I. STATEMENTS OF MISSION AND PURPOSE

A. Purpose of the bylaws
These bylaws establish a set of rules and procedures approved by the TOPS school community to guide the governance functions of the Site Council.

B. Purpose of the Site Council
The Site Council serves as one of the governing bodies of the school, with responsibilities for leadership, advocacy, fund raising, financial stewardship, and strategic planning to assure the highest standards of educational excellence and an inclusive supportive school community. We operate under the current school district policy with regard to Site Councils.

The purpose of the Site Council at TOPS is to promote students’ intellectual, social, physical and emotional growth in collaboration with the Leadership Team. The Site Council will:
1) Advance the mission of TOPS
2) Support staff in their efforts to facilitate and enhance student learning
3) Enable families to become informed about and help shape the educational and extracurricular programs at TOPS
4) Build community and communication within TOPS, and between TOPS and the broader community of Seattle
5) Provide direction to the Friends of TOPS in allocating funds raised by TOPS families, consistent with the school mission and the Site Council strategic plan
6) Evaluate the state of the school and parent-funded programs
7) Advocate for the interests of TOPS with the Seattle School District and the City of Seattle
8) Attend to other issues, such as student safety or facility maintenance and improvement, as they arise.

II. MEMBERSHIP

A. Expectations
Members of the Site Council represent and are expected to communicate with their constituency, but they vote in the best interests of the school as a whole. Members of the Site Council are not paid for their services to the Site Council.

B. Community
The TOPS at Seward Site Community shall be defined as: the building principal, vice-principal, all certificated and classified staff, all in-building program staff, all parents or legal guardians of children enrolled in TOPS, and enrolled students.

C. Site Council
The Site Council membership shall consist of 23 individuals, each with one vote.
There shall be 11 staff members of the Site Council. These include the principal; vice-principal; eight representatives for certificated and non-certificated staff; and one staff representative of the child care program at the school.

There shall be 12 non-staff members of the Site Council. These include:

- 9 parents or guardians of children enrolled in TOPS, three from each of the following grade bands:
  a) K through Grade 2
  b) Grade 3 through Grade 5, and
  c) Grade 6 through Grade 8
- 1 representative from the Coalition for Social Justice (CSJ)
- 1 representative from the Associated Student Body (ASB), and
- 1 representative from the Eastlake Community. This representative must not be a TOPS parent.

D. Election of Members

Members of the Site Council will be elected, with the exception of the building principal, the vice-principal, the childcare program representative, the appointed Coalition for Social Justice representative, the Associated Student Body representative and the Eastlake community representative. Efforts will be made to recruit members who are representative of the entire school population, especially with regard to ethnic and economic diversity.

- Eight staff representatives from the elementary school, the middle school, and from other academic programs will be elected by the entire TOPS staff (to include teachers, librarians, administrators, etc.) based on or in proportion to student enrollment.
- Nine parent representatives will be elected through public ballot by fellow TOPS parents. The grade-band an elected parent represents is determined by the grade his or her child will attend the September following the spring election; a parent with two or more children must decide which grade-band s/he will represent. A parent representative must be the parent or legal guardian of a child enrolled at TOPS at the time of the election and must not be employed at TOPS by the Seattle School District. A parent must resign from the Site Council when his or her student(s) stop attending TOPS.

E. Appointment of members

- The building principal and vice-principal shall automatically serve as appointed members to Site Council.
- One representative from the childcare program in the building will be selected by that program.
- One representative is appointed to the Site Council by the Coalition for Social Justice committee.
- The elected president of the Associated Student Body shall be appointed to represent that body on Site Council.
- One community representative to be chosen by the Eastlake Community Council. The community representative must not be a parent of a student currently attending TOPS.

F. Membership Terms

The Site Council staff membership term shall be for one year, with the option to serve more.

The parent membership term shall be for two years, with parents serving a maximum of two consecutive terms. The community representative shall be confirmed or reconfirmed to the Site Council annually by the Eastlake Community Council.
A term begins at the June meeting following elections in May.

If a member resigns before the end of his or her term, his or her replacement shall serve to the end of the school year, and shall be eligible to serve an additional two consecutive terms. Replacements will be appointed by the Site Council executive committee and ratified by the voting membership of the Site Council.

**G. Friends of TOPS**

Members of the TOPS Site Council automatically serve as directors of the 501(c)(3) (nonprofit) corporation known as “Friends of the Option Program at Seward (TOPS)”, hereafter known as Friends of TOPS, the purpose of which is to provide a legal entity which can accept gifts and donations, and expend the same, to support the educational programs at TOPS.

**H. Removal of members**

An elected member of the Site Council may be removed from office for misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance by a recall election, which may be initiated by the Site Council or the constituency group from which the member was elected. The procedures are the following: 1) the Site Council may request a recall election after a three-fourths majority vote of its members, or 2) the constituency group (e.g., parents, faculty, classified staff) may request a recall election by a petition containing the signatures of 5 percent of its bona fide members. The recall election will then be conducted by the appropriate constituency group within 60 days of the recall motion or petition.

**I. Nominations Process**

The executive committee of the Site Council shall appoint a nominations committee to recruit at least two candidates for each open parent and faculty position prior to the scheduled election. Candidates shall be sought who represent the diversity of the school population, who are committed to the concept of school self-governance, and who would be energetic and positive Site Council members. The recruitment process shall include public notice soliciting interested candidates a minimum of four weeks prior to election of new members, to ensure that all TOPS community members are offered the opportunity to participate. The Nominating Committee shall supervise the elections process for staff and parents. They shall also see to it that the childcare staff, Coalition for Social Justice, student, and Eastlake Community Council representative positions are filled in the manner prescribed in these bylaws.

