



Werner Elementary School  
Covenant & Charter



**Revised May 20, 2010**

# INTRODUCTION

This notebook explains the covenant, charter (governance), and critical study process for Werner Elementary School.

The notebook begins with the Covenant of Werner Elementary School. The Covenant explains our philosophy and beliefs. The last section in the notebook explains the Critical Study Process. It provides a structure for committees or individuals to explore ideas and to bring them to the greater school community.

The remainder of the notebook includes several sections that should, in total, be considered the Charter for Werner Elementary School. The Charter is our understanding about how decisions are made:

- Who is responsible for what
- The composition of the decision-making bodies
- The decisions to be made
- The process to be used

Included in our Charter is a description of the Werner School Council. Our Council is our decision-making body and serves as our School Improvement Team. The Council has the responsibilities described throughout the notebook including monitoring the Accountability Process. Our Council is a governing structure of freely elected members who represent the school across grade levels, special areas, and community lines with the sole mission of figuring out the best education for all children.

You will often find reference to the WSC (Whole School Community) in this notebook. Werner Elementary School believes all constituents—students, parents, teachers, all classified and administrative staff—should be included. Whatever your role—you are invited to be part of the process.

## **HISTORY OF SITE-BASED MANAGEMENT AT WERNER:**

Werner Elementary School opened in 1987 with the philosophy of community involvement. We initially set up a leadership team very similar to today's Council. That group evolved adding both meaning and history to the way Werner School does its work. In 1992, the staff working in conjunction with interested parents constructed the original school covenant, charter, and critical study process. The documents were developed by a consensus process and included participation by anyone in the school community who came to our meetings. The documents were then presented to the PTA and reviewed in the school newsletter. A full copy was available in the office. An open meeting was advertised and held, and there was a unanimous decision to move ahead with the documents as written.

In 1995, a change to the school mission was proposed and accepted by the whole school community. The change added statements related to the importance of diversity and multicultural issues.

In 1996, 1999 and 2005, and 2010 the entire document was reviewed and several items in the charter were changed. A vision statement was also added to enhance purpose for all stakeholders. All changes were available to the whole school community and approved in open staff and Council meetings.

In 2002 the charter was not reviewed due to change in leadership.

**PROCESS FOR REVIEW:**

Our community continues to grow and change, and therefore, our ideas and philosophy must continue to evolve. In order to support a “living” document full of meaning and pertinent to issues of the day, the covenant and charter will be reviewed every five years or when there is a change in leadership. Beginning with the review conducted in 1996, the school Council will develop recommendations to be reviewed and approved every fifth year or as needed.

**PRINCIPAL’S ROLE:**

School board policy states that the school principal is responsible and accountable for all decisions at the school site. Werner School policy is to involve as many people as appropriate in all decisions as defined by the Werner School Charter. If an occasion should arise when the principal in his/her best judgment makes a decision in opposition to the decision of the site Council, the principal’s decision shall stand. The Council is then free to use the “Appeals Process” as detailed in the decision-making rule section of the charter.

The principal is expected to participate fully by representative or personally in all decision-making processes as outlined in the school charter.



### Vision

Werner Elementary is a learning community striving to educate and inspire lifelong learners through high expectations and personal responsibility in a positive, supportive environment.

### Mission

Educate and inspire every child, every day

### Values

Werner values educating the whole child by:

- teaching essential academic skills to exceed Colorado Academic Standards;
- honing critical thinking and creative problem-solving skills;
- fostering positive self-esteem, a sense of belonging, and cooperation among parents, students, and staff;
- meeting the needs of each child to promote individual growth (social, emotional, behavioral, physical, artistic, and academic)

## NORMS FOR TEAM INTERACTION

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These norms will be used by all teams and groups in the Werner Community to help govern the way we work with each other. Groups or teams are not limited to this list of norms and can add any that work specifically for their needs. The “Limited Parliamentary Procedures” (adopted from Roberts Rules of Order) shall govern in the parliamentary procedure of the team. Everyone is responsible for helping each other abide by the norms.

