



Traut Core Knowledge School Charter

May 29, 1998, as amended 2000, 2007, 2011, and 2012

1. Introduction

1.1 Original Proposal

The original proposal for this school was approved by the Poudre R-1 School District Board of Education in April 1993.

1.2 Definitions

Site Based Management: A decentralized management system in which the school and/or site become the primary decision making and management authority using a shared decision making model representing the school community.

Shared Decision Making: A collaborative process in which issues are presented, defined, discussed, and resolved through commitment and involvement of school community, and in which decision makers are accountable for the results of their decisions.

Covenant: A set of core values and beliefs collaboratively determined by the school community that serve as a basis for decision making.

Charter: A constitution delineating the composition of the decision making body, the decisions to be made, the responsible party or parties for making those decisions, the process used to reach them and the process for making changes to the Charter.

Decision Making Matrix: A working document whose purpose is to meticulously define the role of each member of the TCKS community with respect to decision making in the school.

School community: TCKS Parents, staff and students (represented by their parents).

Partnership: A collaborative effort between parents and staff as equals.

2. School Name

Our school name is currently Traut Core Knowledge School (TCKS).

3. Approval and Changes to the Charter

- a. This Charter shall be accepted when approved by a 2/3 majority of the voting parents and a 2/3 majority of the voting staff. A voting staff member in this context includes the principal and Certified and Classified staff who are contracted for at least 50% and hired from the Traut Core Knowledge School staffing allocation.
- b. Any member of the school community may propose changes to these bylaws at any time. Changes should be made in written form and submitted to the Site Based Management Council (SBMC).
- c. To amend this Charter requires a three-fourths affirmative vote of the Parent Advisory Board and a three-fourths affirmative vote of the Teacher Advisory Board, followed by a vote of the entire school community with one vote per parent and staff member. The SBMC will schedule a vote once each spring for any change proposals received since last vote. Changes to the Charter must be approved by a 2/3 majority of the voting parents and a 2/3 majority of the voting staff. A voting staff member in this context includes the principal and Certified and Classified staff who are contracted for at least 50% and hired from the Traut Core Knowledge School staffing allocation.

4. Site Based Management Council

The Site Based Management Council (SBMC) will consist of the Parent Advisory Board (PAB) and the Teacher Advisory Board (TAB). The PAB shall consist of seven members elected by the school parents. One of the seven PAB members may be an outside community member. The TAB shall consist of the principal plus six members elected by the school staff. One of the six TAB members may be a classified staff member.

4.1 Responsibilities of the SBMC

The Site Based Management Council is the primary policy-making body in TCKS. It is this group that sets the school's goals, improvement strategies, and calendar, and makes all major site policies. Any authority not mandated by statute or State or District policy either resides with the SBMC or is delegated by the SBMC. The SBMC shall maintain the Decision-Making Matrix which carefully outlines the responsibilities of all members of the school community with regard to decisions and policies of the school. The final authority for the contents and interpretation of the matrix resides with the SBMC. In cases of controversy, the SBMC may choose to retain decision-making authority from the groups to whom authority has been delegated. The SBMC responsibilities include:

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- a. Implementing and administering the covenant of the school through school policy decisions.
- b. Providing for financial management.
- c. Providing strategic planning for the school.
- d. Promoting effective communication and goodwill between all members of the school community.
- e. Promoting a positive model of parent/teacher partnership within Poudre School District.
- f. Representing the school to the community and the Poudre School District.
- g. Overseeing committee functions.

4.2 SBMC Meetings

- a. The SBMC will meet in regular session a minimum of four times each year. A quorum will consist of nine members of the SBMC.
- b. All actions must receive nine affirmative votes to pass. Proxy votes will not be accepted.
- c. All SBMC votes will be reported by name in the meeting minutes.
- d. All meetings, except executive sessions, are open to all community members.
- e. There will be provisions for input from community members at all meetings.
- f. The time and agenda of all SBMC meetings shall be published by Friday the week before the meeting. Agenda items will not be added once the agenda has been published. Meeting minutes will be made public once they have been approved.

