



District Plan for School Improvement Teams and Site-Based Planning 2021-2023

District Shared Decision Making Review Committee

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

Lawrence Bo Wright
Superintendent of Schools

Adopted:	February 13, 1996
Recertified:	January 20, 1998
Revised:	January 18, 2000
Revised:	January 22, 2002
Revised:	February 10, 2004
Revised:	March 28, 2006
Revised:	March 25, 2008
Recertified:	January 26, 2010
Revised:	June 26, 2018
Revised:	June 8, 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<i>Section I: Overview and Rationale</i>	
Commissioner’s Regulations, Part 100.11	3
Educational Issues	3
District Mission and Vision	4
Belief Statement	4
Roles and Responsibilities of the District Committee	5
<i>Section II: Site-Based Planning</i>	
School Improvement Teams	6
Roles and Responsibilities of School Improvement Teams	7
Authority	7
Means and Standards to Evaluate Student Achievement	8
Involvement of All Parties	8
Accountability	9
Dispute Resolution Process	9
Glossary	10
Appendix I: Consensus Guidelines	12
Appendix II: Checklist for Decision-Making and Communication	14

SECTION I: OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

Commissioner' Regulations, Part 100.11

1. The purpose of school-based planning and decision-making shall be to improve the educational performance of all students in the school, regardless of such factors as socioeconomic status, race, sex, language, background, or disability.
2. Beginning in 1994, each district has been required to adopt a plan for school-based planning and shared decision-making that includes participation by teachers and parents.
3. The plan for participation in school-based planning must specify:
 - a. The educational issues which will be subject to cooperative planning and shared decision making at the school level.
 - b. The manner and extent of involvement of all parties.
 - c. The means and standards by which all parties shall evaluate improvement in student achievement.
 - d. The means by which all parties will be held accountable for this work.
 - e. The process whereby disputes about these educational issues shall be resolved.
 - f. The manner in which all state and federal requirements for the involvement of parents in this process will be coordinated and met by the district plan.
4. The district plan shall be reviewed biennially by the Board of Education.

Educational Issues

Each site-based School Improvement Team will guide and support implementation of the School Improvement Plan, including the identification and monitoring of major goals, initiatives and issues related to student achievement, assessment, instructional practices, health and safety, scheduling and other issues that affect student learning outcomes. All School Improvement Team work must be consistent with the District Priorities and goals established annually by the Board of Education.

District Mission and Vision

Mission

To prepare every student for responsible citizenship, lifelong learning, and college or career success.

Vision of Excellence

The Rush-Henrietta Central School District will be a learning community characterized by these values:

- Safe and supportive learning environments
- High levels of student learning
- A culture of collaboration
- Continuous improvement
- Responsible resource management

Belief Statement

These beliefs are the foundation for site-based planning and shared decision making:

1. The whole community should participate in the continuous improvement 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.

Roles and Responsibilities Of the District Committee

At the direction of the Board of Education, the Superintendent of Schools will convene an ad hoc advisory District SDM Review Committee every two years for the purpose of reviewing the School Improvement Teams' process and progress. As part of this review, this committee will conduct the required biennial review of the District Plan. Consistent with the Commissioner's Regulations, Part 100.11, the committee membership will include representatives from the Board of Education, the Superintendent or designee, the District Parent Advisory Council, and the RHEA-Teachers Chapter. It also will include representatives from all other employee associations, as well as secondary students. Each stakeholder group shall be responsible for ensuring membership representation on the committee. As an ad hoc committee, there is no fixed length of term for members.

The District Committee will:

- ensure participation of all stakeholders at site and district levels.
- facilitate the resolution of disputes that cannot be resolved at the local level.
- conduct the required biennial review of the District Plan to be submitted to the Board of Education.
- serve as a clearinghouse for all goals and accomplishments of each SDM team.
- as part of the biennial review, ensure open and ongoing communication among all stakeholders at the site, the School Improvement Teams at other sites, the District Committee and the Board of Education.
- meet as needed in between biennial reviews to consider feedback from the School Improvement Teams on the site-based planning and shared decision making process, and to address any problems or disputes brought to the District Committee from a site-based team.

SECTION II: SITE-BASED PLANNING

School Improvement Teams

Each school-based team shall determine its membership each year. Length of terms and the process for selecting representatives shall be determined by each stakeholder group. As required by CR 100.11, each school-based team shall include parent and teacher representatives, as well as school administrators. The Senior High School team also must include student representatives; students may participate at the junior high schools and intermediate schools, as determined locally. It is expected that other school stakeholder groups will provide representatives as well, including clerical staff, paraprofessionals, maintenance staff and, if possible, community members.

It is the responsibility of each stakeholder group to ensure representation on the school-based teams.* Parents on a site-based School Improvement Team may be employed by the district.

Teams shall focus on the School Improvement Plan and related educational issues, as described on page 3, and, as appropriate, shall seek to reach consensus on the establishment of school improvement goals, priorities, progress benchmarks and measures, within the parameters and District Priorities established by the Board of Education and consistent with the regulatory requirements on page 3. Teams may develop local processes for reaching group consensus; Appendix I is provided as a resource for this work. Roles and responsibilities at team meetings shall be locally determined, but it is recommended that they be rotated among group members.

