

School-Based Planning and Shared Decision-Making



South Country Central School District

Bellport High School

Bellport Middle School

Frank P. Long Intermediate School

Brookhaven Elementary School

Kreamer Street Elementary School

Verne W. Critz Elementary School

South Haven Early Childhood Center

I. INTRODUCTION

A. South Country Central School District Philosophy of Education

- The primary purpose of the South Country Central School District is to impart knowledge and develop as fully as possible the total capacities of all children and to prepare them for a contributing part in American society and the world.
- This two-fold purpose demands sound instruction in basic skills in accordance with New York State statutory requirements, the effective teaching of subject matter, and the development of children's minds, characters, self-esteem, and physical well-being within a safe and orderly environment so that they may cultivate reasoning, sound judgment, and creativity.

B. South Country Central School District Strategic Planning Goals

1. Ensure that each of our students is academically prepared to succeed in college, career, life, and the global economy.
2. Create a safe, engaging, supportive and challenging school environment that enables student success while receiving a well-rounded education.
3. Create a culture of appreciation where we hold ourselves accountable for student success.
4. Develop and implement an aligned curriculum with core learning expectations to improve the performance of all students, where teaching and learning are continually adjusted on the basis of data collected through a variety of valid and reliable methods.
5. Promote efficiency and economy ensuring the district is delivering the best education program with the resources we have so the public gets the maximum educational return for each dollar spent.

C. Commissioner's Regulations

- In accordance with Commissioner's Regulations 8 NYCRR 100.11 the South Country Board of Education adopted a district plan for the participation by teachers and parents with administrators and school board members in school-based planning and shared decision-making.
- The purpose of school-based planning and shared decision-making shall be to improve the educational performance of all students in the school, regardless of such factors as socioeconomic status, race, sex, language background, or disability.

D. Board of Education Advisory Committees

- Beginning in school-year 2013-14, the Board of Education created four Board Advisory Committees to advise the Board on school district related issues and shared decisions. These four advisory committees are as follows:
 - Strategic Planning
 - Teaching & Learning
 - Health & Safety
 - Finance & Facilities

- Membership on each Board Advisory Committee includes representation from all district stakeholders including:
 - Board of Education
 - Administration (South Country Administrator Association)
 - Faculty (Bellport Teachers Association)
 - BTAA (Bellport Teachers Association Affiliate)
 - CSEA (Civil Service Employees Association)
 - SCGA (South Country Guards Association)
 - PTA (Parent Teachers Association)
 - Community Members (not to include parents or employees)

- Each Board Advisory Committee meets at minimum six (6) times per school-year.

- Advisory Committee members are selected by the respective official representative from their association. Community members are selected by the Board President.

- The Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning will serve as the District-wide Shared Decision-making Steering Committee in compliance with Section 100.11 of the regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

II. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES SUBJECT TO COOPERATIVE PLANNING AND SHARED DECISION-MAKING

- Student improvement and achievement: assessment, support and intervention programs
- School environment
- Curriculum implementation
- Professional development
- Community and parent involvement
- Budgetary concerns

III. MANNER AND EXTENT OF EXPECTED INVOLVEMENT OF THE PARTIES

A. Composition of School-Based Shared Decision-Making Teams

1-2 Administrators	[s]elected by members of school administrators.
4-5 Faculty Members	[s]elected by members of faculty with an attempt to represent all segment of faculty
2-3 Other Staff Members	[s]elected by secretaries, custodians, aides, assistants, nurses, and any other group within school staff.
3-6 Parents	[s]elected by school's designated parent group
4-6 Secondary Students	[s]elected by vote of student body

Secondary Schools will have 12-22 members

Elementary Schools will have 10-16 members

- Each constituent group will determine the number of seats to be filled within the assigned range.
- For purposes of [s]election, the year is considered to run from July 1 through June 30.
- If a vacancy arises on the building team, the constituent group may fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.
- Other Items
 - A parent must have a child in the building during their time on the committee
 - A parent must be a resident of the district
 - A parent representative may not be an employee of their child's building
 - A person may only be a member of one school-based team at the same time

B. Procedures and Responsibilities

- Frequency of Meetings
School-based shared decision-making teams should meet at least once a month during the school year and more frequently, if necessary.
- Schedule of Meetings
This function is delegated to the individual school-based shared decision-making teams.
- Meeting Notification
School-based shared decision-making team members shall be responsible for notifying their constituencies in advance of all meetings. School-based teams will submit a list of scheduled school-year meetings to the Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning.

- Chairperson(s) or Facilitator Selection
These functions, while not mandated, are an option delegated to the individual school-based shared decision-making teams.
- Minutes
Minutes shall be maintained, approved and distributed to school-based shared decision-making team members and then forwarded to the Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning.

C. Action Teams

- The building school-based shared decision-making teams are encouraged to involve greater segments of the school and community by establishing action teams to focus on specific issues on a needs basis. One member of the building team should serve on the action team to facilitate communication and act as a liaison to the building team.