**III. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**A. Leadership**

There shall be four officers of the Site Council: chair, assistant chair, secretary, and treasurer. These officers shall be elected by the Site Council at its June meeting for the following academic year; only elected (not appointed) members of Site Council shall be eligible to run for an officer position. Those at the June meeting whose terms are expiring shall not vote on new officers. An officer's term shall be no longer than two years. The assistant chair may be selected with the intention of preparing to serve as chair. An executive committee, consisting of the principal, vice-principal, the elected officers, and any other individuals in positions deemed necessary by the executive committee will serve as a leadership team for the Site Council.

**B. Chair**

The powers and duties of the chair shall be to have general supervision, direction, and control of the business and affairs of the Site Council.
C. **Assistant Chair**  
The role of the assistant chair shall be to aid the chair in carrying out his or her functions.

D. **Secretary**  
The powers and duties of the secretary are to keep minutes of all the Site Council meetings, to maintain all important documents (such as bylaws), to maintain and annually publish the Site Council roster, to see that all notices are given with the provisions of these bylaws or as required by law, and generally to perform all duties of the secretary as required by the executive committee of the Site Council.

E. **Treasurer**  
The treasurer shall chair the Finance and Budget Committee of the Friends of TOPS Corporation, and shall be responsible for financial management of the corporation.

F. **Principal and Vice-Principal**  
The Principal and Vice-Principal of the school serve automatically on the Site Council (although they are not eligible to serve as chair), and their powers and duties are as described in school district policy.

IV. **MEETINGS**

A. **Calling Meetings**  
The Site Council shall meet on a monthly basis in a designated meeting room within the school. A quorum consists of a majority of the membership as defined in section IV. E., and a quorum shall be required in the event of a decision to be made by Site Council. The annual meeting calendar shall be placed in the school directory and the newsletter, and shall be announced at all parent meetings. Emergency meetings may be called by the executive committee with a minimum of a 24 hour notice to be posted in the school office or on the web site; notice shall include purpose of meeting. All Site Council members must be notified by phone with at least 24 hours of notice. All meetings are open and public. The Site Council encourages active participation from the entire school community.

B. **Absenteeism**  
If a member has two consecutive unexcused absences, the chair shall contact the person, requesting an explanation of the absences and the member's intentions about remaining on the Site Council. Said member may be subject to removal by the executive committee.

C. **Agenda Preparation and Distribution**  
The executive committee shall prepare and distribute an agenda for each Site Council meeting five days in advance of the meeting except in the case of an emergency session.

D. **Committees**  
The Site Council shall create committees to accomplish its tasks, and shall solicit members to compose such committees. Two committees are required: the Finance and Budget Committee of the Friends of TOPS corporation, and the Nominating Committee. The committees shall select their own chairs, with the exception of the Finance and Budget Committee, which is chaired by the elected treasurer, and the Nominating Committee, whose chair is appointed by the executive committee.

Committees may involve people who are not on the Site Council, and will determine their own meeting schedules. Committees are expected to send representatives to the Site Council meetings to report on their activities, and are permitted to participate fully in Site Council discussions.
E. Decision Making
In making decisions, all present are afforded an opportunity to understand the issue under discussion and to participate in the discussion. The chair of the Site Council is responsible for moving the group towards, and listening for, consensus.

While everyone present is eligible to participate in the discussion, only those named as members of the Site Council in Sections II. D. and II. E. are eligible to participate when a vote is taken. Each Site Council member has one vote; in the case of a “shared Site Council seat”, those sharing the Site Council position also share a single vote.

A quorum must be present in order for a vote to be taken. A quorum shall consist of a minimum of 12 Site Council members; further, in order to constitute a quorum a minimum of 6 members representing staff and 6 members representing the parent body and community shall be present.

Decisions shall be made by majority vote (over 50%) of Site Council members present.

F. Records
A file of the current strategic plan, Site Council policies, and minutes shall be maintained by the secretary in the school library and/or the school office and/or the TOPS web site at all times. Minutes of the last Site Council meeting shall be distributed to all Site Council members, along with the agenda of the upcoming meeting, five days prior to each meeting.

G. Finance
The Friends of TOPS corporation shall have a Finance and Budget Committee composed of three persons, one being the Treasurer of Friends of TOPS. Responsibilities should be divided for control purposes as follows: one person will make deposits; a second person will write and sign checks; the Treasurer will approve check requests, balance accounts, and prepare reports to the IRS and Site Council, and perform other duties as necessary. It is advised that the Treasurer have an accounting background.

G. Plan and Policy Adoption
The site council shall be responsible for adopting an annual strategic plan. It shall also adopt policies which it believes contribute to academic excellence and building a sense of community.

H. Principal Evaluation and Selection
The site council shall participate in an annual evaluation of the principal, and will actively participate in the selection of a new principal should a vacancy occur.

V. BYLAWS CHANGES

Bylaws modifications may be made by majority vote of the Site Council membership in accordance with Section IV. E. when:
1) the proposed changes have been announced in the school newsletter, and
2) the proposed changes have been discussed at one meeting and are voted on at the following meeting.

VI. DISSOLUTION

The Site Council may dissolve itself at any time provided it believes it has given the school community adequate time and opportunity for discussion.