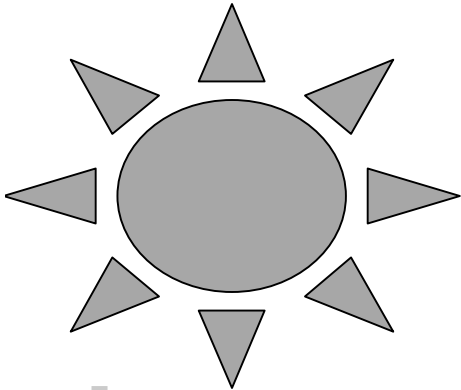Rush-Henrietta Central School District
2034 Lehigh Station Road • Henrietta, NY 14467

J. Kenneth Graham, Jr., Ph. D.
Superintendent of Schools

Plan for
Shared Decision Making

Students
Parents
Business/Community
Support Staff
Teachers
Administrators
Board of Education

Revisions submitted by the District SDM Committee

Board Adopted: February 13, 1996
Recertified: January 20, 1998
Revised: January 18, 2000
Revised: January 22, 2002
Revised: February 10, 2004
Revised: March 28, 2006

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MEMBERSHIP

This document was created by representatives of each stakeholder group. The process required more than 30 hours of deliberation. Consensus was reached on November 22, 1993 and the plan was then submitted to each stakeholder group for approval. This plan was revised by the District Shared Decision Making Committee on January 17, 1996 and submitted to all Shared Decision Making Committee members for review during the January 17, 1996 Shared Decision Making dinner meeting. The District SDM Committee met on January 30 to consider all suggested revisions from SDM Teams. The final draft of the revised plan, prepared by the District SDM Committee, was adopted by the Board of Education on February 13, 1996. In January 2000 an additional revision occurred as part of the State Education Department's biennial review.

MISSION STATEMENT FOR SHARED DECISION MAKING

Shared Decision Making provides the process that empowers all stakeholders to advocate:

- Responsible citizenship
- Quality student achievement
- Life long learning

BELIEF STATEMENT

These beliefs are the foundation for shared decision making:
1. The whole community should participate in the restructuring of the school system for the benefit of our children.
2. SDM involvement leads to interest in and responsibility for decisions.
3. All stakeholders should have an equal part and vested interest in affecting student outcomes.
4. SDM is a process, which takes advantage of multiple perspectives.

DISTRICT COMMITTEE

TERM OF MEMBERSHIP: A minimum of 2 years

The length of term is determined by the stakeholder group with a two-year minimum. Roles and responsibilities are to be identified and rotated among group members. New members need to participate in the next available training session provided by the district.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

People	Facilities
Training	Materials and Equipment
Time	Clerical Services
Budget	Visitation/Conferences

METHOD OF DECISION MAKING: Consensus - (see Glossary and Appendix I)

STAKE HOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	METHOD OF SELECTION
Board of Education	1(*non-voting liaison)	BOE appointed
Superintendent	1	By office
Administrators	1-2	Bargaining unit
Teachers	1	Bargaining unit
Students	1-2	Voted on by high school student council
Parents	1-2	Voted on by members of DPAC*
Administrative Support	1	Bargaining unit
Bus Drivers	1	Bargaining unit
Paraprofessionals	1	Bargaining unit
Facilities/Maintenance	1	Bargaining unit
Community/Business	1	Appointed by District SDM Committee based on application (see Appendix II)

VACANCY OR REPLACEMENT: It is the responsibility of the leadership of each stakeholder group to ensure representation on the committee.

* from Commissioner's Regulation - CR 100.11 - section "b," parents on the **District Committee only** may not be employed by the district.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE

The District Committee will:

• ensure participation of all stakeholders at site and district levels.

• facilitate the resolution of disputes.

• act as liaison among SDM Teams, stakeholders and the Board of Education.

• interpret the shared decision making plan and monitor compliance with contracts, laws, regulations and policies.1

• be a resource to SDM Teams.

• oversee the issues of district-wide concern while allowing for site decision-making.

• provide ongoing training.

• conduct CR100.11 required biennial review to be submitted to the Board of Education and Commissioner of Education.

• serve as a clearinghouse for all goals and accomplishments of each SDM Team.

• ensure open and on-going communication among all stakeholders at the site, the Shared Decision Making Teams at other sites, the District Committee and the Board of Education.

SDM TEAMS

TERM OF MEMBERSHIP: A minimum of 2 years

     The length of term is determined by the stakeholder group with a two-year minimum. Roles and responsibilities are to be identified and rotated among group members.   New members need to participate in the next available training session provided by the district.