4.3 Meetings of Executive Session

- a. The PAB president, TAB president or principal may call a special closed meeting of the SBMC to discuss issues involving individuals within the school community.
- b. The school community will be notified of upcoming executive session meetings.

4.4 Hiring Staff

- a. School staff shall be hired by the school principal and a hiring committee consisting of an equal number of parents and teachers. The hiring committee shall not exceed 10 members. The TAB will select staff members for the hiring committee. The PAB will select parents for the hiring committee which will include at least one PAB and at least one non-PAB parent.
- b. The school principal has responsibility for final selection.

4.5 Hiring the School Principal

- a. The Poudre School District Board of Education has hiring responsibility for the school principal.
- b. When the need arises to hire a principal, a selection committee will be appointed consisting of an equal number of non-PAB parents, staff members and PAB members, with a minimum

of 6 and maximum of 12. The TAB will select the staff members and the PAB will select the parents to participate on the selection committee. The selection committee shall conduct interviews and select two to four leading candidates by simple majority. Those leading candidates who meet the approval of both the PAB and TAB by majority vote will become final candidates to be voted on by the selection committee. A 2/3-majority vote of the selection committee will determine the recommendation for principal.

- c. The Poudre School District Board of Education will determine minimum requirements for the position of principal and will have final approval of any candidates who are recommended.

4.6 Site Based Management Council Accountability

The SBMC is accountable to the school community. Decisions made by the SBMC should reflect the school covenant and input from the school community. They will also adhere to applicable state laws and Poudre School District policies, unless a waiver is obtained.

5. Parent Advisory Board (PAB)

The seven members of the PAB will be elected from among the parent population to represent the interests of the parents and students in site policy decisions. They will be advocates for parents and students for decisions and issues in the school. It is also the responsibility of the PAB to appoint parent representatives to the District Advisory Board and the district's Boundary Committee, and to conduct at least one evaluation of the principal's performance each year. Other responsibilities may be delegated by the SBMC.

5.1 Eligibility

- a. All parents with children currently enrolled in TCKS are eligible to run for a PAB position. Parents who have served two consecutive terms on the PAB are not eligible for re-election for the following term.
- b. All parents are eligible to vote in PAB elections.
- c. One PAB position may be filled by a non-parent community member.

5.2 Nominating and Voting

- a. Any parent may nominate herself / himself or any other parent, with the other parent's permission, for the open PAB positions.
- b. Each parent has one vote.
- c. Elections will be held by the first week in May each year. Nomination for the open positions must be submitted by the Monday of the second full week in April.
- d. Ballots will consist of all individuals nominated for the open positions. Parents will vote for a number of candidates equal to the number of openings. For example, if five parents are

running for three positions, parents will select three of five names. The three individuals with the most votes will fill the positions. To be valid a ballot must have a number of votes equal to the number of openings.

- e. Votes will be counted by the continuing PAB members and a TAB representative.

5.3 Campaigning

- a. Organized campaigning will be limited to a maximum of two informal meetings at the school, sponsored by the current PAB to give parents a chance to meet prospective PAB members.
- b. Each candidate will supply a biographical sketch, which will be sent home to all parents.

5.4 Terms

Terms shall begin the day after the last day of school, and proceed for two consecutive years.

5.5 Resignations and Removal

- a. In the event that a PAB member resigns, becomes ineligible, or is removed before the end of the elected term, the PAB may, at its discretion, either continue to operate with fewer members or hold an election for a replacement.
- b. PAB members attending less than 50 percent of all PAB and SBMC meetings in any four-month time period will be subject to removal at the discretion of the PAB by a majority vote of the remainder of the PAB
- c. Any group of parents may call for a recall election by gathering the signatures from 25 percent of the parent population. The recall issue will be resolved in a PAB meeting within 7 days of receipt of the recall petition. A recall election will be held within one month following the same process as a general election. The individual recalled is eligible to be re-elected in the recall election.
- d. A parent elected to fill a position opened by resignation or removal will complete the original term.
- e. The newly elected PAB member may or may not fill the same office as the previous member, at the discretion of the PAB.

