

# PROCEDURES MANUAL

## West Mesa High School Instructional Council

August 29, 2014

### I. Instructional Council Rationale, Responsibilities, and Scope of Activities

A) This Procedures Manual was created in compliance with Article 5 C of the WMHS IC By-laws.

The IC has been established as part of a collaborative effort to improve and support the teaching and learning process at West Mesa High School. It is the intent of the District, the Federation, the Administration and the staff at West Mesa to allow the individuals on the council to use their collective expertise and experience concerning their site and community to address school issues that fall within the scope of instructional improvement.

IC members have certain obligations, rights and responsibilities of membership, including attending and actively participating on the IC; reaching out to the diversity of their represented group to hear their opinions and ideas; communicating those opinions to the IC; supporting goals and strategies to implement the school's Educational Plan for Student Success (90 Day Team); checking with supportive documents such as Board Policy and the Negotiated Agreement; and collectively supporting the school improvement process.

The IC shall comply with negotiated agreements, Board policies, District procedures/directives, New Mexico laws/regulations and Federal laws/regulations when addressing issues. Issues shall be addressed in a collaborative manner. Specific structure and protocol for the IC shall be developed by the IC and published for the school community.

The IC is empowered to address school issues that fall within the scope of instructional improvement. The IC will act as the leadership team that manages the process for the implementation of the Common Core State Standards at West Mesa. The Instructional Council is concerned with both process and content. It is important that the IC has collaboration among stakeholders working together to develop common visions for West Mesa.

The IC will employ the strategies of site-based management and shared decision-making. These strategies are dependent upon collaboration and consensus building. For shared decision making to work, the issues to be decided must be meaningful and not merely symbolic. Important decisions must be reached in a collaborative manner.

The community of West Mesa High School has a multitude of groups working to help our students, parents, staff and other members fulfill the school's mission and vision. We will use the term "**committee**" to represent any group (for example, but not limited to: Department Chairs, PLC Leaders, Team Leaders, Student Senate...) that falls under the umbrella of "improving and supporting the instructional processes at WMHS." (Article 2: Purpose, WMHS By-laws)

**B) Connection to School Committees and Other School Structures:** All school committees need to communicate directly with or through the Instructional Council in order to coordinate planning and implementation of their work (when this work affects student learning or the teaching process). It is recommended that committees follow protocols similar to those for the Instructional Council.

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**C) Connection to Teacher Leadership Positions:** It is essential that a purposeful connection between various teacher leadership positions (e.g. Department Chairs, Team Leaders, PLC Leaders, etc.) and the Instructional Council be created and maintained. It is through the forum of the IC that these leaders communicate and coordinate their work.

**D) Connection to Budget:** School budgets are open and public documents. It is the responsibility of the Instructional Council (Article 6: Budget Process, WMHS By-laws) to work in collaboration with the staff and Administration to set priorities for the school's budget and in developing and overseeing the implementation of a budget that places resources where they will effectively support the school's goals and District Guidelines.

**E) Connection to EPSS:** The IC will work with Administration and their representatives to study, build and publish the EPSS for WMHS.

## II. INSTRUCTIONAL COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

**A)** In order for an Instructional Council (IC) to function well, the following is a list (not all-inclusive) of tasks that the council should take on as their responsibility:

**1) Facilitation assignment/role description:** IC Chair and Chair-elect shall have the role of facilitator(s). This will include, but is not limited to, publishing the agenda before each meeting; calling meetings to order; ensuring the meeting stays on task as outlined by the agenda; ensuring that all IC members have equal opportunity to speak; calling on individual members to speak/call for motion/second a motion; calling for a consensus/vote; calling for a motion to end each meeting; representing the IC to outside entities. IC Chair will also have the responsibility of calling all emergency meetings when an issue arises that cannot wait until the next scheduled meeting.

**2) Recorder assignment/role description:** The secretary (voted on/approved by IC) shall take, publish and maintain accurate records for each meeting; shall maintain a list of the IC membership; shall take role at each meeting which will become a part of the minutes. With the help of the Tech Department or their designate, minutes and other records of the IC (By-Laws, Procedure Manual and Committee Manual) shall be posted to a folder on the school's server and the school's website giving access to the entire staff, student body and community.

