

SPHERE CONSORTIUM 2021-2022

SPHERE History & Mission

SPHERE was founded in 1990 as a consortium of six Hartford-area independent schools funded by grants from the Howard and Bush Foundation and the DeWitt Wallace Readers Digest Foundation with a mission of helping foster a multicultural educational experience for our students and making our schools more inclusive. SPHERE hired an executive director and had a central office. The director organized student and faculty events and collected a bank of resumes of faculty and staff candidates. In its next chapter beginning in 1998, the centralized office was eliminated and programs were run by member schools. A summer institute for faculty and staff of member schools ran for a few years in the early 2000s and three new members joined SPHERE, bringing the total to 10 schools. There are now 13 member schools. Through its history SPHERE has remained focused on encouraging and assisting member schools as they collaborate in sustaining diverse, inclusive, and culturally responsive environments for teaching and learning.

The mission of SPHERE is to encourage and assist member schools as they collaborate in sustaining diverse, inclusive, and culturally responsive environments for teaching and learning. Members seek to foster a respect for difference and an understanding of multicultural perspectives in curricular and extracurricular programs.

SPHERE Board of Directors

The SPHERE Board is comprised of the heads of the thirteen member schools. The Board has three overarching responsibilities:

- 1) Helping shape and sustain the organization's philosophy and goals
- 2) Overseeing the organization's finances
- 3) Supporting the work of the diversity practitioners who lead the consortium's operations

SPHERE Diversity Practitioners

The diversity practitioners at the 13 members schools oversee and organize SPHERE programs for students and faculty. In the 2021-2022 academic year these include the following:

Students Events

- Social Justice Summit
- LatinxFest
- GSA socials
- Middle school program

Faculty Programs

- Opening of year professional development meeting — August
- Faculty of Color gatherings – spring and fall – through CODIS
- Professional Development Workshop – November
- Mid Year Faculty Program – January or February

Bylaws of SPHERE Consortium, Inc.

September 2005

ARTICLE I

NAME

The name of this organization shall be SPHERE (Supplementary Program in Hartford for Educational Reinforcement and Enrichment) Consortium, Inc. (sometimes referred to in these Bylaws as the "Consortium").

ARTICLE II

HISTORY AND MISSION

Sec. 1 SPHERE is a consortium of independent schools from the greater Hartford area that came together in the early 70's because of a common commitment to diversity, originally expressed through summer enrichment programs for students from the city of Hartford. Today, the Consortium consists of ten member schools.

Sec. 2 The mission of SPHERE is to help the member schools to collaborate in becoming and remaining culturally diverse, inclusive, and responsive environments for teaching and learning. To this end, the member schools, individually and collectively, seek to achieve diversity in faculties, staff, and student bodies, to create within each school and among the member schools a climate of respect for differences, to encourage multi-cultural perspectives in curricular and extracurricular programs, and to build bridges between city/suburb and public/private sectors, races, and classes.

SPHERE schools do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, age, or ability in the administration of their hiring, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, academic, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Sec. 1 Membership is open by invitation of the founding schools to independent schools within Hartford County which have adopted mission and anti-discrimination statements appropriate to the Consortium mission and which have adopted objectives similar to those of the Consortium.

Sec. 2 Membership carries with it certain dues and requires a statement of intent to maintain membership for at least three years.

ARTICLE IV

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Consortium shall be led by a Board of Directors (sometimes referred to in these Bylaws as the "Board"), which consists of the heads of the member schools, and others they may elect for appropriate terms, which includes a representative from the member schools' Deans of Faculty group and Multicultural Directors group. The total of the directors shall not exceed fifteen.

**ARTICLE V
MEETINGS**

Sec. 1 Regular meetings of the Board shall be held four times each year with the annual meeting taking place during the month of June.

Sec. 2 Special meetings may be called by the president of the Board or by a majority of the Executive Committee. Also, any member of the Board may request a special meeting by submitting a written request to the Executive Committee. Notice of the time, place, and subject matter of the special meeting shall be given to each director orally or in writing at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the called meeting.

