

Golden Bridges School
Social Justice Committee
Governance and decision-making protocol

It is a priority to the Golden Bridges Social Justice Committee that our decision-making reflects our values, norms, and goals. We strive not to replicate systemic oppressive patterns that give white, cisgendered, heteronormative, and/or Judeo-Christian people more authority and power than people of color or other marginalized peoples.

We practice full transparency about decision-making and hold accountable the people who make decisions that impact the committee or the school community at large, as it relates to issues of social justice. Committee members or school community members who believe a decision made by the Social Justice Committee is harmful should bring their concern to one of the two group facilitators/moderators, as listed in the subcommittee and roles [spreadsheet](#).

Attending meetings: Any member of our community (a parent of a child currently enrolled at Golden Bridges School or faculty or staff member) is welcome to attend a Social Justice meeting at any time, without any expectation that they will continue to attend meetings.

Committee Membership: To be considered a core voting member of the committee, one must have attended three of the last six meetings*. (Therefore, new members need to wait until their fourth meeting to vote.) This number has been determined in order to maintain continuity and safety, and to value the commitment required in undertaking this work. The attendance list will be available as a document on the SJC Google Group.

*If a member expresses interest in staying involved but has extenuating circumstances that prevent them from coming to a meeting, they will not automatically lose their membership if they miss three or more meetings. The Governance Committee will track voting members and determine voting eligibility for active members who have extenuating circumstances that prevent them from coming to a meeting.

Google Group: The Google Group is a tool for active committee members to continue work between meetings, as well as post articles, questions and discuss social justice-related issues. Events and articles of interest to the full school community will be shared in the newsletter and GBS Social Group. If you attend fewer than three meetings within a school year, you will be considered inactive, and removed from the Google Group. If you have extenuating circumstances, please contact the governance subcommittee to discuss further.

Work Structure

There are currently five subcommittees of the SJC. If no subcommittee meeting time is scheduled on the agenda, subcommittees should meet between full committee meetings. Subcommittees have autonomy and the power to make decisions within the area their subcommittee covers. Each subcommittee has equal authority within the SJC, i.e., there is no hierarchy. To reach decisions, subcommittees use the “fist to five” decision-making approach (as described below). If a decision requires action by the SJC as a whole, the subcommittee must bring the decision to the full committee for a vote.

1. **Governance:** Responsible for holding SJC accountable to the structures and criteria for group participation and decision-making that the committee has agreed upon. Manages

Google Group (add or remove members, moderate discussions when necessary), keeps the SJC webpage current, tracks meeting attendance, creates the agenda, and ensures that we have a facilitator, timekeeper, process checker, and recorder for each meeting.

Also, through the SJC liaison(s), coordinates with the school (newsletter, meeting announcements, space usage, scheduling) and communicates SJC recommendations and priorities to school administration. Ideally the SJC Governance Facilitators will have completed SF-CESS facilitator training or similar training.

2. **Fundraising:** Organize fundraisers with the goal of generating funds to support the work of the SJC while also making social justice-related offerings (e.g., literary series, film nights, speakers, etc.) to the larger community. Identify and apply for grants on behalf of the SJC.
3. **Community Action:** Organize and publicize three annual drives, one family engagement opportunity and an ongoing (monthly) service learning project. Drives may include food drive, sock drive, coat drive, and other service projects at GBS
4. **Outreach & Enrollment:** Support GBS in creating a diverse and engaged community of students, parents, teachers and administrators at GBS. This is done by learning about and connecting with other schools, supporting the school's efforts to be engaged with other communities, and assisting the admissions department as needed.
5. **Faculty Recruitment:** Advises staff in recruiting faculty that share our commitment to equity and inclusion.

Decision Making

- Only core members may vote.
- Decisions are made via “fist-to-five” voting (see below).
- Any issue that will be voted upon at a meeting needs to appear on the agenda (which will be sent out at least two days prior to the meeting). Pertinent information related to the issue should also be sent ahead of time.
- If the outcome of the vote could have been different had more current core members been present, those members will be able to vote via email (with a deadline) after reading the meeting minutes, and the final decision will be announced via the Google Group or at the next meeting.
- If any core member feels that they need more time to review or think about an issue, we will postpone the vote and vote via Doodle Poll (with a deadline) or at the next meeting.

Fist-to-Five Consensus

In order to foster group solidarity and participatory decision making, we will use the fist-to-five consensus process. This process does not require everyone to agree, but it does mean that everyone agrees to implement and actively support the decision if it is the best one under the circumstances, with no hidden reservations. Fist-to-five moves the emphasis on those who disagree to convince the majority, the opposite of traditional consensus. While fist-to-five does not guarantee full agreement, it does guarantee that each person has the opportunity to be heard well.

Procedure:

Once a decision is discussed and proposed to be voted on:

- The facilitator reads the list of present and current core voting members.
- The facilitator explains that on the count of three, each core voting member should hold up between one and five fingers, indicating the level of support for the decision on the table.
- All core voting members must participate. By using fingers or a fist, the team members indicate their views:
 - Five fingers = best
 - Four fingers = good
 - Three fingers = okay
 - Two fingers = needs more discussion
 - One finger = not good
 - Fist = totally against or broken
- The committee should consider consensus reached if all hands show three or more fingers. Should any one individual (or more than one individual) display a fist or less than three fingers, then a consensus has not been reached. A majority in agreement is not a consensus.
- The committee will continue its discussion on the topic by first hearing from an individual with a fist or one or two fingers displayed, and then from a representative of the three fingers or more group. After the discussion, ask for a new show of hands.
- Continue the process until the team ultimately reaches consensus.
- If after a reasonable amount of repetitions and discussion, the committee cannot reach consensus, all voting members maintaining one or two fingers or a fist will meet with the committee facilitators to develop a plan to address concerns and bring a new proposal to the committee at the next monthly meeting, or table the topic for future attention.