- 🐾 Remain focused on what’s best for kids
- 🐾 Be open to all ideas
- 🐾 Everyone participates
- 🐾 Be respectful
- 🐾 Stay on task
- 🐾 Start and end on time
- 🐾 All participants are equal
- 🐾 Individuals are expected to attend
- 🐾 Individuals that are absent will support the decisions that are made
- 🐾 Minutes of meetings will be available for open meetings
- 🐾 Individuals are responsible for getting information when absent
- 🐾 Be prepared
- 🐾 When representing groups, each member reports to the represented team or group in a timely manner

## Limited Parliamentary Procedures

### Steps in Making a Motion

1. State the motion
2. Motion is seconded
3. Chair restates the motion as heard
4. Open for discussion (may be amended at this time\*)
5. Chair puts the motion forward for a vote
6. Chair announces the results

### \*Amending the Current Motion

1. Anyone can state the amendment to the motion.
2. Needs to be seconded.
3. Discussion on the amendment
4. Vote on the amendment
5. Announce results
6. Continue discussion on the question at hand
7. Steps 5 & 6 above

### Other Procedures Used

1. *Table the Motion*- ends discussion and moves the question to the next meeting.
2. *Move to send a Task Force*- establishes a committee to review the question and make a recommendation to bring back to the meeting in the form of a motion.
3. *Withdraw the Motion*- takes the motion off the floor to be restated or dropped.
4. *Point of Order*- forces the membership to follow the accepted procedures (as stated above).

# BASIC EXPECTATIONS

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Basic performance expectations are those areas of professional responsibility that are basic to the smooth operation of the school and are assumed to be part of the daily behavioral repertoire of all staff members. These are outlined below so that all faculty and staff will have a clear understanding of what is important for the daily operation of the school, and so that any problems in any of these areas can be resolved quickly and informally rather than in the formal evaluation process. These basic expectations are:

- 🐾 To consistently follow building policies and procedures
- 🐾 To be flexible, cooperative, and respectful in all interpersonal interactions
- 🐾 To follow through on commitments according to mutually agreed on time frame
- 🐾 To start and be at all meetings and duties on time
- 🐾 To equitably serve on building and district committees
- 🐾 To respect confidentiality of students, colleagues, and parents
- 🐾 To keep staff meetings focused, on task, and professional
- 🐾 To listen openly to all parent concerns
- 🐾 To periodically and consistently communicate with parents of your students
- 🐾 To communicate honestly and directly when problems arise
- 🐾 To make good use of team-planning time when it is made available
- 🐾 To dress appropriately and professionally for the job
- 🐾 To be open and willing to receive feedback and to solve an identified problem

## Expectations of administration

- 🐾 Routinely provide feedback to staff

# COUNCIL

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## **DESCRIPTION:**

The Werner Council is a representative group of the Werner School Community whose role is to:

- function as our primary School Improvement Team;
- facilitate policy & large-scale change decisions affecting our school;
- serve as a communication loop to affected groups.

## **MISSION:**

The decisions we make and the policies and practices we implement will enable the entire school community to function more effectively.

## **COUNCIL NORMS:**

“Norms for Team Interaction” will guide our work together as a team.



# COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

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The group as a whole should fairly represent the entire school community. All major groups should be represented with access always open to others.

It is recommended that voting members serve a two-year term as follows:

- Parents shall be represented by **one** PTA member (preferably the present PTA President or Vice-president), and **two** parents-at-large (representative of different communities and/or community representative).
- Staff will be represented from the following areas:
  - 1 - Teacher per grade cluster (K/1, 2/3, 4/5)
  - 1 - Specialist- Art, Music, PE, Media
  - 1 - Special Ed/Literacy/Gifted & Talented/Counselor
  - 1 - Classified

When a staff member's term expires, the represented group will determine a new member. Staff members may serve for a second term; however, their respective group must approve them.

- The Principal and Office Manager/Secretary will be standing members.

Total voting membership of Council:

- 3 – Parents/Community
- 5 - Certified teachers
- 1– Classified
- 1 - Office Manager/Secretary
- 1 – Principal
- 11 voting members

If a seat is vacated by a teacher, parent, or classified member, the represented group will select a new member to fill the term. New Council members will be decided at the beginning of each new school year (in August).

Council members will rotate on either “odd” or “even” years, based on the schedule below:

- Principal- always serves
- Office- even years
- K/1- odd years
- 2/3- even years
- 4/5- odd years
- Specialists- even years
- Special Ed./Literacy/Gifted & Talented/Counselor- odd years
- Classified- odd years
- Parents/Community- PTA always serves  
Parents-at-large (alternate odd/even)

## **COUNCIL MEETINGS:**

Meetings will be held throughout the regular school year, the day and time to be determined at the first meeting. Other meetings may be scheduled as needed. The meetings shall be open and may be attended by any member of the public. Notification of meetings will be in the school calendar each month.

Special meetings may be held at any time at the request of the chairperson or any other team member. Notice must be given at least 24 hours before the special meeting.

Note taking will be taken by the office representative and with minutes published.