5.6 PAB Offices

- a. The PAB offices shall be:
 - 1. President
 - 2. Vice president
 - 3. Treasurer
 - 4. Secretary
 - 5. Communications Coordinator

6. Strategic Planning Advisor
7. Strategic Planning Advisor

- b. Between the election and the last day of school, PAB members for the following year shall select from among themselves one individual to serve in each of the PAB offices for the following year by majority vote.
- c. Terms for each office are one year.
- d. All PAB members must be present to select officers.
- e. There is not a limit on the number of terms one individual may serve in one office.

5.6.1 President

- a. Serves as the facilitator for all PAB meetings. The president shares facilitator responsibility at SBMC meetings.
- b. Calls all regular PAB meetings
- c. Coordinates and publishes the agenda for PAB. Coordinates the agenda for SBMC meetings with the TAB President and the principal.
- d. Submits PAB proposals to the TAB
- e. Serves as SAAC facilitator.

5.6.2 Vice President

- a. Serves as the president when the president is absent.
- b. Coordinates committee activity.
- c. Reports on Poudre School Board of Education Actions.

5.6.3 Treasurer

- a. Works with principal and the TAB treasurer to propose a budget for each school year and attend regularly scheduled meetings of the principal and TAB Treasurer.
- b. Places the proposed budget on the SBMC agenda along with TAB Treasurer for action.
- c. Tracks expenditures and assures follow-up reporting on funds spent.

5.6.4 Secretary

- a. Records and publishes all PAB meetings and actions.
- b. Shares responsibility for recording and publishing SBMC meetings with the TAB secretary.
- c. Records and publishes all votes of the PAB in the minutes.
- d. Maintains a record of current school policies.

5.6.5 Communications Coordinator

Organizes and facilitates communication between the PAB and other groups, such as the parent body, the staff, the District Advisory Board and Boundary Committee representatives, and the district.

5.6.6 Strategic Planning Advisor

Works with school principal and TAB Planning Advisors on long range plans for the school.

5.7 Voting

- a. Four PAB members constitute a quorum.
- b. All actions must receive four affirmative votes to pass.
- c. All votes will be recorded by name in the PAB meeting minutes.

5.8 Regular Meetings

- a. All meetings of the PAB shall be open to all members of the school community. The only exceptions to this are meetings of Executive Session.
- b. There will be provisions for input from community members at all meetings.
- c. Regular meetings of the PAB shall be scheduled once a month or as deemed necessary.
- d. Any two PAB members may call a special meeting with proper notice to the school community.
- e. The time and agenda of all regular PAB meetings shall be published by Friday the week before the meeting.

5.9 Meetings of Executive Session

- a. The PAB president may call a special closed meeting of the PAB to discuss issues involving individuals within the school community.
- b. The school community will be notified of upcoming executive session meetings.

6. Teacher Advisory Board

The TAB shall consist of the principal and six members elected from among the staff to represent the interests of the staff and students in site policy decisions. The TAB will be advocates for the staff and students for decisions and issues in the school. Other responsibilities may be delegated by the SBMC.

6.1 Eligibility

- a. All Certified and Classified staff who are contracted for 50% or more are eligible to run for a TAB position. A staff member in this context includes the principal and personnel who are hired from the Traut Core Knowledge School staffing allocation.
- b. One TAB position may be filled by a classified employee.
- c. All staff members are eligible to vote in TAB elections.

6.2 Nominating and Voting

- i. Any staff member may nominate himself/herself or any other staff member, with the other staff member's consent, for a TAB position.
- ii. Nominations for the open positions must be submitted to the principal by the first school day in May.
- iii. Elections will be held by the first week in May each year.
- iv. Each staff member has one ballot. To be counted as valid, a ballot must have no more selections than positions available.
- v. Votes will be counted by a staff member not on the ballot, the principal and a PAB representative.
- vi. The candidates receiving the highest number of votes cast will be elected until all open positions are filled. One member of TAB may be a classified employee. If two or more classified employees are running for the TAB, and two or more classified employees would have been placed on TAB, the classified employee with the higher number of votes shall be elected to serve.