**3) Quorum:** A quorum is needed at all formal meetings for all decision making processes. A quorum is defined as 2/3 of the recognized members of the IC as defined in Section III A of the Procedures Manual.

**4) Meeting days, times and location:** TBD each school year

**5) Minutes dissemination procedure:** Minutes shall be sent by email to the staff (published by the secretary) within 48 hours of each meeting. At this time the Tech Dept. will post to the website and the server.

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**6) Communication procedures with constituent groups:** IC members have the responsibility of meeting with/communicating with their constituent group on a timely basis for all issues brought to the IC for discussion (timely: far enough in advance that the entire group has had time to discuss and give feedback before the next IC meeting)

**7) Communication procedure with community:** Publishing IC minutes and other appropriate documents should also include having them posted to the school's website (this will be done by the Tech Department or their designate). Meetings of SPOT may be used by the parent representative to present, discuss and gather feedback on issues before the IC. The student representative will present, discuss and gather feedback at the appropriate Student Senate meetings. Senate representatives will need to help present, discuss and gather feedback from the student body.

**8) Publication and distribution of procedures:** A complete set of By-Laws, Procedure Manuals, Committee Manuals and standardized forms shall be available electronically to all staff members, a copy of each should be put into the folder on the server, posted to the school web-site and a hard copy provided to each member of the IC, as necessary.

**9) Publication of all decisions made:** All decisions will be published and made a permanent part of the minutes from IC meetings.

**10) Procedure to revisit protocols routinely (date each review/revision):** It will be the responsibility of the IC to annually review all decisions/changes made by the IC that year and any other decision the IC deems necessary. A standing committee will be assigned the responsibility of managing the collection and presentation of such data. The data should help the IC reaffirm their decision or possibly lead them to take steps to rescind a decision that has become apparent is not providing the results that were expected.

**a) Minority Reports:** Committee members representing a minority and/or dissenting opinions on items considered by the Council may submit a written report to the IC if they feel this step is warranted. Minority Reports will then become a part of the permanent record of the IC.

**11) Agenda-setting procedure:** The agenda for each meeting will be set at the previous meeting. A portion of each regularly scheduled meeting will be spent reviewing topics and strategies that will be discussed at the next IC meeting. Any community member may request to submit a topic or strategy for consideration as an agenda item. A member desiring to place a new item on the agenda will need to fill out an Agenda Item Proposal Form and submit this to the IC Chair 5 working days prior to the meeting ([See January 2021 IC Minutes](#)). The IC Chair will review the proposal and if the proposal is

determined to be appropriate, the Chair will add it to the agenda. During the next meeting the person(s) submitting the proposal will have an opportunity to give a short presentation regarding their request. If the IC determines the request meets the criteria, it will be approved for addition to the next meeting as a discussion item.

### **III. VOTING MEMBERSHIP:**

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**A. Voting Membership configuration:** The recognized voting seats (voting representatives) as agreed to by a consensus of the IC are as follows:

- ATF
- Administration
- English
- Math
- Science
- Social Studies
- PE/Health
- Modern Classical Languages
- Fine Arts
- Support and related services rep
- EAs
- Career Technical Education
- Special Education including support and related services (These two groups merged with approval by the council on May 17, 2022.)
- Counseling

- ROTC
- Community Outreach/Health Center
- Parent: from STOP
- Student: from Student Council
- At-Large: 1 voted in from whole WM community

\*On July 30, 2021, the council came to a consensus that the At-Large representative must come from that body of constituents. The At-Large includes staff members who are not represented by a department, custodians, security, secretaries, cafeteria staff, and the nurse.

Instructional Coaches are associated with the IC, but are non-voting members

**B) Membership:** Each department listed above is eligible to have a representative on the IC. A representative will be elected by the departments/groups listed above at the beginning of the year (if needed). Representatives need to represent their constituency at the meetings, NOT their individual opinions. Members will serve a two-year term. However, if a representative cannot or is not willing to complete his/her term, the department/group may elect a new representative to finish out the two-year term. Departments may, at their discretion, join together and elect a single individual to represent them.

