

P.S. 101Q School Leadership Team Bylaws

School Leadership Team Bylaws P. S. 101Q, School in the Gardens

Adopted June, 2015

Article I - Mission Statement/Educational Vision for P. S. 101Q

The mission of P.S. 101Q, School in the Gardens, is to nurture our students in a well-rounded, 21st century educational program and diverse, socially conscious environment. By fostering the love of learning through exposure to core and arts' curricula, students reach their potential. We value the engagement and collaboration of all stakeholders in order for our students to thrive.

Article II - Purpose and Scope of the School Leadership Team (SLT)

The purpose of the SLT is to determine the school's educational direction. The SLT plays a significant role in creating a structure for school-based decision making and shaping a path to a collaborative school culture. The SLT assists in the evaluation and assessment of a school's educational programs and their effects on student achievement. Successful completion of the school's CEP and the development of the budget will be the team's first priority. As the school's central coordinating body, the SLT may choose to address additional issues that are related to the CEP and budget. The SLT's role with regard to other school committees is to act as facilitator and coordinator so that communication is open between all school committees.

Section 1: Focus of the SLT:

The SLT will focus on two core responsibilities: the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) and the Budget. The SLT serves as the central coordinating team of the school. Members are also responsible for completing the annual Assessment of Principal Form, participating in the C-30 process, and reviewing the school uniform policy. The SLT must consult with the superintendent and participate in public hearings regarding any restructuring plans for the school. The SLT is also responsible for consultation, communication, and reporting with regard to Title I funding.

1.0 The Comprehensive Educational Plan:

- a. The SLT is responsible for developing the annual CEP, which includes the annual goals and objectives of the school. The CEP shall be developed concurrently with the development of the school-based budget so that it may inform the decision-

making process of the budget and result in the alignment of the CEP with the school-based budget for the ensuing school year.

- b. The SLT is also responsible for modifying the CEP on an as-needed basis throughout the year as a result of changing educational needs. The effectiveness of educational strategies will be reviewed throughout the year using evaluation tools currently available in the school.
- c. The final CEP and school-based budget shall be posted on the school's website, and a copy of each shall be provided to each SLT member upon request.

1.1 The Budget:

- a. The Principal is responsible for developing the school-based budget, after consulting with the SLT, and ensuring that it is aligned with the CEP. The principal is responsible for the hiring and the firing of any school staff.
- b. Any SLT member may request (on behalf of the SLT) the Galaxy Table of Organization Report (entitled Public/SLT view) up to two times per semester and the principal shall provide this report within 5 school days. In addition, SLT members are encouraged to review the Galaxy Budget Allocations and the Galaxy Table of Organization Summary Report (both posted on the DOE website).

1.2 SLT Relationship with Other School-Based Entities:

In its role as the school's planning and review body, the SLT is the central coordinating team in the school, and it should facilitate communication among the various school committees. Except in the areas of the CEP and budget, the SLT does not oversee the work of other school committees.

1.3 Annual Assessment of Principal Form

The SLT shall provide an annual assessment to the community district superintendent of the principal's record of developing an effective shared decision-making relationship with the SLT members during the year (the required School Leadership Team Assessment of Principal Form).

1.4 C-30 Process

The constituent groups on the SLT shall select representatives from each constituent body for the C-30 process for Principal and Assistant Principal subject to the Chancellor's Regulations. If parents from the SLT are not available to serve on the Level 1 C-30 Committee, the P.A. President shall enlist parent members to serve in the following order up to the maximum number allowed: 1) P.A. Executive Board members, and 2) other P.A. parents.

1.5 School Uniform Policy

The SLT must consult with the school's Parent Association (P.A.) regarding the school uniform policy (Chancellor's Regulation A-665) before deciding to adopt a school uniform.

1.6 School Restructuring Plans

The superintendent will consult with the SLT regarding any school restructuring plans for the school. With respect to all proposals to make a significant change in school utilization, the SLT shall participate in the joint public hearing held at the school. See Chancellor Reg A-190.

1.7 Title I

The SLT will serve as the vehicle for consultation with parent representatives regarding the use of federal reimbursable funding and program planning (e.g. Title I). The SLT should maintain documentation on file to verify that this consultation has taken place. (D.O.E. Title I Parent Involvement Guidelines)

Section 2: Role and Responsibilities of Team Members

While SLT members are selected by a particular constituency group, they are selected to represent the best interest of students; therefore the team as a whole is responsible for communicating with the entire school community.

