

SCHOOL-BASED DECISION-MAKING

Background

The Division supports excellence in teaching and learning and the involvement of parents/guardians and the community in the education of students.

The Division believes that major decisions about policies, instructional programs and services and the allocation of funds to support them must be made collaboratively. The principal is the key educational leader at the school level and will provide leadership in successful school-based decision-making. In keeping with the philosophy of the Division, school-based decision-making is to involve collaboration among the principal, school staff, School Council, Superintendent, the parish and the community. School-based decision-making enables schools to be responsive to local needs.

Definitions

In this administrative procedure,

1. "School-based decision-making" involves the whole school community in teaching and learning in order to ensure high levels of student achievement. School-based decision-making is a process through which certain decisions are made at the school level consistent with Division procedures; and
2. "Community" means a school's students, their parents/guardians and other community-based support elements available to the school.

Procedures

1. This administrative procedure shall be applicable to the Division's schools but is intended to allow for flexible approaches to school-based decision making.
2. The focus of school-based decision-making shall be on teaching and learning.
3. The principal is expected to seek and consider input from staff, parents/guardians, School Council, parish and the school community in making school-based decisions.
4. The role and responsibilities of the staff, parents/guardians, School Councils, parish and the school community will include input into school-based decisions on programs, instructional services, extra-curricular activities and the allocation of funds to support them.
5. As part of their budget submission each year, principals shall submit to the Superintendent their school goals for the following year.
6. Principals may be requested to present an overview of the school goals at a Board meeting.

7. The Superintendent may meet with the principal at appropriate times to discuss progress on the school goals.
8. Prior to June 15, the principal shall provide the Superintendent with a written evaluation of the status of the current school goals.
9. The principal is directed to develop and maintain procedures for widespread communication with the school community and for the implementation of school-based decision-making at the school level. This involves facilitating and enabling the leadership role of staff, School Council and students. An important aspect of the role is to work collaboratively with the School Council and the community.
10. Each principal must develop a process or model for school-based decision-making that is appropriate to the situation. It is important to note that not all decisions are shared decisions.
11. School-based decision-making will be judged to be successful when:
 - 11.1 Decisions focus on conditions that enhance teaching and learning;
 - 11.2 More people are involved in making better decisions;
 - 11.3 People trust one another to make good decisions;
 - 11.4 People are more skilled in making decisions;
 - 11.5 A positive, collaborative climate exists within the school community;
 - 11.6 Public support for schools in particular and education in general increases; and
 - 11.7 It fosters sustained school improvements.

The effectiveness of the school-based decision-making process in place each year will be evaluated based upon the above at least every three years.
12. School professional development plans will include opportunities for staff and School Council members to facilitate changes in roles and responsibilities including: problem solving, management and communication skills of all stakeholders.

Reference: Section 33,52,53,55,197,222 Education Act
School Based Decision Making policy 1.8.2
School Councils policy 1.8.3
School Board Decision Making Resource Guide (1997)