6.3 Terms

- a. Terms begin at the first TAB meeting after the school year ends and proceed as designated for two years.
- b. There is no limit to the number of terms an individual may serve on the TAB.
- c. Three members will be elected each year in order to maintain continuity on the TAB.

6.4 Resignations and Removals

- a. In the event that a TAB member resigns, becomes ineligible, or is removed before the end of the term, the TAB may at its discretion either continue to operate with fewer members or hold an election for a replacement.
- b. TAB members attending less than 50 percent of all TAB and SBMC meetings in any four-month time period will be subject to removal at the discretion of the TAB by a majority vote of the remainder of the TAB.
- c. Nominations for the vacant position will be open for fourteen days from the resignation or removal (during the school year – vacations and summer months excluded). A vote will be scheduled within seven days of the close of the nomination period. Voting will be the same as in a regular election.
- d. A staff member elected to fill a position opened by resignation or removal will complete the original term.

- e. The newly elected TAB member may or may not fill the same office as the previous member, at the discretion of the TAB.

6.5 TAB Offices

- a. The TAB offices shall be:
 - 1. President
 - 2. Vice President
 - 3. Treasurer
 - 4. Secretary
 - 5. Two Strategic Planning Advisors
- b. Between the election and the last day of school, TAB members for the following year shall select from among themselves one individual to serve in each of the TAB offices for the following year by majority vote.
- c. Terms for each office are one year.
- d. All TAB members must be present to select officers.
- e. There is no limit on the number of terms one individual may serve in one office.

6.5.1 President

- a. Assigns the role of facilitator for TAB meetings, rotating responsibility among TAB members.
- b. The TAB president shares facilitator responsibility at SBMC meetings.
- c. Calls all regular TAB meetings
- d. Coordinates and publishes the agenda for TAB meetings. Coordinates the agenda for SBMC meetings with the PAB President and the principal.
- e. Represents the TAB at regularly scheduled meetings of the principal and PAB president.

6.5.2 Vice President

- a. Serves as the president when the president is absent.
- b. Coordinates committee activity
- c. Attends PAB meetings along with the principal should a special meeting be called regarding a specific personnel issue.

6.5.3 Treasurer

- a. Works with principal and PAB Treasurer to propose a budget for each school year, and attend regularly scheduled meetings of the principal and PAB Treasurer.
- b. Places the proposed budget on the SBMC agenda along with PAB Treasurer for action.
- c. Tracks expenditures and assures follow up reporting on funds spent to TAB.

6.5.4 Secretary

- a. Records and publishes all TAB meetings and actions.
- b. Shares responsibility for recording and publishing SBMC meetings with the PAB secretary.
- c. Records and publishes all votes of the TAB in the minutes.

6.5.5 Strategic Planning Advisors

Works with school principal and PAB representatives on long-range plans for the school.

6.6 Regular Meetings

- a. All meetings of the TAB shall be open to all members of the school community. The only exceptions to this are meetings of Executive Session.
- b. The TAB meets a minimum of once a month during the school year. The schedule of meetings will be determined at the first meeting after elections in September.
- c. Any TAB member may place an item on the TAB agenda.
- d. The time and agenda of all regular and special TAB meetings shall be published by Friday of the week preceding the meeting.
- e. TAB meetings will begin by accepting the minutes of the meeting before and then adjusting and prioritizing agenda items.
- f. There will be provisions for input from community members at all meetings.

6.7 Meetings of Executive Session

- a. The principal or TAB President may call a special closed meeting of the TAB to discuss issues involving individuals within the school community.
- b. The school community will be notified of upcoming executive session meetings.

6.8 Voting

- a. Four TAB members constitute a quorum.
- b. All actions must receive four affirmative votes to pass.
- c. All votes will be recorded by name in the TAB meeting minutes.

7. Committees

- a. In addition to the Site Based Management Council, committees shall be established to carry out much of the work of operating the school, doing necessary research, and making policy recommendations to the SBMC.

