

PETALUMA CITY SCHOOLS DECISION-MAKING RESOURCE GUIDE

PETALUMA TRUST AGREEMENT IN SHARED DECISION-MAKING

**PETALUMA CITY SCHOOLS
DISTRICT**

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DECISION-MAKING RESOURCE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The Petaluma City Schools District and the Petaluma Federation of Teachers agree that by working together we can exert a powerful and positive influence on the continued improvement of learning outcomes for all of our students.

We recognize that the most important interactions affecting student performance are those between teachers and students. As accountability for success is assumed by school sites, we believe that teacher involvement in decision-making will result in increased student achievement.

Shared decision-making is an integral part of the process of improving student achievement. The Federation and the District encourage staff to engage collaboratively in designing the teaching/learning models that best promote college and career readiness for all students.

PURPOSE

By using a variety of strategies and building a common vocabulary, teachers and administrators will collaborate to make decisions. An effective decision-making process requires sufficient time allocated to planning, implementation, and evaluation.

The Trust Agreement Committee is committed to the utilization of the Decision-Making Resource Guide. Therefore, the committee welcomes feedback from sites and individuals on the utilization of the document. Contact the Federation President, District Superintendent, Director of Human Resources, or any member of the Trust Agreement Committee with questions, suggestions, or concerns.

DECISIONS ARE MADE IN MANY DIFFERENT VENUES

Such as:

- School Site Councils
- Principals' Advisory Groups
- Student Study Teams
- Academic/Grade Level Teams
- Academic Departments
- Department Chair Committees
- School Site Staff Meetings
- Subcommittees of School Site Staffs
- Trust Agreement Committees
(i.e. K12 Curriculum and Staff Development)
- District Budget Committee
- Professional Development Committees
- Hiring Committees
- District Leadership Team

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

1. Identify the issue to be resolved
2. Determine the Shared Decision-Making Model to be used
3. Develop norms for the decision-making process, e.g.,
 - a. Take personal responsibility for participating in the information-gathering and decision-making process
 - b. Support the learning process for others by avoiding side conversations
 - c. Stay in the moment by attending to and listening to other people's opinions
4. Gather information – develop common understanding of the content underlying the issues:
 - a. Clarify the issues (processes like brainstorming or jigsawing may be helpful)
 - b. Gather factual information
 - c. State the beliefs, biases, assumptions involved in the issues
5. Generate alternative solutions
 - a. Whole groups or small groups
 - b. Brainstorming
 - c. Further research, if necessary
6. Advocate
7. Identify pros and cons of alternative solutions
8. Decide on a solution to the problem
9. Consider the unintended consequences of the decision as probable outcomes
10. Create a follow-up process for evaluation and improvement as needed
11. Gather feedback in order to improve the decision-making process
12. Support the process and decision

THREE DECISION-MAKING MODELS

<i>CONSENSUS</i>	<i>CONSULTATION</i>	<i>COMMAND</i>
<p><u>Participants, including Administrators</u></p> <p><u>Process:</u></p> <p>The Administrator is an equal member of the group, not super-ordinate. Group uses consensus to reach decisions.</p> <p>If, after all voices have been heard and consensus can't be reached, a vote can be an alternative. A super majority of 2/3 of the voters is recommended.</p>	<p><u>Staff Input</u></p> <p><u>Process:</u></p> <p>Staff generates alternative solutions to a problem, reviews proposed decision, and makes recommendations to administrator who reports back to staff with decision and rationale.</p>	<p><u>Administrator Alone</u></p> <p><u>Process:</u></p> <p>Administrator makes decision on information s/he deems appropriate and provides explanation for decisions when needed.</p>

Some examples of where these models might apply in different venues:

Staff development	Teacher assignments	Board of Education Policy
Curriculum development	Master Schedule	Administrative Regulations
Restructuring	Student placement	Student discipline
Dept. Chair selection	Space allocation	Site emergency
	Classroom assignment	Adherence to California State Education Code

PRE-DECISION MAKING CHECKLIST

- How is the issue identified?
 - Who will be affected by decision?
 - Who should be included in the decision-making process?
- What are the time constraints?
- Are there legal policies or other constraints involved?
- How will the decision be made?
 - Consensus (decision made by group agreement); Everyone agrees to support, not sabotage, the decision
 - Consultation (decision made by recommendations to administrator)
 - Command (decision made by administrator alone)
- Clarify the level of involvement:
 - Administrator (upon request s/he will explain reasons for the decision)
 - Whole group affected by decision (including administrator)
 - Representative body of group affected by the decision (including the administrator)
- Group making the decision?
 - Large group (with small group process if desirable)
 - Representative group selected by large group
 - Composition of group depending on issue
- Do the decision-makers have the information they need? Will outside expertise be required?
- How should the decision be communicated?

GLOSSARY

Advocate	Support of a cause or idea
Brainstorming	A group process whereby ideas are generated without argument or refutation; intuitive, creative and rational approaches to solutions are encouraged.
Collaborate	Work cooperatively with colleagues to achieve a common goal.
Command	Administrator makes decision without input and discussion by the group.
Consensus	A process of coming to agreement characterized by rational discussion of the issues until everyone involved in the discussion agrees with the decision, or at least agrees not to obstruct the decision.
Consultation	Administrator makes decision with input and discussion by the group.
District	Petaluma City Schools
Federation	Petaluma Federation of Teachers
	Jigsaw A process used to speed up the understanding of a document. The process involves having small groups become expert in a part of the document, and sharing their knowledge with the larger group.
	Norms Agreed-upon rules for discussion and advocacy
Professionalism	The standards, procedures and ethics characterized by those who are educated in a specific body of knowledge.
Shared Decision-Making	A process in which team members collaborate, where appropriate, in identifying problems, defining goals, formulating policy, shaping direction, and monitoring program implementation.