308 - DISTRICT DECISION MAKING PROCESS

I.   PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the process for making decisions that impact district programs, services, policies and procedures.

II.   DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Alexandria Public Schools is committed to enhancing educational decisions through the use of a shared decision-making process. This process seeks to involve those persons who are responsible for the implementation of or are affected by the decisions in the decision-making process. For the purposes of this policy, persons shall be known as stakeholders. The stakeholders include parents, students, teachers, administration, support staff, school board members and community members. Any stakeholder may identify a challenge (concern, issue or matter) and direct the challenge to the appropriate level. The appropriate decision-making level is the setting at which the decision has direct impact or a resulting action. The appropriate decision-making level is defined as follows:

- Building site or program challenges: Teacher, Coach, Principal, Director

- Districtwide challenges: District Administration, Assistant Superintendent, Superintendent, School Board

The district is committed to using a shared decision-making process as a means for:

- Improving communication and involvement

- Increasing cohesion, cooperation and collegiality

- Improving involvement and participation of stakeholders

- Expanding district empowerment

- Enhancing the organizational planning efforts

III.   AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT

Minnesota statutes place responsibility for the operation of the local school system in the hands of the school board and by designation, the superintendent of schools is the chief executive officer. The school board will retain this ultimate responsibility over matters governed by law, contract and policy.

The district school board and superintendent affirm their intent to implement a shared decision-making process. This process is declared in the District Decision Making Matrix (Appendix A). The matrix defines the stakeholders and parameters of the decision-making process.

IV.   **DECISION MAKING DEFINITIONS, PARAMETERS AND PROCESS**

A.   Definitions

1.   "Building Administration" means building level administrators, directors and/or personnel with building site management responsibilities.

2.   "Building Level Committees" means building site level committees assigned to address only building or program level challenges. Committees may also be given the status of task force, study group or cohort.

3.   "Building Site Leadership Team: means school building site or program level leadership team with representations from the various stakeholder groups.

4.   "District Administration" means Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, District Level Administrators, District Level Directors and/or personnel with districtwide management responsibilities.

5.   "District Level Committees" means committees with representatives from various stakeholder groups that address decisions from a districtwide perspective. These committees may also be assigned the status of task force, study group or cohort.

6.   "Evidence Based Decisions" means decisions that are based on a collection of evidence with the findings defining the benefits and challenges, the relationship to mission and belief and the decision-making impact.

7.   "School Board" means elected seven-member Board of Education.

8.   "Shared Decision-Making Process" means the collaborative process in which stakeholders of the school community are involved in making decisions to improve the quality of student learning.

9.   "Stakeholders" means persons who are directly involved in the decision-making process. Stakeholders include parents, students, teachers, administration, support staff, school board members and community

members. The stakeholders are to have an opportunity to provide input, perspectives and insights into decisions occurring within the district.

B.   Parameters – Shared Decision-Making Matrix (Appendix A)

Parameters will be used to implement the shared decision-making process. The District Shared Decision-Making Matrix lists the topics subject to shared decision making and the appropriate use of the decision-making process. Stakeholders will be involved in one or more of the following activities in completing the decision-making process:

1.   Study: Gather evidence and examine

2.   Develop: Seek solutions from available evidence

3.   Review: Receive evidence and examine

4.   Adopt/Approve: Formal act of acceptance, consent and action

5.   Supervise: Oversee, direct and finalize

6.   Implement: Place into action and accomplish

Given decisions may be appealed within the district's established legal policy and procedural requirements.

C.   Evidence Informed/Learner Driven (Appendix B)

The district is committed to making decisions based on evidence. Evidence will be gathered, analyzed and acted upon to ensure the best decisions are made to improve the quality of student learning. An organizational method for incorporating evidence gathering analysis and action is defined in the District Evidence Informed/Learner Driven Plan. This process will be implemented and monitored by district administration.

The study level of the decision-making process will be determined by the administration based on the impact of decision on program, services and stakeholders. The levels of the decisions will be:

1.   Complete Study

2.   Partial Study

3.   Consultant Study

D.   QuickSolve Decision Making (Appendix C)

The district recognizes the benefit of using the QuickSolve process for developing timely action-based recommendations for challenges facing the district. The process uses problem-solving tools and involves representatives from stakeholders involved in the challenge. The process identifies the parameters of the QuickSolve and the decision-maker for the recommended resolutions. QuickSolve resolutions do not require school board action.

E.   Leadership Expectations (Appendixes D and E)

District staff will use the leadership expectations identified in "Leading Through Teamwork" and "Holonomous Teamwork" as a guide in completing decision-making tasks.

V.   BUILDING SITE LEADERSHIP TEAMS

A.   Purpose

Each building site will establish a leadership team to enhance the educational decisions of the building's programs and services. The assigned building administrator will coordinate the leadership team and be a participating member of the team.

B.   Team Model

Each building site administrator will determine a recommended leadership team model for school board approval. The model shall be reflective of the building site's culture and have input from staff, parents, students and administrators. An appeal of a site's team model by a stakeholder shall be made to the school board. The decision of the school board is final.