**C) Officers:** the IC will elect the positions of Chair, Chair-elect and Secretary. These will also be two-year terms. The position of chair and Chair-elect should have two-year terms that begin and end in alternating years (i.e. the Chair has a one year term and Chair-elect has a two year or Chair has a two year and Chair-elect has a three year term – both of these provide for continuity of leadership in the chair position). The positions of Chair, Chair-elect, and Secretary must be filled from a sitting member of the IC. Officers may vote, if and only if, they vote as representatives of their respective department/group. If an officer chooses, they may choose to be a non-voting member of the IC (this decision will remain in effect for the remainder of that school year. The following school year the IC Chair or Chair-elect may change this decision, but this eliminates the department representative previously chosen to replace them as a voting member), in which case their respective department/group may choose another representative as a voting member. If a situation arises where the Chair and Chair-elect have terms that expire at the same time, the IC may vote on an exception on the length of the term of one or both positions.

**D) Standing Committees:** The IC will create a limited number of standing committees. These will be defined as committees whose purpose, duties and responsibilities will continue to flow thru from year to year. As needed the IC may add committees or suspend a committee when it is determined they are no longer necessary. Members of the IC are encouraged to volunteer to be a member of one of the standing committees. Membership on the committee is not restricted to IC members only, but membership is subject to approval by the IC. Membership is for a two-year term. Each committee will need to address issues as outlined in the Committee Manual.

Currently the standing committees are:

**1) Finance:** This committee will be responsible for working with Administration and the staff in the review and allocation of budget allocations and priorities.

**2) Data Collection:** The IC will review data at the end of each year from all new policies/procedures as well as any policies/procedures from previous years if deemed necessary. This committee is responsible for organizing the collection and presentation of this data at such times as the IC designates. (Sec II A 10, Procedures Manual)

**3) Recurring Events:** (i.e. Jump Start, Open House...):” This committee will be responsible for putting together teams to help organize a plan and implement the plan. This committee should have both long term and short-term members as called for by the events.

**E) Ad Hoc Committees:** The Instructional Council may establish special Ad Hoc committees when necessary. Such committees are established for the purpose of carrying out particular tasks, which can vary from researching, organizing or revising operational procedures established by the Council, to recommending new priorities or areas of study. The Full Instructional Council, or the Chair of Instructional Council appoints members of these task force committees. Committees and task forces report their recommendations to the Instructional Council.

#### **IV) IC Decision Making Processes:**

A) Consensus is the preferred method for making team decisions because it is naturally collaborative, includes everyone, involves them in brainstorming and selecting options, promotes understanding and ownership, respects and learns from dissent and prevents sabotage after the decision is made. It is highly democratic because it allows everyone to have an equal voice regardless of their position in the organizational hierarchy, encourages differences of opinion to surface and be incorporated in the solution, and increases unity and a sense that the group is moving in a common direction. Consensus will be the primary decision making model at WMHS.

B) Decisions will be reached through a consensus process that includes the following:

- 1) There has been communication with and input from constituents.
- 2) Participants have reached a meeting of the minds sufficient to make a decision and carry it out.

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3) If there is disagreement, those who disagree have had an opportunity to express that disagreement and they agree that they will not block consensus.

4) There is agreement that everyone needed to support the decision and put it into effect will do so.

C) This definition does not mean unanimity of thought. The resulting agreement may be a package of various levels of enthusiasm and support, but the **agreement is one that each party can accept and live with.**

1) Group reaches consensus when: it finally agrees upon a single alternative; and each group member can honestly say:

a) I believe that you understand my point of view.

b) I believe that I understand your point of view.

