

BRIDGEWATER KHALSA SCHOOL BY-LAWS

Article 1: Name of Organization

The name of this organization is Bridgewater Khalsa School. The organization operates in association with GSSA of New Jersey which is a nonprofit incorporated organization of its members. These by-laws shall serve in lieu of any articles of organization or constitution. The organization will consist of elected Officers and a Governing Body made up of Sewadars – appointed volunteers, and the General Membership which is strictly comprised of parents of registered students, teachers and Sevedars.

Article II: Purposes

1. To teach topics related to the Sikh religion, culture, history and literature
2. To encourage enthusiastic interest in the school and the welfare of its students & staff.
3. To lend support to the students and staff in carrying out educational experiences.
4. To encourage communication and understanding between teachers and parents.
5. To encourage parental involvement in the educational process.

Article III: Membership and Dues

1. Membership in this organization is limited to parents of registered students, teachers, and Sevedars affiliated to the School
2. Dues are to be established by the Governing Body
3. The Membership Drive shall start 3 weeks before the graduation or end of the school year and will close on the 4th Sunday after start of school year each year, except for families who move to the area within the school year.

Article IV: Governing Body

The Governing body will comprise of:

1. Principal
2. Vice Principal (also the Operation Council Leader)
3. Education Council Leader
4. Activities & Events Council Leader
5. Finance Council Leader
6. Communication Council Leader

Council Leaders will select & appoint the Principal and the Vice Principal of the school at the close of the school session in May every two years through nomination. All the council leaders will be appointed by the Principal and the Vice Principal for a two year term, but staggered by 1 year of the appointment of the Principal and Vice Principal. At the appointment of a new Governing Body member, the former member will be required to stay until the end of October of that year to facilitate a smooth transition.

COUNCILS

It is recommended that each Council have a total of 5 members (Council Leader plus four). The members of each council will be appointed by the Council Leader, in consultation with the governing body, for a two year term. A council leader may organize its members into smaller groups or committees with specific responsibilities.

Education Council:

- Decides on curriculum for students.
- Appoints the teachers.
- Evaluates students.
- Monitors academic progress and continuing education for the teachers.
- Works on a curriculum for Adult Education & organizes events for the same in collaboration with the Activities & Events Council.
- Works to appoint a music coordinator who will work to facilitate classes for Tabla, Vaja and Kirtan

Finance Council:

- Responsible for maintaining inflows and outflows of funds for the running of the School
- Work with all other councils wherever funds are required
- Facilitate and organize fund raisers for Bridgewater Khalsa School as and when needed

Communications Council:

- Responsible for all communication to members and outside entities
- Will be conscious of the privacy issues pertaining to personal information of the members of the Bridgewater Khalsa School.

Activities and Events Council

- Organize and facilitate events for the students of the Khalsa school
- Organize and facilitate events for the adult education in topics related to Sikhi in collaboration with Education Council
- Organize activities for the Khalsa school students within or outside the Gurudwara sahib premises

Operations Council

- Monitor performance of principal, vice principal, governing body, teachers & sevedars.
- Maintains the Code of Conduct for students, teachers, governing body and sevadars to facilitate a smooth operation of the Khalsa School.
- Handle escalations of issues related to qualifications and responsibilities & facilitate meetings to resolve such issues
- Compose and send all communications related to such issues in liaison with the communication councils
- Day-to-day running of the school, including facilities, resources, transportation.

TEACHERS

Teachers are to be appointed by the Education Council, in consultation with the Principal and the Vice Principal for a 1 year term. The basic requirements for a teacher are:

- Ability to communicate in Punjabi.
- Ability to create lesson plans.
- Ability to motivate students

General Responsibilities for Principal, Vice Principal and Teachers

- Make sure they are at the school at start of the assembly
- Plan their absence from the School in advance.
- If a teacher has to be absent from the Khalsa School other than their planned absent days, they must inform the Principal or the Vice Principal by Saturday night (verbally or electronically) and receive an acknowledgement of the same.