“Limited Parliamentary Procedures” (adopted from Roberts Rules of Order) shall govern in the parliamentary procedure of the team.

## **COUNCIL SUBCOMMITTEES:**

Task force or critical study groups will include at least one member of the leadership team plus any other interested parties from the Werner School Community. Any member of the school community may initiate a critical study by bringing an issue to the Werner Council (see Critical Study Process)

The Council may appoint a standing committee or task force for a specific purpose that the team may require. In the case of a task force, the group will be dissolved upon completion of the purpose for which it was appointed.

Beginning in the 2010-2011 school year, all schools are required by state law to have a School Accountability Committee (SAC) with guidelines described in the School Accountability Committee Guidelines section. SAC will be a sub-committee of Council, involving many of the same members and reporting back to Council and the principal. This committee will “advise and recommend” to the principal on certain areas and will meet an additional four times each year with dates/times to be decided at the beginning of the school year.

## **VISITORS:**

The Werner School Council values the active involvement and interest of any school or community member. Visitors are welcome to observe meetings. Any visitor who desires to meet with the committee for the purpose of presenting information or making requests must follow the established process for bringing issues to council. See next section for procedures.

## SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE (SAC) GUIDELINES

**Purpose:** SAC advises and recommends to the principal in the following areas:

- Recommend to the principal of its school priorities for spending school moneys—state, federal, local, grants discretionary money.
- Sends copy of recommendations to the District Accountability Committee (DAC).
- Advise regarding school improvement plan or performance plan (principal and school board).
- Quarterly discussions regarding school’s progress in implementing accreditation plan.
- Prepare School Improvement Plan (SIP) depending on rating.
- Advise and recommend.

**Results:**

- Make plans available upon request of public.
- Development of funding priorities
- Plan minimum requirements include:
  - Targets aligned with state-wide targets.
  - Identify trends on performance indicators.
  - Assess and prioritize issues and needs to raise levels of achievement.
  - Identify specific research based strategies to address needs and issues.
  - Identify local, state, and federal resources that will be used to support implementation.
  - Submit priorities for spending and copy of recommendation to principal and DAC.

**Membership:** The principal will conduct an application process to select a minimum of seven members of SAC. Parents need to be representative of student population and exceed number of any other group. One parent must chair or co-chair committee. The group will minimally include:

- 3 parents or legal guardians of students
- 1 teacher
- 1 parent organization member- Werner’s PTA Treasurer or designee
- 1 community member
- Principal
- Office Manager

**Support:** A school improvement team may support the SAC. Additionally they will receive support from District School Improvement by:

- ELL department
- IS department
- GT coordinator
- Data coach
- Tech coordinator
- Literacy coach
- District personnel

# PROCEDURES FOR BRINGING ISSUES TO COUNCIL

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Any issue may be brought to Council using the following procedures. The Council will decide at which level the decision should be resolved if not already noted on a level chart. (See decisions by level.)

**1. Issue Statement:**

Complete the issue statement document (receive from Office Manager) and place it into the facilitator's mailbox.

**2. Facilitator Contact:**

Facilitator personally contacts the person with issue. Discuss details and briefly determine course of action:

- Attend next Council meeting
- Review literature
- Phone calls, etc.

**3. Facilitator brings issue to Council.**

**4. Council decides level of decision. (Level A, B, C, or D)**

**5. Council reviews issue, gives recommendations, and assists in making an action plan.**

**For example:**

- Council decision
- Bring to staff
- Form committee
- Refer to principal

**6. Facilitator is responsible for communicating and monitoring progress to Council and community member(s) who originated the issue.**

# ISSUE STATEMENT

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**COUNCIL MISSION:** The decisions we make and the policies and practices we implement will enable the entire school community to function more effectively.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Role in school: (teacher, paraprofessional, parent, etc.)

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Issue or Request:

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Proposed ways to realize request or resolve issue:

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Persons/Group who would be affected:

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Resources needed to realize request:

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Timeline expected for completion

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Werner Elementary  
DECISION-MAKING MATRIX