**ARTICLE VI
QUORUM**

Sec. 1 At a regular meeting of the Board, a majority of the members of the Board shall constitute a quorum.

Sec. 2 At any meeting of a Board committee, a majority of the members shall constitute a quorum.

**ARTICLE VII
OFFICERS**

Sec. 1 The officers of the Consortium Board of Directors shall be president, vice president, secretary and treasurer.

Sec. 2 The president and vice president must be a head of school. The secretary and the treasurer need not be a head of school.

Sec. 3 Based on seniority of current headship, succession of leadership progresses from secretary to vice president to president on a two-year term basis. Non-heads would rotate out after serving as secretary or treasurer.

Sec. 4 The officers shall take office immediately following the annual meeting and shall hold their respective office for the term of two years or until their successors are appointed.

Sec. 5 Any officer may be removed, with or without cause, at any time by the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board of Directors. Any vacancy in any office, whether caused by removal, resignation, or death may be filled for the unexpired term by the Board of Directors.

**ARTICLE VIII
DUTIES OF THE OFFICERS**

Sec. 1 The president of the Consortium shall:
a) have general charge, oversight, and the direction of the property, affairs, and business of the Consortium

- b) preside at Board and Executive Committee meetings
- c) be a member ex-officio of all committees
- d) establish ad hoc committees as may be deemed necessary and designate their duties with the approval of the Executive Committee
- e) be authorized to sign and endorse checks, notes, and drafts in the business of the corporation
- f) after consultation with the Board, assign committee chairpersons to make committee assignments.

Sec. 2 The vice-president shall act in place of the president if the president is absent or incapacitated.

Sec. 3 The secretary shall:

- a) have recorded the minutes of the Executive Committee and Board meetings
- b) attend to the giving and serving of all notices of the Consortium and shall keep a list of the members of the Consortium
- c) have his/her books at all reasonable times be open to the examination of any member of the Consortium.

A paid consultant, functioning as an administrative assistant, shall assist the secretary in fulfillment of the above-listed duties.

Sec. 4 The treasurer shall:

- a) have the custody of the funds and securities of the Consortium, subject to the order of the members
- b) have deposited all moneys, checks, notes, and obligations accruing to the Consortium in one or more banks or trust companies, located in said Hartford County and shall have paid all just bills of the Consortium, so far as practicable, by check against said bank account or accounts.
- c) cause proper books of account to be kept, which shall at all reasonable times be open to the examination of any member of the Consortium and shall render reports to the Consortium at such times as the president shall order.

ARTICLE IX COMMITTEES

Sec. 1 There may be such standing, special, or ad hoc committees as the Board may establish from time to time for the discharge of particular duties, which duties shall be either specified by the Board or those normally engaged by such committees.

Sec. 2 Committee members are not required to be members of the Board.

Sec. 3 The chairperson of each committee shall:

- a) submit to the president a plan of work and goals for the year
- b) prepare a written report for the annual meeting to be filed with the secretary
- c) turn over to the successors of their committees all records in good order
- d) appoint an assistant as may be deemed necessary

e) present oral reports to the Board as necessary

Sec. 4 The Executive Committee shall:

- a) consist of the officers of the Consortium
- b) have all the powers of the Board between meetings of the Board
- c) meet prior to Board meetings as needed
- d) review the bylaws of the corporation.

ARTICLE X FINANCES

Sec. 1 Each institutional member of the Consortium shall pay a membership fee to be determined annually by the Board of Directors.

Sec. 2 The dates of the fiscal year of the Consortium shall be July 1st of one year through June 30th of the next year.

Sec. 3 The Board of Directors shall select an auditing overseer, in addition to the treasurer. It shall be the duty of the latter two to audit the accounts of the Consortium and make such reports as may be directed by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE XI AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Consortium Board of Directors, in person or by written proxy, thirty days previous notice in writing having been given.

ARTICLE XII MISCELLANEOUS

The Board shall establish such rules of procedures for the conduct of the business of the Consortium, and the actions and meetings of the members, the Board, and all committees.

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