School Sevadars / Council Members Responsibilities

- Sevadars' responsibilities will be detailed by their council leaders & other council members
- All Sewadars need to provide a written electronic status report of their responsibilities to their Council leader, every marking period/defined dates.
- Council Leaders must provide a written electronic status report of their responsibilities to the Principal and Vice Principal, at least on a monthly basis every marking period/defined dates
- If a sevarar is not able to fulfill his/her duties they need to inform the council leader and the Principal in advance

Policies regarding engaging teachers

- The decision is to be taken by the Principal, Vice Principal, and the Education Council Leader

Policies regarding relieving teachers

- The decision is to be taken by the education council and the governing body
- If a teacher is absent from the School WITHOUT informing principal/vice principal for 2 consecutive weeks, or 4 total weeks, it will be considered as lack of commitment. Under these circumstances, a meeting of the Governing body will be called by either the teacher or the Education council leader or principal or the vice principal. The objective of this meeting is to decide if the teacher should continue their teaching duties or not.
- Decision of the Governing body would be final

Policies regarding engaging Sevadars

- Sevadars are engaged by the council leaders

Policies regarding relieving Sevadars

- The decision is to be taken by the council leader and the governing body
- If a Sevdar does not provide the status report for 2 consecutive months or is absent from the school WITHOUT informing principal, vice principal or the council leader for 2 consecutive weeks, or 4 total weeks, it will be considered as lack of commitment. Under these circumstances, a meeting will be called by the Sevdar or their council leader or principal or the vice principal. The objective of this meeting is to decide if the Sevdar should continue their duties or should be asked to relinquish the responsibility to another Sevdar.
- Decision of the Governing body will be final

MEETINGS

There shall be at least two general meetings annually, one Pre-Session meeting in the Summer (just before the school opens) and one in the Winter, at the start of the second semester of the school year. The date and time for the Summer meeting will be tentatively decided before the end of the previous session year. The Principal and Vice Principal at that time will be responsible for communication of any change in the date, time or place of this meeting.

Agenda of the Pre-Session (summer meeting):

- Work out all details for the start of the school session
- Confirm the memberships of each council
- Confirm the teaching assignments for all teachers
- Review the finances of the Khalsa School
- Official Hand-Over from outgoing members to the incoming ones.

Agenda of the Mid-Session (winter meeting):

- Assess the progress of the school as a whole
- Raise any significant issues that affect the whole school
- Review the finances of the Khalsa School

Agendas will be published to the member at least 2 weeks in advance by the Principal and Vice Principal. This may include additional items to the ones above.

Additional meetings shall be held whenever deemed necessary by the Governing Body and shall be publicized to the membership one week in advance of the meeting. A quorum shall consist of the Principal, Vice Principal, all Council Leaders and at least 2 additional members of each council, who are present at the time and place scheduled for the meeting.

AMENDMENTS

These by-laws may be altered, amended, repealed or added to by an affirmative vote of not less than 2/3 of the membership present and voting, provided that notice of the proposed amendment or amendments shall be given at a previous meeting or in writing one week prior to a meeting.

A quorum shall consist of the Principal, Vice Principal, and all Council Leaders and all at least 2 members of each council.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS**Minimum Standards for all Teachers and Sevedars**

- Must understand and agree that his or her motivation for volunteering is to advance the cause of Sikhi without any expectation of pay, special recognition, employment, or compensation.
- Must be willing to cooperate with The Governing Body's program supervision and be responsible for agreed-upon time schedule and tasks.
- Commitment of time. The amount of time required will vary greatly depending on the position and the teacher/sewadaar but he/she must be able to make an adequate commitment.
- Maintain an open mind with regard to other people's standards and values.
- Become thoroughly familiar with the mission and the goals of the program in which you are involved.
- Role model healthy, positive energy and communication.
- Be considerate, respect the ability of other teacher/sewadaar and work as a member of the team.
- Carry out assignments in good spirit and seek the assistance of the Governing Body in any situation requiring special guidance.
- Communicate personal limitations, acceptable out-of-pocket costs, transportation needs, time constraints, etc.
- Inform the Education Council or give written or email notice if you cannot continue in your position or if you are requesting a leave of absence from the program.