Team Members shall:

- attend SLT meetings and one D.O.E.– sponsored training session per year.
- identify concerns and educational issues to be discussed during SLT meetings
- share the views of their constituencies with the team.
- engage in collaborative problem-solving and solution-seeking methods that will lead to consensus-based decisions that will benefit all students.
- engage in conflict resolution processes when necessary.
- Use the DOE Family and Community Engagement Consensus-Based Training presentation, Chancellor Regulations, and the attached Amendment A as a guide for implementing consensus-based decision making.
- facilitate communication among the various school committees.
- provide a list of its members and a copy of its by-laws to the DLT annually by Oct 31.
- review bylaws biennially or as the Chancellor’s Regulations are revised.

Article III - Team Composition

The SLT will have a minimum of 10 members and may not exceed a limit of 17 members. The SLT shall maintain an equal number of parent and staff members. Budget allocations must be considered in determining the size of the team. Any changes to the current membership will be decided annually by the team.

Section 1 - Membership

1.0 Mandatory Members of the team shall be:

- Principal, or designee
- United Federation of Teachers (UFT) Chapter Leader, or designee
- Parent Association (P.A.) President or Co-President, or designee.

1.1 Non-Mandatory Members

The Non-Mandatory Members of the team shall consist of other parents and staff (pedagogic and/or non-pedagogic) from the school. Parents and staff must be elected by their own constituent groups. Elections must be open to all members of the constituent group (e.g. P.A., CSA, UFT, and DC37). Representation from multiple grade levels and special needs is encouraged to provide a broad-based view of the needs of all of our students. Staggered terms is encouraged.

1.2 Community-Based Organization

The team may, by consensus, choose to create a seat or seats on the team for community based organizations (CBO). The team will create a process for the organizations to apply for membership. A member of the team may also recommend an organization for membership. This will be done in June or September on an annual basis, or as needed, to meet the needs of the school. Team members representing these organizations will not be counted in the parent to school staff balance, but will be counted in the total team member count.

Section 2 –Facilitating Positions

2.0 Filling SLT Positions

Facilitating positions exist to support the flow and planning of meetings. There is no hierarchy in the SLT. All members are equal. Facilitating positions shall be decided by consensus of the SLT in September and January, if necessary. All facilitating positions will be filled by SLT members with the following exception: The team may have a non-SLT member serve as the recorder for meetings. The recorder can be a staff member and/or a parent who is non-participating and non-voting. Co-positions are optional. All positions (except the Financial Liaison/Record Keeper) alternate between staff and parents, each serving for a period of half of the school year or, if there is a co-position, they shall be filled with one representative from each constituency (parent and staff/admin) sharing the position.

- Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons
- Timekeeper or Co-Timekeepers
- Financial Liaison/Record Keeper
- Recording Secretary or Co-Recording Secretaries

2.1 The role of the Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons shall be to:

- schedule meetings
- set meeting agendas in collaboration with other team members
- distribute agendas one week prior to the regularly scheduled SLT meeting and post the agenda on the school's website
- preside at all meetings
- ensure that team meetings are effectively organized
- focus the team on educational issues of importance to the school that meet the needs of all students
- ensure that the voices of all team members are heard
- interface with the principal and other core members

- facilitate discussion(s) during meetings
- coordinate team and sub-committee efforts
- ensure that information is disseminated to all team members to guide their planning
- secure all records of the team, including keeping copies of the SLT bylaws and minutes in the principal's office, P.A. office, and on the school website
- In the case of co-position, only one person will perform the duties at meetings. Each will serve as backup in the event of emergencies or absence. The responsibilities listed above will be shared and/or divided up evenly throughout the term.

2.2 The role of the Timekeeper or Co-Timekeepers shall be to:

- advise the Chairperson and/or other team members on matters of Parliamentary Procedures
- assist in the interpretation of rules and procedural requirements and in the preparation for the proper handling of various agenda items within the day's order of business
- set designated time limits on agenda items
- be timekeeper for the meeting (every team member will be given equal time to speak on issues to ensure that the meeting runs efficiently)
- assure uninterrupted time for each speaker
- In the case of co-position, only one person will perform the duties at meetings. Each will serve as backup in the event of emergencies or absence. The responsibilities listed above will be shared and/or divided up evenly throughout the term.

