election will be conducted by the Class Teacher. The candidates with the highest and second highest number of votes become the Parent and Deputy Parent Representative respectively.

There is only one vote allowed per child. In case of a tie, there will be a second ballot.

Minutes should be taken for every election, which should contain the following details:

- Date and place of election
- Class
- Name of person conducting the election
- Names and number of those eligible to vote should be kept on an attendance sheet, which should be attached to the minutes
- Number of votes
- Number of valid and spoilt votes, as well as abstentions.
- Number of valid votes for each candidate, as well the names of the Parent and Deputy Parent Representatives.

### **4.3 Resignation**

Normally, the Parent and Deputy Parent Representative are chosen for the duration of one academic year.

Parent and Deputy Parent Representative may resign from this position for the following reasons:

- The candidate wishes to resign
- The candidate no longer has children in the school
- According to section I 4.2, the candidate becomes a member of the School Board, or enters into an employment relationship of any kind with the school.
- The candidate is asked to resign from the position by a 2/3 majority.

The resignation of a representative from this post must be communicated immediately to the Class Teacher. A Parents' Evening must be organised within 2 weeks at the latest, in order to elect a new Parent and/or Deputy Parent Representative.

## **II. Parents General Committee (PGC)**

### **1. Definition**

The Parent and the Deputy Parent Representatives of all the classes jointly form the Parents General Committee. The School Management, a member of the School Board, as well as a member of the Teachers' Representatives must participate in Parents General Committee meetings. A member of the Students' Council may participate. If deemed necessary, the Chairperson of the Parents General Committee may invite other people, e.g. relevant subject teachers, members of the administration etc. The Chairperson has the right to exclude certain persons from the meetings in particular cases.

### **2. Duties and responsibilities of the Parents General Committee**

The Parents General Committee will assist the school in achieving its educational goals. For this reason, it will elect a Chairperson of the Parents General Committee, a Deputy Chairperson, and a Parents' Sub-Committee. It can also set up further task forces if necessary. The Chairperson of the Parents Sub-Committee presents issue of parents to the school. S/He must inform the Parents' Sub-Committee, as well the Parents General Committee on the important content of all the meetings s/he participates in.

The School Management, the Board, the Teachers' Representatives and the Parents' Sub-Committee are expected to inform each other about relevant developments in their respective areas.

The Chairperson of the Parents General Committee may be invited to meetings organised by the School Management or the School Board, such as Board Meetings or Teachers' Meetings.

### **3. Parents General Committee Meetings**

The Parents General Committee meets at least twice in an academic year. The Chairperson of the Committee will invite (in writing) all members to the meeting at least one week in advance, and attach the agenda to the invitation. Written invitations may be in the form of e-mail or fax.

As far as the topics on the agenda are concerned, the number of members present is not important. The members present have the right to make any decisions on the agenda. Decisions are made on a simple 'majority wins' basis. If there is a tie in votes, the proposal must be rejected.

Voting is generally carried out openly. However, should the parent body request it, it may be carried out by secret ballot.

Minutes must be taken for all Parents General Committee meetings. A copy of these must be handed in to the school for filing, along with a copy of the invitation, the agenda and the attendance sheet.

### **3.1 First Parents General Committee Meeting**

The invitation to the first meeting must be sent by the School Headmaster. It must take place no later than 5 weeks after the beginning of the new academic year, and is considered the constitutional meeting of the Parents General Committee.

At this first meeting, the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, and members of the Parents' Sub-Committee must be elected.

### **3.2 Second and further Parents General Committee Meetings**

A second meeting should take place at the beginning of the second semester. Other meetings may be called if:

- 2/3 of the Parent Representatives deem it necessary
- It is requested by the School Management or the School Board
- It is requested by the Parents' Sub-Committee.

## **4. Elections**

Elections may be carried out if at least 2/3 of the classes are represented. If there is no quorum, all members must be invited to a further meeting, which is to be held within a week. In this second election, the quorum of 2/3 of the members is not required. All members present may make the necessary decisions.

The election, in accordance with section 4.1 and 4.2 must be carried out by secret ballot, as long as 2 or more candidates stand for the position. Candidates may be re-elected.

