PLAN FOR SHARED DECISION MAKING

CENTER MORICHES U.F.S.D

DEFINITION OF SHARED DECISION MAKING

Shared decision making is a system by which representatives of all segments of our community reach consensus regarding the implementation of educational goals and resolution of issues and problems that impact the overall educational process.

I.   **EDUCATIONAL ISSUES**

The following issues are among those that may help be addressed by the building teams in order to improve student performance and help all children achieve the desired learning outcomes:

- Learning environment

- Curriculum development and implementation

- Program evaluation and improvement

- Student scheduling and placement

- Educational relationships and communications

- Staff development

- Input into hiring

     (See appendix A for examples of potential issues)

Guidelines:

The building teams will need to give attention to prioritize issues and focus on areas that will most impact student learning.

Site based teams' decisions should include plans that are researched-based, data-driven, and provide for evaluation.

Sharing authority with site-based teams in specific areas will not prevent administrators or the Board of Education from exercising their responsibilities for initiating actions in the specific areas identified for school based decisions.

The building teams' decisions cannot:

- Be budgetary in nature

- Violate state law or statutory regulations

- Violate contractual agreements already in place

- Supersede existing levels of authority

- Impact other buildings within the district without mutual agreement of other building teams

- Involve matters of personnel including instructional and non-instructional staff members

- Be directed towards individual students

II.   MANNER AND EXTENT OF EXPECTED INVOLVEMENT OF ALL PARTIES

Decision Making Model – Consensus:

Consensus is a systematic process used by a group to make decisions that everyone can support. A consensus decision has been reached when:

1. All group members agree to support the decision though it might not be everyone's first choice.

2. Everyone is committed to the decision as if were the first choice of all group members.

3. Each participant agrees that he or she has had an equal opportunity to influence the decision.

4. No one raises an objection when the group leader calls for consensus approval of the decision.

Minimum Team Composition:

	Center Moriches High School	Center Moriches Middle School	Clayton Huey Elementary School
Principal	1	1	1
Teachers	3	2	3
Parents	3	2	3
Students	2	1	*
Pupil Personnel Services (nurse, psychologist, guidance, etc.)	1	1	1
Paraprofessional	1	1	1
Community Member***	1	1	1

***Not a CMUFSD employee

Other support staff will be invited to assist as needed, such as, secretaries, custodians or central office personnel.

* Students will be invited to serve on the elementary school Ad Hoc Committees wherever appropriate.

Each year, building team composition may be reviewed for possible modifications that would be recommended to the Board of Education. Members of the business community will be invited to serve on Ad Hoc Committees whenever appropriate.

Selection of Team Members:

1. The principal will serve by role.

2. The Center Moriches Teachers' Association (CMTA) will select teachers through a process which it will determine.

3. Paraprofessionals will select members through a process which the Center Moriches Paraprofessionals' Association determines.

4. PTA will select parent members who have children currently in the school, through a process which they determine.

5. Students will be invited to submit a letter of self-nomination. The principal and teachers on the building team will, in advance of the first building team meeting, meet to select students from among those who volunteer.

6.   Community members (not BOE members, district employees or parents of current Center Moriches students) will be invited to submit a letter of self-nomination. Selection will be made by the building teams at a preliminary meeting held solely for that purpose.

7.   Pupil Personnel Services members will meet and select one representative.

Membership:

Each group will be encouraged to help ensure that the team has a diverse membership by naming required members as early as possible for the following year. At the latest, membership should be in place by June 30th for the following year. In addition, it is recommended that alternates are named in the event that an individual is unable to perform.

Each new member of the team will be given a copy of the district-wide plan upon designation as a team member. In addition, each team, each year will receive orientation training to the working procedures of CR 100.11, Shared Decision Making.

Members need to come to their roles with an open mind and willingness to compromise. Members who are repeatedly obstructive to the process may be recommended to the Board of Education for removal by a consensus vote of the other members of the site based team. Any individual recommended for removal shall have access to appeal this recommendation to the Board of Education, which will have the final decision on this matter.

Attendance:

Regular attendance is assumed; however, after two consecutive absences, or a total of three for the year, a member will be replaced unless otherwise determined by the team through consensus.

Quorum:

At least half plus one of the team must be present in order to proceed.

Term of Office:

Each term of office will be for two years. No term limits will be set.

Chairperson:

The chairperson(s) will be selected by the building team annually. The role of the chairperson is to facilitate meetings, including but not limited to: insuring that notes are taken and distributed, setting meeting times, canceling meetings when necessary, calling additional meetings when necessary, arranging for guests to attend meetings, arranging with the Superintendent's Office to make team presentations at Board of Education meetings and focusing team members on the task at hand.

The chairperson(s) will provide a brief status quo report regarding items on the agenda for the benefit of any guests who are in attendance. The chairperson(s) will also decide whether input by guests is relevant to the issue being discussed by the team and has the authority to limit guest input if it is not relevant.

Meeting Notes:

Meeting notes are not intended to be formal minutes. General topical notes from each meeting will be distributed in a timely manner to each team members, the Superintendent, the presidents of all labor units and associations in Center Moriches Schools, and the president of the CMPTA. In addition, meeting notes are to be posted in the main offices of each building and in the library.

Guests:

Meetings shall be considered open and although they are considered working sessions, guests are welcomed and invited to provide input during the meeting.

Frequency:

Meetings will take place monthly during the school year; more often if deemed necessary by the team.