Each team model will include:

1.   Representative membership and/or involvement

2.   Communication process defined for sharing information

3.   Decision making process defined

4.   Organization of Educational Decisions, including:

a)   School Improvement Goals

b)   Staff Development and Training

                c)   Site's Management and Organization

C.   Leadership Team Member

Each leadership team member must be involved in the functions of the leadership team. A general job responsibility description will serve as a guide for a team member and will be developed by the district administrators. Each site can make modifications in the description as necessary.

D.   Site Decision Making

Each building site leadership team will develop a process for making decisions impacting the site's programs and services. The site decisions shall not be in conflict with the district's Mission Statement, Beliefs or Policies. Also, the decisions shall not be in conflict with Minnesota State Statutes.

When appropriate, leadership teams will develop procedures and guidelines that will assist in the operations and decisions of a building site. The procedures and guidelines will remain in place at the site from year to year. Periodically, or as needed, site councils will receive and update the developed procedures and guidelines as required.

VI.   DECISION MAKING PROCESS TRAINING

The district is committed to ensuring that ongoing training and staff development occurs to improve the decision-making skills of the district's administration, building leadership team committees and stakeholders.

ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS - NO. 206 DECISION-MAKING PROCESS MATRIX

DECISION-MAKING TOPICS	School Board	District Admin.	District Level Committees	Building Admin.	Building Leader Team	Building Level Committees
VISION AND GOALS						
District Action Plan & Strategic Plan	Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Identified Task Forces Study, Develop and Implement		Review	
School/Program Improvement Process and Accountability	Review	Supervise		Recommend & Supervise	Develop, Adopt & Implement	Identified Task Forces Implement
Staff Development Program	Adopt	Supervise	Staff Develop Committee Recommend & Implement	Supervise	Review & Implement	
Policy and Procedures	Study & Adopt	Recommend & Implement		Implement	Study & Implement As Needed	
Joint Powers Agreements	Review & Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Task Force Study As Needed			
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION						
Curriculum Revisions	Adopt	Supervise	Curric Comm Study & Develop, Curric Advisory Council Recommends	Supervise	Review & Implement	
Graduation, Course and Grade Level Requirements	Adopt	Supervise & Recommend	Curric Comm Study & Develop, Curric Advisory	Supervise	Review & Implement	Department/ Team Study & Recommend

			Council Recommends			
Program/Curriculum Additions	Review & Adopt		Curric Comm. Review, Curric Advisory Council Recommends	Supervise	Review & Implement	Department/ Team Study & Recommend As Needed
Non-Salary General Fund Allocations	Adopt Thru Budget	Develop		Supervise	Determine & Implement	
Capital Fund Expenditures	Adopt Thru Budget	Study & Recommend		Supervise	Review	
Curriculum Cycle	Adopt Plan	Supervise & Recommend	Curric Comm Implement	Supervise		
System Assessments	Review	Supervise	Curric Comm Study	Supervise & Review	Implement	
School Calendar	Review & Adopt	Recommend	Committee Develops			
Daily School Schedule		Approve		Supervise & Implement	Study & Develop	
BUDGET						
Calendar and Assumptions	Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Task Force Study			
Five Year Capital Plan	Adopt	Recommend & Implement		Review	Review	
Long Range Projections	Review	Develop & Implement		Review		
Annual Levy	Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Task Force Study As Needed			
Budget Documentation		Develop & Implement		Supervise		
Prices and Fees	Adopt	Recommend		Supervise & Implement		
Solicitation Approval of Bids/Quotes	Adopt	Recommend & Implement				
Annual Budget (including Reinvestments/ Reductions)	Review & Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Task Force Study As Needed	Supervise & Implement	Review	

Levy Referendum	Review & Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Task Force Study & Develop As Needed		Study As Needed	
PERSONNEL						
Admin Hiring and Termination	Approve	Recommend	Committee Study As Needed			
Teacher Hiring and Termination	Approve	Recommend		Recommend		Committee Study As Needed (Hire Only)
Support Staff Hiring and Termination	Approve			Recommend		Committee Study As Needed (Hire Only)
Work Agreements	Approve	Implement	Comm Study & Recommend	Review & Implement		
Admin. Supervision	Supervise	Supervise & Implement	Comm Study & Recommend			
Teacher Supervision			Peer Mentor Comm Implement	Supervise & Implement		
Support Staff Supervision				Supervise & Implement	Supervise & Implement	
Contracted Services/ Agreements	Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Study	Study		
School Board Election Process	Adopt	Implement				
Procedures and Policy	Adopt	Recommend and Implement	Study	Supervise and Implement		
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS						
Non-Salary General Fund Allocations	Adopt Thru Budget	Develop		Supervise & Implement	Determine	
Capital Fund Expenditures	Adopt Thru Budget	Study & Recommend		Supervise & Implement	Determine	
Health and Safety Codes/Laws		Supervise & Implement	Health & Safety Committee Review	Supervise		
Maintenance Cycle		Study & Develop		Supervise & Implement		
Long Range Facility Plan	Adopt Thru Budget	Study, Develop &				