2.3 The role of the Financial Liaison/Record Keeper shall be to:

- maintain and report SLT meeting attendance records to the Department of Education for verification of member participation
- ensure that all records documenting the number of hours served are completed for processing by the principal

2.4 The role of Recording Secretary or Co-Recording Secretary shall be to:

- keep an accurate, written record (minutes) of all team meetings, including member attendance
- distribute minutes to all members and post for the entire school community
- ensure that minutes are posted on the school website and that a hard copy is on file in the principal's office
- The school principal may designate a school staff member to assist the SLT secretary.
- In the case of co-position, only one person will perform the duties at meetings. Each will serve as backup in the event of emergencies or absence. The responsibilities listed above will be shared and/or divided up evenly throughout the term.

Article IV - Schedule of Meetings

Section 1 - Schedule of Meeting and Place to be Held

- 1.0 Meeting must take place at least once a month during the school year, with a minimum of 10 meetings per school year. Meetings must take place on school or DOE premises and be scheduled at a time convenient to parent members (day or evening). Parent members will be polled each year in June to determine the time most convenient for team meetings. The September meeting (and any summer meetings) will be scheduled in June.
- 1.1 Members who miss more than 3 consecutive meetings without rendering in writing a good and valid excuse will be subject to removal from the team.
- 1.2 Meetings are to be held in a place that can easily hold all team members along with enough space for observers to gather comfortably. The place can be reviewed on an annual basis. For any meeting when a high number of observers would be expected, a place would be decided upon by the principal in advance of the meeting.
- 1.3 If team members are unable to attend a meeting, they must notify the Chairperson in advance of the meeting, per Chancellor's Regulation Article III, Sec 3. Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons shall provide an email and/or phone number to all team members.

Section 2 - Notice of SLT Meetings and Agendas

- 2.0 Notice of SLT meetings must be provided in a form consistent with the open meetings law. The team will establish a yearly calendar in September that shall be posted in the general office, on the Parent's Association bulletin board (located in the main school entrance), and on the school website. Any changes to the published schedule must be discussed at a regularly scheduled meeting, if possible; otherwise via e-mail. These changes will be posted on the school website.
- 2.1 An agenda should be made available to the general public one week in advance of a scheduled meeting (except for emergency meetings) if possible.

Section 3 - Emergency Procedures

- 3.0 An emergency is an unanticipated notification that requires immediate action by the SLT. In the event of an emergency, the principal shall notify all team members of any changes to scheduled meetings in an expeditious manner. All team members will be given the opportunity to participate in emergency meetings.

Section 4 – Open Meetings Law

- 4.1 SLT meetings will be open to members of the school community and the general public as observers, in accordance with the open meetings law. Observers may request speaking time at the meetings to discuss specific topics. All such requests must be submitted in writing to the Chairperson at least one week in advance of a scheduled meeting and approved by consensus via e-mail. Observers may also speak during meetings at the request of the SLT.
- 4.2 Non-members are encouraged to bring issues of concerns to their constituent representative(s) on the team prior to SLT meetings. Request for topics of discussion should be submitted in writing at least one week in advance of the meeting. Emergency issues are to be considered exceptions.
- 4.3 Meetings are open and can therefore be recorded verbatim. Recording devices may be used as long as they are unobtrusive. SLT members shall be informed if taping is to be done (Sunshine Law). Due to the confidentiality of certain items (e.g. budget - salaries) the SLT may call for an executive session where no taping would be allowed.

Section 5 - Quorum

A majority of SLT members (50% +1) must include representation from each constituent group to constitute a quorum. Fifty percent of each constituent group must be present to ensure that their group is adequately represented at each meeting.

Section 6 – Suggested Order of Business

- Call to Order
- Reading and approval of the minutes
- Call for new item (s) to be placed on the agenda
- Principal's update (5 minutes)
- P.A.'s update (5 minutes)
- Carry-forward and new discussion topics
- Sub-committee discussions and reports
- CEP/Budget
- Agenda building for next meeting
- Adjournment

Article V - SLT Member Elections

Section 1: Election Guidelines:

To ensure that all members of the school community shall have the opportunity to participate and encourage the broadest possible participation, parents and staff will be

elected by their own constituent group in an election that is widely advertised, with reasonable advance notice, open to all members of the constituent group and in a way that is public and perceived fair and unbiased. Elections must be open to all members of the constituent group (e.g. P.A., CSA, UFT, and DC-37). P.A. election for parent member representatives must allow for a minimum of 10 calendar days notice. Elections for both parents and staff are to be held after the P.A. elections in the spring (Chancellor's Regulation A-660).

Section 2: Length of Term:

The length of term for SLT members (with the exception of core members) shall be 2 years, provided the team member(s) is (are) eligible to serve in accordance with the Chancellor's Regulation A-655. SLT members may serve for more than one term but must be re-elected by their constituent group.