D. Communication

- Pre-decision and post-decision communication to constituents is encouraged and necessary if shared decision-making is to be effective.
- A record of decisions will be issued in a timely fashion and communicated to all constituencies. Copies of decisions will be forwarded to the Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning and the Superintendent of Schools.

E. Team Parameters

- Empowerment takes place as the people with authority are willing to share their power with members of the group, either as a member of the group or by charging the group to make the decision.
- As groups are formed, the collective authority of the group is greater than the authority of any individual. The group by virtue of its formation is empowered beyond its most influential member.
- The school-based shared decision-making teams will use the Board's Priorities to guide their work and activities for that particular school-year.
- The school-based shared decision-making teams may not implement a decision, if it:
 - Doesn't have the authority to do so;
 - Doesn't have the funds to implement;
 - Will affect other schools in addition to its own;
 - Affects labor contracts;
 - Affects personnel (assignments, evaluation, discipline, etc.).
- Decisions or expenditures exceeding the group's authority can be formulated into recommendations to be submitted to the person or persons with the power to implement them.
- All school-based shared decision-making teams must include in a decision an evaluation and review process appropriate to the decision.

F. Professional Responsibility

- The professional responsibility of participants in the SDM process is to:
 - Be constantly aware of the dangers inherent in situations that give rise to conflict of personal interest with that of the SDM process.
 - Preserve the obligation of having controversial issues presented fairly and without bias.
 - Maintain confidentiality of privileged information.
 - Observe state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to education.
 - Maintain the focus of highly-quality education for every student.

G. Ground Rules

- Ground Rules will assist the school-based shared decision-making teams in governing its discussions and decision-making process.
- No attribution
It must be agreed that each member can speak freely and that his/her statements will not be reported or attributed to any individual.
- Consensus
The group shall arrive at decisions through a process of consensus. Consensus is a systematic process used by a group to make decisions which everyone can support. A consensus decision has been reached when:
 - **Everyone on the team can live with the decision**
Each team member agrees to support the decision though it may not be everyone's first choice.
 - **Everyone on the team actively supports the decision.**
Each team member is committed to the decision as if it were the first choice of all group members.
 - **No one on the team will sabotage the decision.**
Each team member agrees that he or she has had an equal opportunity to influence the decision.
- Quorum
A meeting requires a quorum, which shall consist of two-third (2/3rds) of the members.
- Attendance
 - Attendance will be taken and recorded in the minutes.
 - Members are expected to attend at least 50% of scheduled meetings.

IV. MEANS AND STANDARDS BY WHICH ALL PARTIES SHALL EVALUATE IMPROVEMENT IN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The South Country Central School District embraces the philosophy that "all students can and will learn." Students at each level, regardless of socio-economic class, gender, or race will achieve minimum academic mastery of the prescribed curriculum. Further, all students will be expected to achieve their maximum potential, and be prepared to continue their successful achievement after

graduation from high school. Minimum academic mastery and student achievement will be measured by student outcomes on district adopted assessment instruments and by the frequent monitoring of student progress.

V. THE PROCESS WHEREBY DISPUTES PRESENTED BY THE PARTICIPATING PARTIES ABOUT ISSUES BEING DECIDED WILL BE RESOLVED

- A conflict exists when one or more team members strongly oppose the resolution being considered and when such opposition prevents consensus from being reached.
- Such conflicts, if not resolved at the building level, will be addressed by:
 - Tabling the issue to a later date (issues may be tabled no more than twice).
 - If the issue remains unresolved, it will be referred to the Shared Decision-making District-Wide Steering Committee, exclusive of that building team's members.

VI. MANNER IN WHICH STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING WILL BE COORDINATED WITH AND MET BY THE OVERALL PLAN

The Superintendent will ensure that all parent and teacher participation which is mandated by law or district policy is coordinated with the activities of the team.

VII. COMPOSITION, ROLE AND FUNCTION OF DISTRICT-WIDE SHARED DECISION-MAKING STEERING COMMITTEE

A. Composition of District-Wide Shared Decision-Making Steering Committee

- The Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning will serve as the District-wide Shared Decision-Making Steering Committee in compliance with Section 100.11 of the regulations of the Commissioner of Education.
- The Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning will maintain a communication network (reporting system) between the school-based teams and each of the four Board Advisory Committees, thereby facilitating communication with the school board, the superintendent, administration, faculty, staff, parents, and the community.
- The Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning shall offer service in terms of what is written in the plan.
- The Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning will conduct a biennial review of the district plan, and make any suggested revisions to the Board of Education for their consideration.
- The Board's Advisory Committee for Strategic Planning will monitor the process for implementation of the Shared Decision-Making Plan.

ADOPTED BY THE SOUTH COUNTRY CSD BOARD OF EDUCATION
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