		Implement				
Building Referendum	Review & Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Task Force Study & Develop As Needed	Review		
COMMUNITY EDUCATION						
Advisory Council	Approve	Recommend	Study As Needed			
Budget	Adopt					
Staff	Approve	Recommend	Advisory Council Study As Needed			
Program	Approve As Required	Recommend & Implement	Advisory Council Study & Approve			
FOOD SERVICE						
Budget	Adopt			Supervise & Implement		
Program		Supervise & Implement		Supervise & Implement		Committee Study & Develop As Needed
TRANSPORTATION						
Budget	Adopt	Recommend & Implement				
Work Agreement	Adopt	Recommend & Implement	Comm Study & Recommend			
Policy/Procedures	Study & Adopt			Implement		

ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EVIDENCE INFORMED/LEARNER DRIVEN PLAN

1.   ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIGNMENT
- Topic of Study
- Purpose of Study
- Level of Study
- Limitations
- Timeframe

2.   LEVEL OF STUDY
- Complete – Study will complete and document all study areas and activities. Formal study report submitted to School Board.
- Partial – Study will complete and document all study areas. Study area's activities will be used as a guide. Formal study summary submitted to School Board.
- Consultant – Study will use study areas and activities as a guide. Formal recommendation with background information and data submitted to the School Board.

3.   INVOLVEMENT
- Administrative Coordinator
- Task Force Membership
- Input Process from:
  - Parents   - Public
  - Teachers/Staff   - Students
- Hearing and Publicity

4.   INFORMATION REVIEW
- Timeframe and tasks
- Research Data
- Targeted District Data
- Local Data
- Educational Trends

5.   FINDINGS
- Options
  - Benefits
  - Challenges
- Relationship to Mission and Beliefs
- Impact
  - Value Added   - Staffing
  - Finances   - Community
  - Policy   - Facility
  - Legal

6.   RECOMMENDATIONS
- Tasks and Timeframes for implementation
- Contact People
- Piloting versus Full Implementation
- Assessment

ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
QUICKSOLVE DECISION MAKING

Purpose: To problem-solve Alexandria Public Schools challenges through the use of input and discussion and leading to **timely action-based recommendations**.

CHALLENGE: _____

QuickSolve Deadline: _____

QuickSolve Team Members: _____

_____

Decision-maker: _____

Givens:
- Time restraints limit depth of study.
- Brainpower enhances a decision.
- Team members will be representative of stakeholders.
- Financial resources are limited.
- Creativity strengthens a recommendation.
- District's Evidence Informed/Learner Driven Plan will guide the study.
- Recommendations will reflect the District's Belief Statements.
- Recommendations will comply with District Policy and Employee Work Agreements.

TASKS	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE	TIMEFRAME

LEADING THROUGH TEAMWORK

LEADERSHIP GIVENS:
- Leadership is Everyone's Responsibility.
- District's Mission and Core Values.
- District's Commitment to Shared Decision-Making Through:
    - District Decision-Making Matrix
    - Building Site Leadership Teams

LEADER EXPECTATIONS:
- Think District/School/Team/Individual (in that order).
- Lead Through Teaching, Coaching and Supporting.
- Be Visionary and Inspire Positive Change.
- Be Accountable to Measurable Goals and Results.
- Create Communication Streams.
- Problem-Solve through Collaboration and Empowerment.
- Appreciate the Power of Diversity (age, gender, race, thought) and Be Inclusive (our, we).
- Promote Student and Professional Learning.
- Manage Resources.
- Celebrate Successes.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS AND TOOLS:
- Connections
    - Motivator
    - Communicator
    - Listener
- Resource Management
    - Organizer
    - Time & Talent
    - Finances
    - Training
- Accountability
    - Goal Setting
    - Use of Data
    - Return on Investment
- Supervision
    - Frameworks
    - Evaluation
    - Coaching
- Organizational Oversight
    - Curriculum & Programs
    - Student Development
    - Policy & Procedures
    - Best Practices
- Problem Solve
    - Team Building
    - Conflict Resolution

ALEXANDRIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
TEAM ACCOUNTABILITY
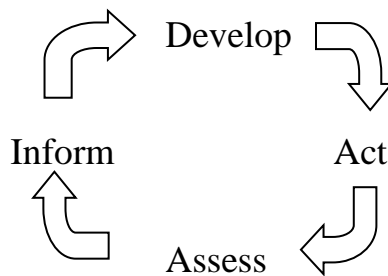
"Holonomous Teamwork"

Holonomous (hō la nō' mas)   An independent inter•dependence

Teamwork (tēm' ▪ wûrk)   Resources coming together to …

> STEP 1:   Identify challenges and opportunities
> STEP 2:   Recognize limits
> STEP 3:   Use best resources available
> STEP 4:   Reach best possible solution
> STEP 5:   Act, assess and inform

Action Efforts

Develop → Act → Assess → Inform → Develop (cycle)

- Strategic Plan
- Yearly Action Goals
- Yearly Site/Program Goals
- Staff Development/Training Goals

- District Annual Report
- Site/Program Status Updates
- Comprehensive Achievement and Civic Readiness Report

- Test Results
- Survey Data
- Focus Groups
- Report Information