Section 3: Filling Vacancies:

In an event of a resignation, termination of eligibility or loss of team membership due to removal, an expedited election (see Chancellor's Regulation A-660) to fill the vacancy will be held by the appropriate constituent group prior to the next scheduled SLT meeting, if possible. SLT members elected to fill vacancies shall be eligible to serve until the completion of that term.

Section 4: Grievances:

Parents may file a written complaint regarding the election of parents within 7 days, and appeal any decision made by the Superintendent within 10 days. Please refer to Chancellors Regulation A-655 Article XIV.

Article VI – Removing and Replacing a SLT Member

Section 1: Removal of Team Member:

1.0 Reasons for Dismissal

SLT members that fail to attend 3 meetings with an excused absence; and/or fail to perform their roles and responsibilities as outlined in these bylaws; and/or behave in a manner during meetings that is disruptive and undermines the work of the SLT will be removed by consensus of the remaining members.

1.1 The process for removing an SLT member shall be:

1.1a The SLT must inform the member under review in writing the reasons for the possible dismissal. The letter shall be sent by registered return receipt mail delivery to ensure proper notification and receipt.

1.1b Within two weeks of the posting of the SLT letter, the SLT member under review must be given the opportunity to submit in writing an explanation

showing good cause. If the letter is not answered or the SLT member under review chooses not to respond, the member under review will be dismissed.

- 1.1c A final review will take place at an SLT meeting at which the member under review will be given the opportunity to speak prior to a final discussion and determination by the remaining SLT members. There must be a quorum of members of each constituent group present and a decision must be reached by consensus.
- 1.1d The member shall be officially notified in writing by the SLT of its decision. The letter shall include the reason for the removal and the member's right to appeal the decision. The letter shall be signed by the Chairperson and shall be sent by registered return receipt mail delivery to ensure proper notification and receipt.
- 1.1e In the case of an appeal, the SLT will allow two weeks for the dismissed member to write a written appeal. The SLT will then review the appeal, make a decision by consensus, and forward a written response to the dismissed member prior to the next scheduled SLT meeting. Upon completion of the appeal, a follow-up letter shall be sent by registered return receipt mail delivery to ensure proper notification and receipt.

Section 2: Replacing an SLT Member

- 2.0 In the event of an opening, an expedited election will be held to fill the vacancy prior to the next SLT meeting, if possible.

Article VII - Decision Making and Conflict Resolution

Section 1: Consensus-Based Decision Making

- 1.0 The SLT will use a consensus-based decision-making process as its primary means of making decisions that will benefit all students. Consensus is defined as reaching an agreement acceptable to all of the members. The SLT will engage in collaborative problem-solving and solution-seeking methods that will lead to consensus-based decisions and, when necessary, effective conflict-resolution. The team will use The DOE Family and Community Engagement Consensus-Based Training presentation, Chancellor Regulations, and the attached Amendment A as a guide for implementing consensus-based decision making.

In the spirit of meaningful collaborative decision-making, should an issue arise resulting in an impasse due to the non-agreement on the part of one or more team members, the team will table the issue for one meeting. The dissenting team member(s) will prepare a brief statement of interest and present their views at the beginning of the next meeting. The entire team will work towards consensus on the issue during the meeting and may choose to revisit the issue at a later meeting to provide more time for individual consideration and research.

- 1.1 Near Unanimous Consensus Minus One. If consensus is still not reached, the SLT may use the Near Unanimous Consensus Minus One tool as defined in the attached Amendment A.

Section 2: Conflict Resolution

In the case of an impasse, the SLT should seek assistance from the District Leadership Team (DLT). If the DLT is unable to resolve such issues to the satisfaction of team members, then the Superintendent should be consulted.

Article VIII - Conflict Resolution Regarding CEP

Section 1: Disputes regarding the formation of the CEP:

In the case of an impasse on the CEP, the SLT should seek assistance from the District Leadership Team (DLT) after efforts have been made to resolve the issue internally. If the DLT does not successfully resolve the issue, then the community superintendent should be consulted. The superintendent shall try and facilitate consensus. If no agreement can be reached, then the superintendent makes the final decision on the CEP, but only as a last resort.

Section 2: Disputes with the principal regarding implementation:

SLT members, other than the principal, may dispute any decision made by the principal where members of the SLT (other than the principal) reach a consensus that the decision is inconsistent with the goals and policies set forth in the school's existing CEP, by submitting a written objection to the community superintendent. The community superintendent shall provide the SLT with a written response within 10 school days. Following the superintendent's determination and the SLT's receipt of a decision, the SLT and principal must immediately revise the school-based budget and CEP, if applicable.