METHOD OF DECISION MAKING: Consensus - (see Glossary and Appendix I)

STAKE HOLDER GROUP	NUMBER OF MEMBERS	METHOD OF SELECTION
Administrators /Principals	1-2	Building principal and second appointment by bargaining unit
Teachers	2-4	Bargaining unit
Parents	2-4	Voted on by members of the site parent organization*
Students	2-4 High School & Middle Schools, voting members Elementary Schools - non-voting observers on a rotating basis	Voted on by student council
Community/Business	1-2	Appointed by District SDM Committee based on application (see Appendix II)
Support Staff	2-4	Bargaining unit
Food Service	0-1	On site

VACANCY OR REPLACEMENT: It is the responsibility of the leadership of each stakeholder group to ensure representation on the committee.

It is recommended that SDM Teams not appoint the maximum number of members in each stakeholder group. Smaller SDM Teams are usually more effective if SDM Team members keep their stakeholders informed and involved.

* Parents on a SDM Team <u>may or may not</u> be employed by the district. Each site parent organization needs to decide.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
<u>OF SDM TEAMS</u>

SDM Teams will ensure:

- selection of a facilitator and recorder, and establishment of operating procedures.
- establishment of outcomes, means and standards for students.
- analysis and evaluation of student achievement, growth, and development and direction of efforts toward continuous improvement.
- administration of the site SDM budget consistent with district and site goals.
- referral to the District Committee those matters which require authorization beyond the site level.
- continuous monitoring of the SDM process at the site.
- provision for on-going training.
- open and on-going communication among all stake holders at the site, the Shared Decision Making Committee at other sites, the District Committee and the Board of Education.
- they facilitate decisions from the people they represent versus making decisions for them.
- continuous updating of the restructuring plan by every stakeholder group.
- periodic updates of their short and long-range goals will be shared with the District SDM Committee.

AUTHORITY

The SDM Team receives its authority as a representative body of stakeholders.

The SDM Team may implement any action requiring an expenditure of funds, if the funds are available to them.

The SDM Team may not implement any action which conflicts with laws, regulations, policies or contracts.

Decisions which the SDM Team is not authorized to make should be forwarded to the appropriate body.

MEANS AND STANDARDS TO EVALUATE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Each SDM Team must identify an appropriate means to evaluate student achievement outcomes.   Methods may include, but are not limited to:

1.   Traditional Assessments
    • Standardized Tests
    • Teacher Made Tests
    • Teacher Observations
    • Grades
    • State Regents Exams
    • Competency Tests
    • Parent Observations
    • Criterion Referenced Tests
    • New York State Assessments
    • Disaggregated assessment data required by No Child Left Behind

2.   Administrative Statistics
    • Attendance
    • Drop-out Rate
    • Graduation Rate
    • Retention Rate
    • Surveys
    • Graduate Tracking Data
    • Annual Partnership Survey

Rush-Henrietta Shared Decision Making Plan

3. Authentic Assessment
   - Portfolio Assessment
   - Performance Based Assessment
   - Authentic Task Assessment
   - Analyses of student work

ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Accountability refers to the responsibility of all persons to act in a manner that is consistent with ensuring excellence for all students.

2. All team members will be held accountable to:
   - their Stakeholder Groups.
   - the committees on which they serve.
   - the SDM plan as a whole.
   - the continuous improvement of the site restructuring plan.

3. The team as a whole will be held accountable for making decisions consistent with the mission of the shared decision making process.

4. The method used to select team members may be used to recall team members if members fail to:
   - represent the best interest of their Stakeholder Group and the Rush-Henrietta Central School District.
   - make every effort to participate in the SDM process.

5. A SDM team member can be proposed for recall to the stakeholder committee who appointed the member if there is consensus of all other stakeholder groups. The appointing group should make a decision within 30 calendar days of receiving the written request for recall. If the decision to recall a member is not made by the representative stakeholder group, the SDM Team can appeal to the District SDM Committee for a final decision on the recall request.

6. If a restructuring plan from a site does not properly define its outcomes, or does not appear consistent with the District's mission, vision and goals, then the District Committee brings this to the attention of the SDM Team and discussion ensues between the SDM Team and the District Committee until consensus is achieved.

7.	It is expected that each SDM Team member will make every effort to attend all scheduled SDM meetings. Alternates are not recognized and should not be part of SDM meeting discussions or votes. All SDM meetings are open to the public for observation.