A	B	C	D
<b>Principal is the sole decision maker</b>	<b>Principal with input from group that is affected</b>	<b>Council or designated committee decides (with principal input)</b>	Grade Level or individual teacher decides
Interpersonal Conflicts	School Goals and Priorities	Curriculum Modifications	<b>Daily lessons</b>
Personnel Issues	Accreditation Report	Accountability (SAC) Development and Monitoring of School Goals	<b>Bulletin boards</b>
Evaluation of staff	Allocation of School Budget Master Schedule (Specials, Lunch/Recess)	School Policies	<b>Instructional Planning</b>
Enforcing Code of Conduct	Staff Utilization Teacher & Classroom assignments	Holiday Celebrations	<b>Parent Communication</b>
Emergency incidents	Hiring Instructional Programs (Intervention/Enrichment)	ABCD Decision Making Model	<b>Classroom Teaching Strategies</b>
Maintenance	Student Placement	<u>Standing Committees (Report to Council annually)</u> The committees below make decisions affecting school, but are ultimately accountable to Council.	<b>Classroom Management</b>
Building Equipment	Collaboration/In-Service Days Agenda	RtI (Response to Intervention)	<b>Field Trips</b>
	Duty Schedule	SST (Student Success Team) PBS (Positive Behavior Support)	
	Conference days	Tech Committee	
	Staff development	SPED-Staffing team	
	Enrichment/clubs	504 Team	
	Master Calendar	Wellness	
	Back-to-school		
	School programs		
	Discipline Policies		
	Building Security		
	Emergency Procedures		
	Testing schedule/coordination		
	Fundraising		
	Assemblies		
<b>The Principal is ultimately responsible for all school decisions</b>			

## Procedures for ABCD Decisions

### A – Principal Decisions

1. Principal will make decisions based on input and Poudre School District policies and procedures.
2. Principal will communicate to all affected groups.

### B- Principal with input Decisions

1. Principal will schedule an open staff meeting to present topic. All relevant information will be presented.
2. Principal will gather input from affected groups.
3. Council representative will gather input from all affected groups.
4. Council will share all input and research in next Council meeting.
5. Principal will begin to facilitate a consensus process and will make final decision based on input and necessary PSD policy/procedure.
6. Principal will communicate decision to all affected groups.

### C- Council/Designated Committee\* Decisions

1. Issues will be brought to Council as described in the section titled Council.
2. Council will gather input from all involved parties through survey, PTA meeting, staff meeting, etc.
3. Council, or an appointed task force, will research all internal and external sources.
4. Based on input and research, Council will make decision.\*\*
5. Council will develop plan for implementation and communicate decisions to all affected groups.

\*Designated Committees are developed by Council or district policy/procedure. These committees operate independently of Council, but are responsible for reporting annually to Council on their work in relation to School Improvement Plan and our goals/priorities.

\*\*Council will work to reach consensus on all decisions. We have arrived at consensus when all points of view have been heard, including dangers and opportunities, and the will of the group is evident even to those who most oppose it. If consensus cannot be reached, the issue will then be decided by a vote with a minimum of two-thirds of voting members needed for passage.

### D- Grade Level/Teacher Decisions

1. Teachers will gather input from affected groups.
2. Teachers will research internal and external sources to gather information as needed. Sources could include district resource support staff, professional journal information or research, PSD or building policy, or input from principal.
3. Teachers will make decisions based on input and research.
4. Decisions will be communicated to all affected groups.

**APPEAL PROCESS:**

Every effort shall be made to handle issues as informally as possible in order to help promote a healthy culture of dialogue and problem solving. Issues or concerns should be brought to the principal and the parties will work together to help resolve the matter. In the unlikely event that resolution can not be found informally, groups or individuals that disagree with decisions made in our charter may submit an appeal following the process below.

1. Complete Site Appeals form and submit to individual or group responsible for making the decision. A copy of the appeal must also be submitted to the school principal.
2. A meeting will be scheduled with both the party submitting the appeal and the decision-making group/individual. If the petitioner needs help to establish a time, the principal may intercede. The respondent is obligated to attend the meeting and work toward resolution.
3. If an agreement cannot be reached, a mediator (i.e. principal, administrative assistant, counselor, council member) will be identified and agreed upon by both parties to mediate discussion between the two parties.



# SITE APPEALS FORM

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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE INITIAL DECISION:

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DECISION IN QUESTION:

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RATIONALE FOR APPEAL:

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DESIRED OUTCOME:

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# CRITICAL STUDY PROCESS

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**1. Define the Topic:**

**2. Establish Task Force:**

- a. Define make-up, operational procedures for group including leadership, meeting times, and place (to be posted)

**3. Study the Topic:**

- a. Define a timeline for the task force.
- b. Decide how to gather information:
  - Internally (within the school)
  - Externally (other sources)

**4. Presentation of Findings:**

- a. Present findings and recommendations to affected community, discuss.
- b. Set timeline for revisions.

**5. Implementation:**

Decision to implement based on the affected community's use of the decision-making model.

\*The decision not to implement is always an option.

**6. Evaluation:** Plan for ongoing evaluation.