Article IX: Remuneration

To be eligible to receive the annual remuneration of \$300, SLT members must complete 30 hours of service on the SLT and attend a mandatory training session on CEPs and budget, offered by the DOE. Team members who attend training but serve less than 30 hours may request remuneration on a pro rata basis.

Article X - Bylaws Review and Amendment

The bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the SLT, provided notice of any proposed changes has been given at a previous meeting. In addition, the bylaws will be reviewed at least biennially to ensure that the bylaws meet the needs of the SLT and remain consistent with the Chancellor's Regulation A-655.

Consensus-Based Decision Making

Consensus Building Reference

Decision rules

The level of agreement necessary to finalize a decision is known as a decision rule. The range of possible decision rules varies within the following range:

- Unanimous agreement
- Unanimity minus one vote

Every effort will be made to reach unanimous consent (unanimity) to approve group decisions. If any participant objects, he can block consensus according to the guidelines described below. The term consensus denotes both the discussion process and the decision rule. If all efforts have been exhausted, the team may allow decisions to be finalized using near unanimous consensus, Unanimity Minus one.

Agreement vs. consent

Unanimity is achieved when the full group consents to a decision. Giving consent does not necessarily mean that the proposal being considered is one's first choice. Group members can vote their consent to a proposal because they choose to cooperate with the direction of the group, rather than insist on their personal preference. Sometimes the vote on a proposal is framed, "Is this proposal something you can live with?" This relaxed threshold for a yes vote can help make unanimity more easily achievable.

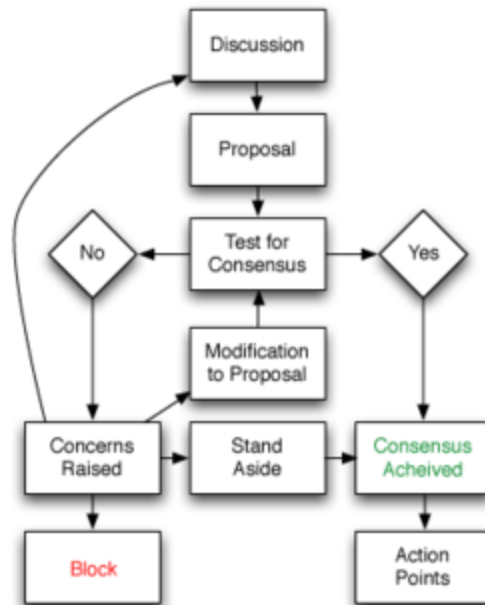
Process

There are multiple stepwise models of how to make decisions by consensus. They vary in the amount of detail the steps describe. They also vary depending on how decisions are finalized. The basic model involves

- collaboratively generating a proposal,
- identifying unsatisfied concerns, and then
- modifying the proposal to generate as much agreement as possible.

After a concerted attempt at generating full agreement, the group can then apply its final decision rule to determine if the existing level of agreement is sufficient to finalize a decision.

Consensus decision-making



Flowchart of basic consensus decision-making process.

Once an agenda for discussion has been set and, optionally, the ground rules for the meeting have been agreed upon, each item of the agenda is addressed in turn. Typically, each decision arising from an agenda item follows through a simple structure:

- **Discussion of the item:** The item is discussed with the goal of identifying opinions and information on the topic at hand. The general direction of the group and potential proposals for action are often identified during the discussion.
- **Formation of a proposal:** Based on the discussion a formal decision proposal on the issue is presented to the group.
- **Call for consensus:** The facilitator of the decision-making body calls for consensus on the proposal. Each member of the group usually must actively state their agreement with the proposal, often by using a hand gesture or raising a colored card, to avoid the group interpreting silence or inaction as agreement.
- **Identification and addressing of concerns:** If consensus is not achieved, each dissenter presents his or her concerns on the proposal, potentially starting another round of discussion to address or clarify the concern.
- **Modification of the proposal:** The proposal is amended, re-phrased or ridered in an attempt to address the concerns of the decision-makers. The process then returns to the call for consensus and the cycle is repeated until a satisfactory decision is made.

Tool and method

Based on DOE Family and Community Engagement Training Presentation

One model for a consensus check requires all team members to rate the proposal on a scale of -3 to 3.