INVOLVEMENT OF ALL PARTIES

At a minimum, teachers, parents, and administrators need to be actively involved in its work for a
SDM Team to be successful and fulfill its responsibilities. Ideally, all stake holder groups -- support staff, business/community, and when appropriate, students -- should be active participants in the work of the SDM Team.

IMPLIED CONSENSUS

Implied consensus simply means that those decisions previously made by individuals or groups continue in force until and unless there is explicit agreement by the SDM Team with regard to that area of decision-making. (In other words, if you've always made that decision, keep making it until you are part of a committee consensus to do otherwise.)

EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

The District Committee provides direction, facilitation and support for SDM Teams as they make decisions related to curricula, instructional practices, assessment, training, student grouping, budgeting, staffing, health and safety, scheduling and other issues that affect student learning outcomes.

DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

1. SDM Teams should attempt to resolve SDM Team disputes at SDM Team levels.

2. If the SDM Team can't resolve a dispute, it may be referred to the District Committee.

STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS
FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

No rules, laws or policies that protect parental rights shall be supplanted.

METHOD OF ALTERING THIS PLAN

Proposals to change this document shall be submitted to the District Committee in writing.

The plan can only be altered by consensus of the District Committee upon consultation with all SDM Teams and adopted by the Board of Education.

FUNDING

Each year funds are set-aside in the district budget to support the work of SDM Teams. These funds are used for items such as training, community/parent newsletters, and to facilitate meetings. The amount of funding is determined through the district's annual budgeting process.

GLOSSARY

1. **Accountability** - obligation to provide satisfactory reasons and/or explanations for one's acts.

2.   **Consensus** - A systematic process used by a group to reach agreements and to make decisions, which are reflective of all stakeholders' viewpoints. A consensus decision has been reached when:

- all group members can accept a decision even though the decision may not have been everyone's first choice; when
- all group members assent to the successful implementation of the decision; and when
- all group members acknowledge that they had equal opportunity to influence the final decision.

3.   **Community/Business Representative** - Any person who lives and/or works in the Rush-Henrietta school attendance area, who will serve as a spokesperson, and who can represent the interests of the general community. This person may not be a spouse of an employee of the building where the representative would serve (effective 9-1-96).

Criteria for selection includes:

- Cannot be an employee, student or Board of Education member of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District.
- Can serve on only one R-H Shared Decision Making SDM Team.
- Cannot serve at a school where his/her children attend.

4.   **District SDM Committee** - the district-level SDM committee which provides support, direction, and coordination to SDM Teams, and which conducts the biennial review for the Board of Education and the State Education Department.

5.   **Facilitate** - to aid or make easier.

6.   **Mission** - A mission statement defines what the organization has been established to accomplish. To state the mission is to state the purpose.

7.   **Quorum** - Each site Shared Decision Making Team determines the number of members needed for a quorum. It is expected that each site will consider the importance of all stakeholder participation and involvement before a decision is made.

8.   **SDM - Shared Decision Making.**   The main purpose of Shared Decision Making is the improvement of student performance. Shared Decision Making is a process through which stake holders at the school site collaborate in identifying concerns, solving problems, establishing goals, formulating procedures and processes, shaping direction and implementing programs by consensus. Shared Decision Making is a process of governance, which becomes the vehicle for restructuring the way each site delivers educational services.

9.   **SDM Team** - the team at the school site through which stake holders collaborate and find consensus in the delivery of educational services.

10.   **Site** - an individual school building.

11.   **Stake holder** - Any person or group with an interest and investment in the success of the students, the school, and the educational system of the Rush-Henrietta Schools. These groups include students, parents, business/community representation, support staff, teachers, administrators and Board of Education members.

12.   **Support Staff** - any person employed by the school district who does not hold professional certification.

APPENDIX I

CONSENSUS

Consensus is the best method for producing an innovative, creative, and high-quality decision that:
- a)   All members will be committed to implementing,
- b)   Uses the resources of all group members,
- c)   Increases the future decision-making effectiveness of the group.

Reaching consensus is characterized by:
- a)   More initial conflict among members,
- b)   More shifts of opinion,
- c)   A longer time to reach a conclusion,
- d)   More confidence in the correctness of a decision.

Consensus requires:
- a) A sophisticated understanding of the dynamics of controversy,
- b) An understanding of distributed participation and leadership,
- c) A knowledge of communication and other inter-personal skills,
- d) that all members of the group must participate actively,
- e) that power must be distributed evenly among all members of the group,
- f) a commitment to the process.

Consensus drawbacks:
- a) take a great deal of time and psychological energy,
- b) require a high level of member skill,
- c) time pressure must be minimal,
- d) there must be no emergency in progress.

