

Operating Protocols

Portland Public Schools District-wide Boundary Review Advisory Committee (DBRAC)

Approved on February 19, 2015

In November 2014, Portland Public Schools (PPS) Superintendent Carole Smith, based on a recommendation made by Portland State University's Center for Public Service and National Policy Consensus Center, appointed a Superintendent's "District-wide Boundary Review Advisory Committee" (DBRAC).

Because of the importance of DBRAC's charge, and the need to ensure public transparency and a robust discussion about the many issues relevant to the process and the ultimate outcome viz. district-wide boundary review, the following document lays out some of the key rules and basic operational principles by which DBRAC will operate. It's recommended that DBRAC review this document, and then adopt it (as is, or amended as it deems appropriate) at the earliest possible opportunity.

Once adopted, this document can certainly continue to be modified and updated to suit DBRAC's needs.

Membership. The District-wide Boundary Review Advisory Committee (DBRAC) will consist of up to 25 voting members, appointed by the PPS Superintendent. Members are drawn from a variety of sectors, and include Portland citizens, PPS parents, PPS administrators, PPS teachers (and members of the Portland Association of Teachers), Student Representatives and PPS Board members.

To help facilitate information gathering and the achievement of DBRAC's mission, the PPS Superintendent may also appoint non-voting members to DBRAC sessions. These non-voting members can fully participate in DBRAC meetings (except for voting).

DBRAC members are appointed by the Superintendent upon the recommendation of numerous stakeholder groups. All DBRAC members are expected to participate as individuals and bring their personal experience to the table. Members may be asked, or may independently choose, to gather feedback from or pose specific questions to the stakeholder group(s) they represent. Votes cast by individual DBRAC members are not expected to convey the endorsement or support of representative stakeholder groups.

Leadership. DBRAC will have at least one chair – or no more than two co-chairs – appointed by the Superintendent. Neither the chair or only one co-chair can be an employee of PPS, or a PPS board member. The chair/co-chairs will be responsible for presiding over each DBRAC session.

Meeting frequency and schedule. Meetings are scheduled to be held approximately once every two weeks, on the same recurring weeknight (currently Thursdays) to facilitate maximum attendance of DBRAC members. Meeting notice should be given at least two weeks prior to the meeting. Meetings will start promptly at 5:45 p.m., and are scheduled to adjourn by 8:15. In the event of inclement weather, the DBRAC chair or co-chairs should give notice of a meeting cancellation and the time/location proposed for the next meeting.

Because of DBRAC's important work, and the compressed time schedule, it is expected that all DBRAC members will attend each meeting, for the entire 2 ½ hour session. But in recognition of unexpected work and/or personal issues, the following rules apply for expected as well as unexpected absences (e.g, personal family emergencies):

- For planned absences, late arrivals, or early departures, please notify at least one DBRAC chair or co-chair, at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting
- In the case of unplanned absences, please notify as soon as practicable at least one DBRAC chair or co-chair of your situation. At your discretion, you can also notify other DBRAC committee members (voting or non-voting).

Meeting Extensions. Meetings are allowed to go beyond the regular 8:15 pm time, but only if 2/3 of those present at the meeting agree to extend the session for up to an additional 30 minutes. Any additional 30-minute extension will require the same 2/3 vote.

Quorum and Voting Rules. A quorum is defined as a majority of the 25 voting members (13 or more). If fewer than 13 members are present for a DBRAC meeting, the meeting can be held or continue to be held (at the chair's or co-chairs' discretion) as an "informational session," but **no votes on any substantive matter** can be taken.

For "procedural issues"—e.g. whether to re-arrange the agenda; limit debate on certain items, etc – a majority of those in attendance must approve. This "majority of those attending" standard is intended to apply only to questions of how to structure the meeting agenda and use the members' time most effectively, not on any substantive issues.

For "substantive issues" – e.g, a specific policy or administrative recommendation to the Superintendent expressing the wishes of DBRAC – an affirmative vote that represents 60% of the 25-member committee is required (15 affirmative votes).

Any amendment to this document shall be considered a "substantive change," and require the same affirmative vote of 60% of DBRAC (15 affirmative votes).

To ensure clarity and avoid mis-understandings, prior to a final vote on a substantive issue the exact wording of such a motion will be read aloud to all DBRAC members in attendance.

Any questions that might arise viz. these voting rules – e.g, whether a question is a procedural issue vs. a substantive issue – shall be decided by the chair or co-chairs. A decision of the chair or co-chair in such matters can be over-turned, but only on a 2/3 vote of those in attendance.

DBRAC as a whole may elect to use other methods to help facilitate agreement on various issues (e.g, the 1-5 finger' or other consensus approaches).

Staff Support. The office of the PPS Superintendent will provide staff support to DBRAC, including responsibility for the taking and posting official minutes for each meeting.

Agenda Preparation. To help ensure alignment between the District and DBRAC, and to help prepare the agenda for each meeting, the Superintendent may appoint a DBRAC "Steering

Committee” to include up to 7 DBRAC members. This steering committee must include the chair or both co-chairs.

Minutes. To ensure an accurate record for DBRAC activities, minutes will be taken for each session, for approval at the beginning of the subsequent session. To encourage candid and thoughtful discussion, the minutes should define the topic and/or purpose of various discussions, and key points made – but should not identify individual DBRAC members and the specific comments they made.

In the case of formal motions on substantive issues, however, the minutes should reflect who made the motion; who (if anyone) seconded the motion; and the author of any proposed amendments to the motion. The votes (yes/no/abstain/excused absence) of individual DBRAC members should also be recorded.

A minority report is allowed to DBRAC members not voting in the majority. Those voting in the minority may author a statement(s) or report(s) explaining their vote and submit this to PPS staff before the next regularly scheduled DBRAC meeting so that it is included in the meeting minutes and DBRAC record.

Public Participation. DBRAC meetings are open to the public, including members of the media. However, only PPS staff will audio or video record the meetings. The chair/co-chairs will set aside a specific period of time during DBRAC meetings for public comment, and set certain rules, including time constraints for those comments. During DBRAC meetings, non-DBRAC attendees are expected to observe and may not interfere or communicate directly with DBRAC members, unless specifically asked to do so. Failure to comply with these and other public participation rules may result in a non-DBRAC member being asked to leave the meeting. In extreme cases, attendees may be asked, by the chair/co-chairs, to **not** return to a DBRAC meeting for a month.