* Because there is no fixed stakeholder group to represent community members, each school team and principal will work to solicit a representative from the community.

Roles and Responsibilities of School Improvement Teams

School Improvement Teams will ensure:

- a forum for discussion of the School Improvement Plan, student learning goals and outcomes, and other issues that affect student learning and school climate/culture.
- stakeholder involvement in these discussions, including public distribution (posting) of meeting dates/location, agendas and notes/minutes. This can be accomplished through online staff/parent communications and parent group meetings.
- selection of a facilitator and recorder, and establishment of locally determined operating procedures.
- establishment of outcomes, means and standards for student academic and social-emotional growth.
- analysis and evaluation of student achievement, growth, and development and direction of efforts toward continuous improvement.
- continuous monitoring of the school-based planning/SDM process at the site.
- open and ongoing communication among all stakeholders at the site.
- ongoing communication by School Improvement Team representatives between the team and the constituents they represent: (1) seeking input from stakeholders and representing that feedback to the team; and (2) reporting back to stakeholders on the team's meetings, activities, outcomes, etc.

Authority

The School Improvement Team derives its authority as a representative body of stakeholders.

The School Improvement Team may not implement any action which conflicts with laws, regulations, Board of Education decision-making authority, policies or contracts.

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

Means and Standards to Evaluate Student Achievement

Each School Improvement Team plays a role in supporting the School Improvement Plan. The team acts as an advisory council for suggested work from the School Improvement Plan. Each School Improvement Team must identify an appropriate means to evaluate student achievement outcomes through the guidance of the building principal. Data used by the team may include, but are not limited to:

1. Traditional Assessments
 - Standardized Tests
 - District Common Assessments and Unit Assessments
 - Other Teacher-Created Tests
 - Grades
 - Criterion Referenced Tests
 - New York State Assessments and Regents Exams
 - Disaggregated assessment data required by ESSA (federal education law), including both longitudinal student cohort data and year-to-year program data, specific to various student demographic subgroups

2. Student Information (should include qualitative and quantitative data)
 - Progress Monitoring Team Data and Teacher Feedback
 - Attendance
 - Engagement in Learning
 - Dropout Rate
 - Graduation Rate and Graduation Cohort Tracking Data
 - Retention Rate
 - Suspension Rates and Other Student Management Data
 - Graduate Tracking Data
 - Survey Data (student, parent satisfaction)
 - Analyses of student work

3. Authentic Assessment
 - Portfolio Assessments
 - Performance Based Assessments and Capstone Projects
 - Authentic Task Assessments

Involvement of All Parties

At a minimum, teachers, parents, and administrators need to be actively involved in its work for a School Improvement Team to be successful and fulfill its responsibilities. Ideally, all stakeholder groups – support staff, community members, and when appropriate, students – should be active participants in the work of the team.

Accountability

1. Accountability refers to the responsibility of all individuals 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 team on which they serve
 - the district plan
 - the monitoring and success of the School Improvement 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 (refer to page 6) may be used to recall team members if members fail to:
 - represent the best interests of their stakeholder group and the Rush-Henrietta Central School District
 - make every effort to participate in the SDM process.
5. If the District Committee determines in its biennial review that a School Improvement Team has not aligned its practices and procedures with this District Plan, or that a SIT's activities do not appear consistent with the District's mission, vision and District Priorities, then the District Committee will make recommendations to the School Improvement Team to make changes, and will include those recommendations in its report to the Board of Education.
6. It is expected that each School Improvement Team member will make every effort to attend all scheduled team meetings. All meetings are open to the public.

Dispute Resolution Process

1. School Improvement Teams should attempt to resolve any disagreements within the team at the school level.
2. If the school-based team cannot reach consensus or resolve a disagreement, it may refer the issue to the superintendent or designee for resolution, or to be referred to the District Committee.

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 Representative to the school-based teams** - Any person who lives and/or works in the Rush-Henrietta district 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.

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 School Improvement Team.
 - Cannot serve at a school where his/her children attend.
4. **District SDM Committee** - the district-level committee which provides support and consultation to the School Improvement Teams, and which conducts the biennial review of the District Plan for the Board of Education.
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-based team determines the number of members needed for a quorum for consideration of an issue.

8. **Shared Decision Making** - a process through which stakeholders at the school site collaborate in identifying concerns, solving problems, establishing goals, formulating procedures and processes, shaping direction and implementing the School Improvement Plan by consensus. Shared decision making is a process of governance, which becomes the vehicle for continuously improving the way each site delivers educational services.
9. **School Improvement Team** - the team at the school site through which stakeholders collaborate and find consensus in the delivery of educational services.
10. **Site** - an individual school building.
11. **Stakeholder** - 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, 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 or goal 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) Knowledge of communication and other interpersonal 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) takes a great deal of time and psychological energy,
- b) requires a high level of 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 stakeholders can not propose a viable alternative, and if one alternative has broad group agreement, the favored alternative should be implemented.

Guidelines for Producing Consensus

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 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

School Improvement Team **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, district policies, and collective bargaining agreements (contracts)?
3. _____ Have the relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries been part of the process?
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. _____ Has the team communicated through appropriate channels as needed with ...
 - ___ directors and building administrators?
 - ___ district-level administrators?
 - ___ Instructional Council?
 - ___ the Board of Education?