If consensus cannot be reached:
- a) Dissenting group member(s) are obligated to present a viable alternative which reflects their stakeholder group's interests while preserving the interests of all other stakeholder groups.
- b) After a reasonable period of time, if dissenting stake holders can not propose a viable alternative, and if one alternative has broad group agreement, the favored alternative should be implemented.

CONSENSUS-MAKING GUIDELINES

1. Avoid arguing blindly for your own opinions. Present your position as clearly and logically as possible, but listen to other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.

2. Avoid changing your mind only to reach agreement and avoid conflict. Support only solutions with which you are at least somewhat able to agree. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.

3. Avoid conflict-reducing procedures such as majority voting, tossing a coin, averaging, and bargaining.

4. Seek out differences of opinion. They are natural and expected. Try to involve everyone in the decision process. Disagreements can improve the group's decision because they present a wide range of information and opinions, thereby creating a better chance for the group to hit upon more adequate solutions.

5. Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for the most acceptable alternative for all members.

6. Discuss underlying assumptions, listen carefully to one another, and encourage the participation of all members.

APPENDIX II

Request to Serve on a Shared Decision Making Team

Name _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____ Date _____

_____

Definition of Community Representative - A community representative is one who lives and/or works in the Rush-Henrietta school attendance area, who will serve as a spokesperson, who can represent the interests of the general community. Newly appointed representatives may not be a spouse of an employee of the building where the representative would serve.

Criteria:
- Can not be an employee, student or Board of Education member of the Rush-Henrietta Central School District.
- Can serve on only one R-H Shared Decision Making SDM Team.
- Can not serve at a school where his/her children attend.

Employment History: Tell us about your background and experiences.

Community Service: How have you been involved in the R-H community?

Desire to Serve: Why do you want to serve on a Site Shared Decision Making Team?

Please feel free to attach any additional information that would support your request.

Return this request form to Denise Anthony
2034 Lehigh Station Road, Henrietta, NY 14467. 359-5018.
You will be contacted when your request form has been received.

Rush-Henrietta Central School District
Community Representative

TO: People interested in being considered as a Rush-Henrietta Community
                 Representative on one of our Shared Decision Making Teams
FROM: District Shared Decision Making Committee
RE: Procedures to Request to Serve
DATE: December 15, 1999

Your Rush-Henrietta School District has implemented a model for decision making known as "shared decision making" to involve people who have a vested interest in helping our schools to continuously improve. We need and want community representatives to serve on our Shared Decision Making Teams.

The District Shared Decision Making Committee has defined a "Community Representative" as:

> "One who lives and/or works in the Rush-Henrietta school attendance area, who will serve as a spokesperson, and who can represent the interests of the general community."

If you believe you fit this definition and would like to make a request to be considered to serve on a team, please complete the attached form, "Request to Serve on a School Site Shared Decision Making Team."

You will see on the request form three criteria to be met by a Community Representative. Attached to this letter is our approved Shared Decision Making Plan, which meets the New York State Department of Education Commissioner of Education's Regulation CR100.11.

Your District Shared Decision Making Committee thanks you for considering this important role for the benefit of our students and community. The District Committee will be the group making the decision to identify "the pool" of Community Representatives. Applicants for a Community Representative who meet the criteria will become a part of the pool. Individual sites will select their Community Representative(s) from the pool.

Stakeholders submitting a request will be informed of the status of their request following the next regularly scheduled District Shared Decision Making Committee meeting. A training session is required before any community representative can serve on the committee.

If you need clarification about any aspect of serving your school district as a Community Representative, please contact Denise Anthony, 359-5018.

<u>**APPENDIX III**</u>

Checklist for Decision Making and Communication

1. _____ Is the decision consistent and supportive of the District's mission, vision, core values and plan for curriculum and instruction?

2. _____ Is the decision in accord with state and federal laws, regulations, Board policies, and contracts?

3. _____ Have the relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries been a part of the decision?

4. _____ Has consideration been given to…
____ who will be affected by the decision?
____ who will be responsible for the implementation?
____ who will influence the outcome of the decision?
____ the feasibility of the decision in regards to resources such as money, time, and space?
____ how the decision will be evaluated?
____ who will be responsible for the evaluation?

5. _____ Have the steps for collaboration and communication been followed…
____ with Directors and Building Administrators?
____ with Central Office?
____ with Instructional Council?
____ with the District Shared Decision Making Committee?
____ with Site Shared Decision Making Teams?

6. _____ Does the Board of Education need to be made aware of the decision and if so, has this been done?