Principal**Qualifications**

- Well versed in Sikh religion, culture and history
- Well spoken in English and Punjabi
- Public Speaking
- Leadership Qualities

Responsibilities

- Recruit teachers and Sevedars
- Organize school and related activities
- Interface with Bridgewater Gurdwara management and outside entities
- Promote involvement from students, parents and Sevedars
- Organize and supervise committees that assist in general operation of the school
- Develop, maintain, evaluate and implement teaching programs
- Provide leadership for planning, collecting and monitoring of school's budget
- Supervise Councils, fund raising events and activities
- Interface with other schools and local organizations
- Communication with the Gurdwara sangat and parents
- Communicate regularly with school teachers and Sevedars
- Appoint the new council leaders in consultation with the vice principal and the current leader of each council.

Vice Principal**Qualifications**

- Well versed in Sikh religion, culture and history
- Well spoken in English and Punjabi
- Public Speaking
- Leadership Qualities

Responsibilities

- If the Principal is not available or not able to perform his/her duties, the vice principal will take over Principals' responsibilities
- Act as the Operation Council Leader
- Assist the principal with his/her duties
- Student registration
- Ensure availability of teachers and sewadaars during school

Teachers**Qualifications**

- Well versed in the subject
- Well spoken in English and Punjabi
- Enjoy working with students

Responsibilities

- Plan and execute instruction lessons in consultation with the Education Council
- Assess and evaluate students on a regular basis
- Develop, implement and evaluate curriculum

- Respond promptly to communication from students, parents or other school staff

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SPECIFIC SUBJECT TEACHERS ARE:

Gurbani: In general all Bani teachers must have their respective Bani memorized. Additionally, extra stress must be paid for correct “uchcharan” of the Bani.

- Japji Sahib teachers must have Japji Sahib memorized and uchcharan validated
- Rehraas Sahib teachers must have Rehraas Sahib memorized and uchcharan validated
- Sawaiye teachers must have Sawaiye memorized and uchcharan validated
- Chhoti Ardaas Memorized

Boli:

- Ability to read and write Punjabi
- Ability to read Gurbani written in Gurmukhi

Virsa:

- Good knowledge of Sikh History including Gurus, Panj Piyare

Sewadars

Qualifications

- Must possess good communication skills
- Must have the ability to follow directions and work in liaison with the Governing Body and independently in their absence.
- Must be detail oriented.

Responsibilities

- Be prompt and reliable in reporting for scheduled work.
- Attend and participate in scheduled council meetings
- Notify Council Leader as early as possible if you are unable to work as scheduled.
- Provide prompt feedback, suggestions, and recommendations to the council and other Sewadars if these might increase the effectiveness of the program.

CONDUCT

The following conduct is expected from all officials, sewadars, and teachers of the Bridgewater Khalsa School:

Attendance & Informed Absences

- All teachers, officials and sewadars are expected to come to the Gurudwara Sahib and School every Sunday the school is open.

- All teachers, officials and sewadars are expected to be present in the school at the time of the Assembly.
- Any planned absence must be communicated to the Principal or the Vice Principal and the respective Council Leader at least one week in advance.
- Any unplanned absence must be communicated to the Principal or the Vice Principal and the respective Council Leader latest 24 hours prior to the start of the school on any Sunday. No more than 3 unplanned absences per school year are allowed for anyone.

BEHAVIOR, VERBAL & WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

All teachers, sevadars and governing body members must be guided by the following principals for all communication, whether verbal, written or electronic. As all positions and responsibilities are voluntary and everyone is taking time out of their lives to provide this service, we must keep the following guidelines in the forefront:

- Politeness
- Humility
- Mutual Respect

TRANSITION

All nominations for appointments for various positions will be done in the month of April.

This will be followed by discussions and decision during the month of May.

The month of June will be used for transition of End-Of-The-Year items.

The official Hand-Over will happen at the Summer Governing Body Meeting. The months of September and October will be used as for the transition of Start-Of-The-Year activities.

During the transition periods, all meetings will be attended by both the outgoing and incoming members.