- b. All committees will consist of both parents and staff. SBMC may make exceptions as warranted.
- c. Committees shall elect from among their members a chairperson and any other positions that the committee deems valuable. The committee chair shall be responsible for reporting to and coordinating with the SBMC.
- d. There will be a PAB liaison to each permanent committee.
- e. Recommendations from committees will go to the SBMC for final approval.

The following committees are established as permanent committees:

7.1 Assessment Committee

The Assessment Committee's mission is to evaluate TCKS student and overall school progress toward established standards and goals. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Defining an assessment program to evaluate school and student progress toward the standards recommended by the Curriculum Committee and adopted by the SBMC.
- b. Assisting the School Accountability Advisory Committee (SAAC) in managing the school improvement plan: measure progress on annual goals, suggest areas for new goals and assist with the annual accountability report.
- c. Defining assessments to provide feedback on individual student progress to their parents and teachers.
- d. Gathering input from parents, staff and students for school improvement planning.
- e. Analyzing data to identify school strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- f. Communicating relevant information to the school community, school district or other appropriate parties.

7.2 Curriculum Committee

The Curriculum Committee's mission is to evaluate and recommend curriculum to ensure the best possible delivery of curriculum at TCKS. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Providing research, analysis and materials recommendations to the SBMC to assist in curriculum-related decision making, including adoption of textbooks and materials as well as study of curriculum-related issues.
- b. Providing analysis and support in the integration and implementation of PSD and CO standards.
- c. Providing analysis and support in the integration and implementation of our Core Knowledge Sequence and any related standards.
- d. Collaborating with staff on curriculum development and delivery and on meeting individual student needs.
- e. Assisting the SAAC in managing the school improvement plan: suggest new goals and assist as needed with the goal action plan.

7.3 Communications Committee

The Communication's Committee mission is to promote a positive image of our school in the community, as well as to positively influence our community in favor of choice in education.

7.4 Character Education Committee

The Character Education Committee's mission is to educate, motivate and help implement the development of our character education pillar in all aspects of school life. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Developing, defining and clarifying guidelines for character education at TCKS.
- b. Researching and compiling resource materials on the subject of character education.
- c. Being available to explain and share this information with faculty, parents and the community.
- d. Participating in activities at school that place value or focus on our 12 character qualities.

7.5 Fund Raising Committee

The Fund Raising Committee's mission is to raise additional funds for this school.

7.6 Grants Committee

The Grants Committee's mission is to generate funding in the form of cash grants and grants in kind from external sources. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Organizing and developing a standard grants guideline that will assist existing and future committee members in the timely writing, submittal and tracking of grant requests.
- b. Establishing a long-term relationship with a foundation or grant source to replace that originally enjoyed with the Challenge Foundation.

7.7 Hiring Committee

The Hiring Committee's mission is to hire the best available staff for TCKS. It will be comprised of the principal and an equal number of staff members and parents. Committee members are encouraged to serve more than one year to develop consistency within the Hiring Committee. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Interviewing and evaluating candidates in a fair, consistent and agreed upon manner.
- b. Hiring individuals who exhibit commitment to the position, demonstrate a genuine love of children, and who understand and embrace the philosophy and goals of our school.

7.8 Library Committee

The Library Committee's mission is to teach information skills within the framework of the curriculum and to provide materials and services that support the instructional program, as well as quality literature for recreational reading. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Stocking and managing the school library. It will oversee purchasing materials, receiving and sorting donated materials, maintaining a library checkout system, and operating the library during school hours.
- b. Communicating with the Technology Committee and provide support when technology is in place.
- c. Communicating with the Curriculum Committee, providing support for the Core Knowledge curriculum and the staff.
- d. Providing analysis and support in the integration and implementation of media and technology guidelines.

7.9 Parent Education Committee

The Parent Education Committee's mission is to promote parent education at TCKS. As full partners in education, all parents are encouraged to become informed about educational issues, especially those related to the five guiding principles defined in the TCKS School Covenant. Its responsibilities include:

- a. The ongoing education and attunement of parents to the TCKS five pillars, the Charter and Covenant.
- b. Securing resource materials used by TCKS parents and publishing lists of recommended materials.
- c. Providing forums for educational issues that relate to our primary school goals.
- d. Providing educational and parenting tips, which assist or supplement the primary school goals.
- e. Providing resource guides for parents as they relate to the primary school goals.

