

DECISION MAKING POLICY



Reviewed & Ratified by Governing Council February 2012

RATIONALE

- Decisions will comply with the Education Act, State laws and Commonwealth laws.
- Decisions are made to further educational outcomes of students and their well being.
- All people and stakeholder groups within the school community have a right to be involved in the decision making process. The level of involvement will vary according to the issue under consideration.
- Everyone has the right to freely express his/her opinion and this is only possible in an atmosphere of trust, tolerance and respect.
- Effective decision making requires open communication of information, adequate time for discussions and use of all available resources.
- Everyone knows and understands the agreed procedure for decision making.
- Roles and responsibilities of the various decision making groups in the school must be clearly stated and documented.
- If the decision affects most people, the main decision making will be by consensus. This means that the decision is one that everyone is prepared to live with, commit to and implement, although there will be different levels of individual satisfaction with it. If consensus is not achieved, 70% majority will prevail.
- All staff/students/parents will be committed to and accountable for the implementation of decisions made collectively.
- If executive decisions are made, the background and reasons for these will be communicated.

Sound decisions will result when:

- All interested people or representatives of all parties affected by the decision participate in the process
- Guidelines are followed
- Open communication exists

Consensus / Majority Decision Making

We will make every effort to achieve consensus in making decisions.

Guidelines to follow during the decision making process:

1. **Identification** – an issue, problem or concern is identified.
2. **Information** – relevant material to assist discussion is distributed in a timely manner.
3. **Consideration** – Participants develop and consider options.
4. **Decision Making** – Method to be used is decided prior to making the decision. Can consist of the following - Consensus ("We can live with that"), vote – show of hands; secret ballot (appoint a returning officer).
5. **Implementation** – Decision is put into practice. Those affected by the decision are informed.
6. **Evaluation/review** – effectiveness of decision is checked.

Where consensus cannot be reached, a **majority of 70% of voting members** is required to adopt the proposal. A vote will take place within these parameters:

- Two thirds will be taken from the voters who vote yes or no only.
- All members of staff/students/parents who normally attend the scheduled meeting have the opportunity to vote.
- Any member of staff/students/parents can ask for a vote at any stage of the discussion.

- After the stages of the decision making procedures have been followed and a decision has still not been achieved, i.e. a stalemate has been reached, the Principal may make a decision taking into consideration all the information considered by staff/students/parents in trying to reach a decision.
- An abstaining vote is not counted towards the majority, but the voter is bound by the outcomes of the voting.
- Secret ballots may be used upon request of any staff/students/parents.
- All members will abide by the decision.

QUICK DECISIONS AFFECTING STAFF/STUDENTS/SITE OPERATIONS


Where information comes to the school and needs a response in a very short time frame any of the following may be used:

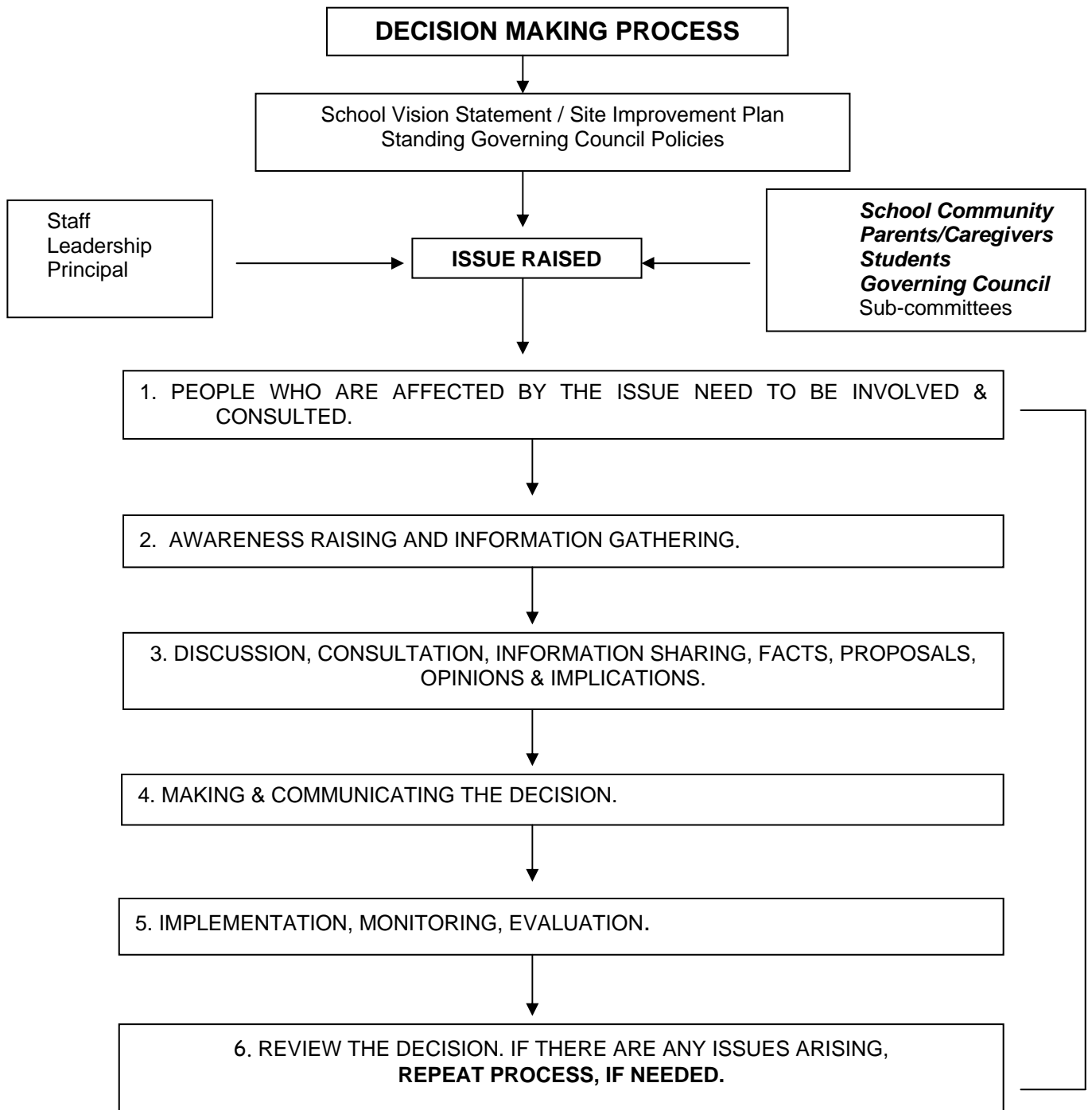
- Consultation with PAC or Leadership or Governing Council Chairperson.
- Issues/proposals are communicated in writing or raised at a staff meeting. All staff indicates support or opposition by either a tick/cross or vote. The proposer then checks the results for consensus/majority before actioning the decision.
- Opportunities are provided to review the decision at a later point in time if required.

TYPES OF DECISION MAKING

Schools are under the influence of a wide range of decisions involving numerous groups of people at different levels. This is best explained by the following table:

TYPES OF DECISION MAKING

ISSUE TYPE	DECISION MAKER/S	PBAS COMMITTEES
EXECUTIVE Legal requirements & DECS regulations governing Principal's duties. eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspension /Exclusion • Staff Deployment / Performance • Crisis Management • Administration • Finance • OHSW 	Principal and/or Deputy Principal Principal/PAC Counsellor / Coordinator Principal Principal, Finance Officer, Governing Council Principal, OHS Rep	Leadership/PAC Finance Committee OHSW Committee
MANAGEMENT Organisation & Management eg <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissemination of information eg DECS directions • Whole School events & Team activities 	Staff Meetings SSO meetings Leadership meetings PAC	Teams Staff Meetings Other committees eg Sports Day, Awards Day
PROFESSIONAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of curriculum • Implementation School Policies • Classroom management • Training & Development • Assessment & Reporting 	 Teaching Staff Ancillary Staff Special Needs Focus areas Leadership Team	All committees & working parties Teams Staff Meeting Professional Learning Communities
COMMUNITY & GOVERNING COUNCIL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Policies • Quality Assurance eg Annual Report, Strategic Plans • Finances • Canteen 	Governing Council	Governing Council sub committees - Finance, Grounds, Canteen, Bus, Uniform Community Library Board



DECISION MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCESSES

Each committee will develop meeting protocols for their group and all decisions will be made within the framework of this policy.

On some occasions the final decision maybe delegated back to the original committee or the Principal because consensus or majority cannot be reached. This is then minuted at the next meeting and conveyed to all parties. These sub-committees make recommendations to Governing Council. Once Governing Council has accepted the recommendations, it is minuted and becomes policy or is actioned.