

Proposed Change to the Terms of the US and MS MSPA Co-presidents

Submitted in May 2017 by:

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Why make a change?

- Continuity in leadership will better serve the school and be an easier transition for our volunteers. It allows more thoughtful, longer range planning and execution of messaging and events. It encourages a gentler learning curve and the ability to observe all aspects of the position before officially taking the role.
- Our personal experiences with succession planning at other local elementary level schools
- Awareness that of our local cohort schools (SHP, Casti, Crystal, Priory, Nueva), we are the only school that doesn't have some sort of overlapping or staggered multi-year terms for the presidents
- Several unsolicited conversations with Menlo administrators, fellow parents and Board of Trustees members who question the logic and continuity of our current set up

Our proposal

Based on input informally collected from the Menlo Head of School, this year's MSPA Council, select Menlo Trustees, Menlo parents and other local school parent group presidents, we've drafted a proposed change for the tenure of the US and MS co-president roles:

- US and MS co-presidents are essentially a **two-year commitment – first year is a lighter role as VP US/MS President Elect who shadows, attends council meetings and serves on nominating committee; second year as official US/MS co-president.**

Additional thoughts on proposed change

- Ensures co-presidents have knowledge and experience to "hit the ground running" for start of leadership year, while VP US/MS President Elects also provide an additional sounding board for the current co-presidents.
- Allows the next co-presidents to serve on the nominating committee which selects their council for their leadership year. This is a large committee representing the entire school. It relies on anonymous voting, as well as nominations from the community, so there will not be an opportunity to "handpick" a council.
- To avoid having 2 people on nominating committee 3 years in a row (as VP

US/MS President Elects, current co-presidents, then VPs Nom Comm) current co-presidents will no longer sit on nominating committee. VP US/MS President Elects will *serve* on nominating committee before they become president, and then *run* nominating committee after their term ends. (In the event that a VP US President Elect starts serving with a junior as their only Menlo student, they will be given the option to come back and serve as VP nom comm after their child graduates. If they decline, their MS counterpart can run the nominating committee solo, or call on any past presidents to co chair the committee.)

- To avoid having 2 people on the council 3 years in a row (as VP US/MS President Elects, current co- presidents, then VPs Nom Comm) VPs Nom Comm will no longer sit on the council. They will already have a solid understanding of the roles they need to fill from their previous 2 years on the council.

Tactical aspects of proposed change

- US co-president must have a student in the US division during both VP and co-president years which leaves a deep pool for potential candidates.
- In the current timeline for nominating committee, in order to ensure a MS co-president has a student in the MS division during both VP and co-president years, and considering that a **potential** incoming 6th grader does not guarantee that a 7th or 8th grade parent would be in the MS division for two more years, the nominating committee could only consider current 6th grade parents as candidates for VP MS President Elect followed by co-president.
- To ensure that we have a bigger pool from which to nominate candidates in the MS division, we propose adjusting the current nominating committee timeline *slightly*. All but the VP US/MS President Elect positions will be slated following the current nominating committee process for general membership approval in March. The nominating committee may identify a short list of candidates for VP US/MS President Elect, but will wait to decide whom to nominate until after admissions results so that they can also consider 7th or 8th grade parents who may now have younger children who will be coming to the MS.
- The nominating committee can reconvene (in person or by email) in April or May (before the May MSPA meetings) to officially nominate just these 2 positions. (The VP US President Elect is less affected by the admissions results than the MS position, and some years may not require waiting for the admissions results to nominate the MS position if a current 6th grade parent seems to have the experience for the role. However, we propose still waiting until after admissions and nominating US and MS together for simplicity and so as not to appear/convey that some years there aren't any current 6th grade parents that are a good fit for the role.) We can just establish that these positions will be nominated on a slightly different schedule from the rest. The general membership can vote on these nominations in the final MSPA meeting that school year or the beginning of the next.

Next steps

- Review this proposed change with Head of School and other administrators he recommends.
- Present proposed change to Council for a vote of approval on 8/22/17
- Immediately provide written notification of proposed change for US MSPA meeting on 8/30/17 and MS MSPA meeting on 9/13/17 (which adheres to requirement to post at least 7 days prior to given MSPA meeting)
- Present change to general membership for a vote of approval at both MSPA meetings.
- If approved, incorporate changes to current guidelines for nominating committee (including removing sitting co-presidents), as well as remove requirement for VPs Nom Comm to serve on council.
- Just this year, convene the nominating committee for 2018-2019 early to nominate the VP US/MS President Elects for 2017-2018 so they have the benefit of some shadowing before they start their official co-president roles. This nominating committee will also reconvene as typical in December to nominate the other positions, and in April/May to nominate the VP US/MS President Elects for 2018-19.