Those eligible to vote are Parent and Deputy Parent Representatives. Thus each class has 2 votes. If one class is only represented by one person, then this vote will be counted twice.

Minutes should be taken for every election, which should contain the following details:

- Date and place of election
- Name of person conducting the election
- Names and number of those eligible to vote should be kept on an attendance sheet, which should be attached to the minutes
- Number of votes
- Number of valid and spoilt votes, as well as abstentions.
- Number of valid votes for each candidate, as well the names of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

At the first meeting the headmaster will choose one of the parents' representatives attending to write the minutes. At all subsequent meetings the Chairperson will determine such.

#### **4.1 Election of the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Parents' Sub-Committee**

All Parent Representatives are eligible to be elected to the positions of Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Parents' Sub-Committee, EXCEPT the following:

- Family members of teachers of the school or of the Kindergarten Headmistress
- Any employees of the school.

The above rule can be deviated from, when the election is carried out by secret ballot, and there a unanimous vote for the candidate. In this case, no abstentions are acceptable.

The election will be conducted by the Headmaster. The candidates with the highest and second highest number of votes become the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson respectively. In case of a tie, there will be a second ballot.

#### **4.2 Election of the Parents' Sub-Committee**

All Parent Representatives are eligible to be elected to the Parents' Sub-Committee, EXCEPT the following:

- Family members of teachers of the school or of the Kindergarten Headmistress
- Any employees of the school.

The above rule can be deviated from, when the election is carried out by secret ballot, and there a unanimous vote for the candidate. In this case, no abstentions are acceptable.

Representatives and their deputies for the following sub-sections will be elected:

- Kindergarten / Pre-School (Children between 2 – 6)
- Primary School (4 Classes of Primary School)
- Lower Secondary (Classes 5 – 9)
- Upper Secondary (Classes 10 – 12)
- Scholarship parents

The Chairperson of the Parents General Committee will carry out the election.

### **4.3 Resignation**

The Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson and all members of the Parents' Sub-Committee are elected for the duration of one school year.

They may resign from their positions if:

- The candidate wishes to resign
- The candidate no longer has children in the school
- The candidate becomes a member of the School Board, or enters into an employment relationship of any kind with the school.
- The candidate is asked to resign from the position by a 2/3 majority.

The resignation of a member from this post must be communicated immediately to the Parents' General Committee, as well as to the school. A Parents General Committee meeting must be held within 2 weeks at the latest, in order to elect a successor. The election regulations according to section 4.2 are applied to this meeting.

## **III. Parents' Sub-Committee (PSC)**

### **1. Definition**

The Parents' Sub-Committee is made up of 8 members, i.e. the Parent Representatives of each sub-section of the school, the Parent Representative of the scholarship parents, the liaison officer of the Board, the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Parents' General Committee. The Deputy Chairperson of the Parents' General Committee is at the same time Chairperson of the Parents' Sub-Committee. All sub-section deputies are welcome to attend the meetings.

The Parents' Sub-Committee meets at least once a month and more frequently should it be deemed necessary. Invitations are passed around informally.

### **2. Duties and responsibilities of the Parents' Sub-Committee**

The Parents' Sub-Committee has the right to give its opinions, make suggestions and offer advice on all issues concerning the school- student-parent relationship.

Important aspects of its meetings are to be kept in writing. The minutes of each meeting will be distributed in time to all Parent Representatives.

The role of the Parents' Sub-Committee is to assist in organisational and co-operational aspects of the school (e.g. assistance in improvements of school relationships, tasks of an educational nature, topics concerning youth protection, organisation of extra-curricular activities that may be relevant to the school) as well as an advisory function (e.g. building works in the school, taking measures to make the school bigger / smaller if necessary, as well as to be involved in any important changes in the teaching staff.)

24<sup>th</sup> September 2007

This document was authored by both Parents General Committee and Board as an addition to the mandatory appendix 7 of the school regulations.

Further changes:

October 2010 by Parents General Committee and Board:

- Relatives of Board members can stand as parent representative and the Parents' Sub Committee.

September 2011 by Parents General Committee:

- One representative per sub-section (instead of two for primary school and lower secondary) as well as one representative of scholarship parents are members of the PSC.