-3	“I will work against the passage of this proposal.”
0	“While I may not agree this is the best proposal, I will not stop the team from moving forward.”
3	“I believe this is the best proposal for the team to pursue.”

Near-unanimous consensus Minus 1

Healthy consensus decision-making processes usually encourage and out dissent early, maximizing the chance of accommodating the views of all minorities. There are also possible pitfalls to the process, such as:

- Preservation of the Status quo:** In decision-making bodies that use formal consensus, the ability of individuals or small minorities to block agreement gives an enormous advantage to anyone who supports the existing state of affairs. This can mean that a specific state of affairs can continue to exist in an organization long after a majority of members would like it to change. The incentive to block can however be removed by using a special kind of voting process.
- Susceptibility to widespread disagreement:** Giving the right to block proposals to all group members may result in the group becoming hostage to an inflexible minority or individual. When a popular proposal is blocked the group actually experiences widespread disagreement, the opposite of the consensus process's goal. Furthermore, "opposing such obstructive behavior [can be] construed as an attack on freedom of speech and in turn [harden] resolve on the part of the individual to defend his or her position." As a result, consensus decision-making has the potential to reward the least accommodating group members while punishing the most accommodating.

Since unanimity may be difficult to achieve, or unanimity may be the result of coercion, fear, undue persuasive power or eloquence, inability to comprehend alternatives, or plain impatience with the process of debate, consensus decision making bodies may use an alternative benchmark of consensus:

Unanimity minus one (or U-1), requires all delegates but one to support the decision. The individual dissenter cannot block the decision although he or she may be able to prolong debate

(e.g. via a filibuster). The dissenter may be the ongoing monitor of the implications of the decision, and their opinion of the outcome of the decision may be solicited at some future time.

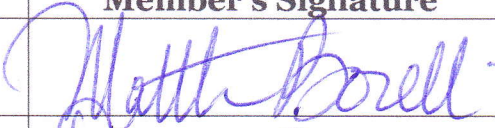
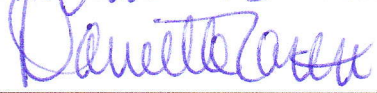
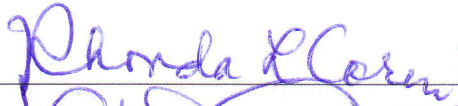

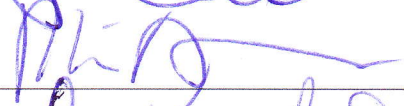
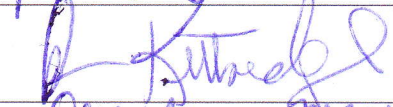
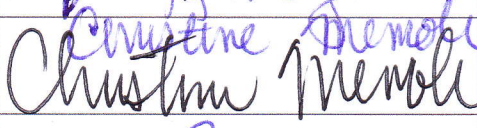
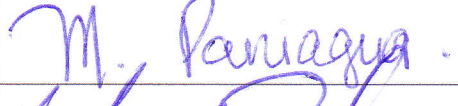
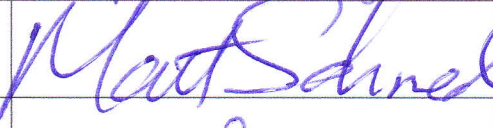
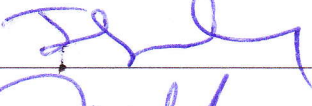
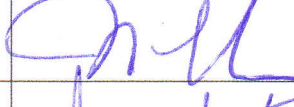
Use of near-unanimous consensus is a last resort after all other avenues have been exhausted, per P.S. 101Q's Bylaws, Article VII, Section 1.1. The team will use consensus techniques to generate as much agreement as possible, but allow decisions to be finalized with a decision rule that does not require unanimity.

Reference:

Consensus-Based Decision Making, Michigan State University, *Consensus, How to and Why*
Consensus Council, *Consensus-Based Decision Making Processes*

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These bylaws were adopted by all members of P.S. 101Q's SLT on June 8, 2015.

Print Member's Name	Title	Member's Signature
Matthew Borelli	Parent	
Danielle Carter	Teacher	
Rhonda Corin	UFT Representative	
Jaisi DiCicco	Parent	
Robin Harper	Parent	
Ann Kittredge	Parent	
Christine Memoli	P.A. President	 Christine Memoli
Monique Paniagua	Principal	 M. Paniagua
Matthew Schneider	Teacher	 Matt Schneider
Julia Sprules	Parent	
Mary Lou Steincke	Teacher	
Jay Westerlund	Teacher	