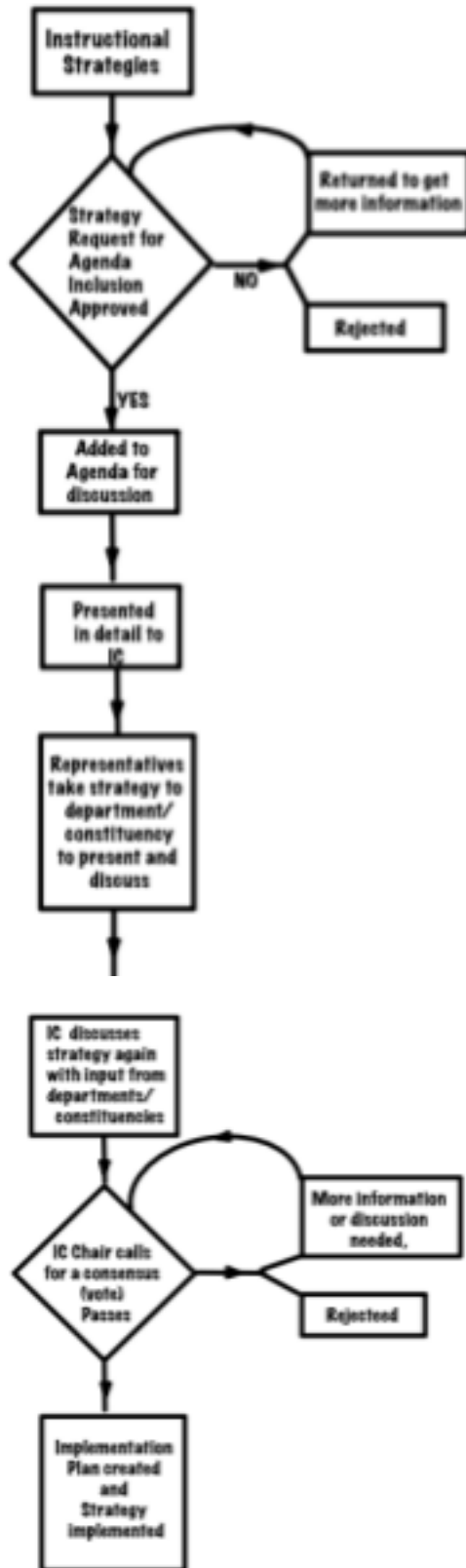
c) Whether or not I prefer the decision, I support it because it was arrived at openly and fairly; and it is the best solution for us at this time. (P11)

**Note: The above is from the Guidelines for Instructional Councils August 2012. 7 D)**

**Protocol for consensus building:**



## Protocol for Consensus Building



**E) Alternative Decision-Making Models:** There may be alternative decision-making processes that are appropriate at time. IC's must determine which decision –making model is best suited for the issue at hand

(e.g.: consensus, majority vote of the IC, - 2/3 majority vote or  $\frac{3}{4}$  - vote of the entire staff, adoption of committee recommendations, etc.). Determination of the model to be used needs to be made through consensus. The model used may change from issue to issue. (P.5 IC Guidelines and IC minutes June 6, 2014)

## **V) Removal of Voting Member or Officer**

A) The removal of a voting member's voting rights or the removal of an officer from their respective office, will need to be put on the agenda for discussion (following previously mentioned process) and when a vote is taken it will require a three fourths (75%) majority vote of all recognized voting members of the IC.

## **VI) Approval and Amendment of the Procedures and Committee Manuals**

A) A simple majority of a quorum is needed to ratify or amend the Procedures and Committee Manuals.

# **Appendix**

## **1. Agenda Item Proposal Request**

## **AGENDA ITEM PROPOSAL FORM**

**The first two boxes must be completed to submit an item to be added to the agenda**

Proposal for IC agenda item:

IC Response:  Approved and added to the agenda for .  Additional information requested .

Your name: Date and time:

Your affiliation:

Briefly explain the item you would like to have added to the IC agenda:

Has this item previously proposed? yes  no

If “yes,” please explain your reason for resubmitting:

1. What do we expect students to learn and why? 2. How will we know if they have learned it?

3. How will we respond if they don't learn it? 4. How will we respond if they already know it?

**The below Sections will need to be completed after Proposal has been approved for an Agenda**

**item.** Please describe plans for implementation (how, when, by whom):

Please include any additional information or research you have on this topic so that the IC can determine the

most appropriate course of action:

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The IC will require an end of year report out on the progress of this action: What data will you present? Who will collect? How will they collect?

**Action of the IC: Approved \_\_\_ Returned for additional action \_\_\_ Rejected**

**\_\_\_ Date of Action: \_\_\_\_\_**

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