7.10 Technology Committee

The Technology Committee's mission is for the successful incorporation of technology into the TCKS curriculum. This requires understanding, commitment and support of the staff and parent community. Staff development is the catalyst to success. Also, technology is a tool of learning, not just the learning of the tool. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Preparing any hardware and software standards for technology deployment.
- b. Developing training and implementation plans for the technology.
- c. Developing curriculum enhancement and support. That is, to foster the use of technology in all curriculum areas.
- d. Evaluating and recommending to teachers and parents educational software.

7.11 VIPS Committee

The VIPS Committee's mission is overseeing in-class volunteer efforts. Its responsibilities include:

- a. Seeking the most efficient use of parent time and energy toward our educational goals.
- b. Recording volunteer time for the Poudre VIPS office.
- c. Assisting with the selection of classroom volunteer coordinators; provide training and information for them and for overall coordination of them.
- d. Keeping informed about PSD VIPS activities and assure TCKS participation where appropriate.

7.12 Ad-Hoc Committees

The SBMC, PAB, or TAB may appoint, commission, and decommission other temporary committees to address issues that arise.

7.13 School Accountability Advisory Committee (SAAC)

Accountability is the effective use of information to focus our energy toward the achievement of student results. It implies both responsibility and recourse. The Accountability Act of 1971 and Part 2 of the Public School Finance Act of 1988 provide the legal basis for accountability in public education. This process is administered through the State Board of Education rules and district guidelines.

Educational accountability in Colorado includes two key features: First, that there is significant involvement of the community in school improvement and planning. Second, that disclosure of actual progress is made to the public.

The School Accountability Advisory Committee (SAAC) is established to fulfill state-mandated accountability reporting requirements and to establish a yearly school improvement plan. This committee should report on how well the school is meeting the education objectives put forth in the school covenant.

The SAAC must submit a written report to the PSD Board of Education concerning the learning environment during that school year with a copy to the District Accountability Committee and the Superintendent by the end of each school year or at the beginning of the following school year. The report is to include information on conduct and disciplinary actions taken during the school year, and must be made available to parents and the general public. The report should review how the principal, staff, and parents carried out their responsibilities toward the adopted school improvement plan.

7.13.1 SAAC Mission

The SAAC is responsible for developing the annual school improvement plan using the Poudre School District critical study process and reporting at year's end on progress toward the plan. Profile information should be used for planning. Issues to be covered include:

1. The State Board goals of maximizing attendance, graduation rates (help for "at risk" students), and improving student achievement.
2. Strengths and needs related to education programs, research and other profile information.
3. Results from opinion surveys of students, former students, staff and community members.
4. Student achievement results separated by various student populations.
5. Reduction in consistent patterns of discrepancies in student performance between the various groups.
6. Additional goals as desired.

The SAAC makes recommendations to the SBMC of the school relative to the prioritization of expenditures of school funds.

7.13.2 Relationship of the SAAC to the SBMC

The SAAC shall write the school improvement plan and the associated report. The plan will be submitted to the SBMC for formal adoption. The SBMC shall coordinate efforts for implementing the plan and will otherwise be responsible for prioritizing and coordinating the effort.

7.13.3 SAAC Membership

The membership of the SAAC shall consist of:

1. SBMC
2. Chairs of the permanent committees or their designees.
3. The Student Advisory Board president or designee.
4. At least one adult who is *not* a staff member or a parent of a child at TCKS.

7.13.4 SAAC Meetings

The SAAC shall meet biannually in public meetings and more frequently as needed to carry out its assignment. The PAB President facilitates SAAC meetings. Each member shall have one vote in recommending the annual school improvement plan and adopting the annual school performance evaluation, which will be by simple majority. The report may include any minority opinions.

8. Annual Meeting

TCKS will hold an annual meeting within the first 75 days of the school year. The purpose of the annual meeting is to welcome new parents, students and teachers, and to discuss major goals for the year. The school principal and School Accountability Advisory Committee will present school goals for the year.