Scheduling of the Meetings:

The principal will set the time for the first meeting. The team will then decide the schedule for the subsequent meetings. Building teams are required to be sensitive to each person's schedule in determining the time for the meetings.

Ad Hoc Committees:

Ad Hoc Committees will be formed in order to help increase ownership and enable a greater number of people than comprise the core team to participate in the work of shared planning and decision making. The Ad Hoc Committee will make recommendations to the core team. Members of the Ad Hoc Committee with join with the core team for decision-making in issues that involve the work of their Ad Hoc group.

Communications:

Building teams have an obligation to obtain genuine input from every group that will be impacted by decisions. This includes the administrative staff and Superintendent, as well as the general membership of the various stakeholders. It is agreed, however, that the dissent of any of these individuals or groups does not prevent the team from bringing an issue to the Board of Education for a final decision. To ensure that as much input as possible is obtained, building committees will identify all parent groups and specialty groups, and will develop communication vehicles designed to invite enrollment by all members of the Center Moriches school community. This is to include, but not limited to, parents of children from the East Moriches School District and the Poospatuck Reservation. Each building team will prepare regular updates for submission to district and local publications.

Communications between Building Teams:

In order to ensure coordination of efforts, the building teams will establish regular communications, which will include the following:

- A kick-off meeting in the Fall will be scheduled as an extra meeting, in addition to those outlined above. This meeting can be used for team development and/or as an opportunity to share goals.

- A summary meeting will be held toward the end of the year, this can be one of the regularly scheduled meetings. At this time the teams can provide an update of their year's activities.

- The chair of each building team will collaboratively develop the agenda for these joint meetings.

- Additional joint meetings can be scheduled as determined by the group.

- Building teams will exchange meeting notes.

- Building teams chairs will be encouraged to develop specific activities and efforts.

Communications with the Board of Education:

Each building team will meet with the Board of Education by November 1st of each school year to provide the preliminary report on the issues to be studied. A subsequent meeting with the Board no later than November 1st of the following year will be held to discuss the status of any issues that were studied throughout the year. Building teams may request more frequent meetings should they need to initiate communications with the Board. Upon the completion of work on a project, each team is expected to provide a final report to the Board. Included in each final report on a new project should be the team's recommendation as to whether the team, the district, or others should assume responsibility for the continuation of the project. Board of Education members are encouraged to attend meetings whenever possible.

III.   **ASSESSMENT (The Means and Standards to Evaluate Student Achievement)**

The purpose of assessment efforts under the provisions of this regulation is to gauge the progress of students in moving towards achieving desired outcomes. Towards this end, students will be assessed using both traditional and alternative/performance-based methods. The assessment methods and results may be reviewed annually and reported to the Board of Education at a public meeting. Traditional methods may include standardized and other achievement tests, such as, regents exams, SAT's, and state assessments. Performance based methods may include portfolios, projects, experiments, fitness tests, oral presentations, research papers, proficiency exams, student activity, and community service logs, etc. Use of performance based assessments will promote the development of higher level knowledge and skills by encouraging reading, writing and active participation in school and extra-curricular activities, thereby positively impacting student achievement of desired outcomes. Appropriate opportunities will be created to enable administrators, teachers, parents and students to explore and implement emerging assessment techniques. Both traditional and alternative measures will be evaluated as to their effectiveness in measuring student performance on specific outcomes.

Some criteria for gauging success may include the following:

- Decreasing the number or percent of students requiring Academic Intervention Services (AIS).

- More students meeting state and locally mandated outcomes/goals.

- Improvement in school-wide standardized, and criterion referenced test results.

- Comparison of grade performance against previous performances and the monitoring of cohort groups to ascertain longitudinal progress of a specific grade.

- More students achieving, mastering, and exceeding the New York State Standards.

- More students attending post-secondary schools.

IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Every team will be held accountable for its decisions, bearing in mind that "at the end of every decision there is a child." (Paul Lochner). Accordingly, the intent of every decision will be to improve student performance and nurture the well-being of every child.

The team will make use of the following means:

- Clearly defined goals that relate to national, state, and local standards, and report these goals to the Board of Education and all stakeholders.

- Review the efficacy of student programs based on a variety of methods and measures over a reasonable amount of time.

- Regularly evaluate site-based teams' decisions, report accomplishments and results, and make the necessary modifications.

- Always do what is in the best interest of the students in the Center Moriches School District.

While the team will embrace the above responsibilities, it should be noted that accountability must be shared by all stakeholders.

V. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

Decision will be reached through consensus. Training for building teams will be provided as needed. Consensus exists when all members can accept and support the decision reached by the team.

The following steps will be used to aid the team in arriving at consensus:

Phase I: _Continued Emphasis on Stopping for Clarification_

Conduct further discussions and listen to concerns raised by one or more members regarding an issue. While working to resolve problems, special attention will be paid to note taking.

Steps such as rephrasing, expanding, giving examples, and recording individual concerns will be taken to keep the dialogue going.

Phase II: _Share Concerns_

Use problem-solving strategies, which may include, but not be limited to the following:

- Brainstorm concerns regarding the issue.

- Look for areas of agreement within and across differing perspectives.

Phase III: _Refocus on the Goals_

Members will re-focus on the goals of the discussion, the mission of the shared decision making group (i.e., the improvement of student performance), and otherwise establish the relevance of the debate to the overall purpose of the shared decision making process.

Phase IV: _Further Steps_

If after utilizing the steps above, no consensus has been achieved, the following steps may be utilized:

- Set discussion time constraints.

- Return to constituent groups for input, and set time for revisiting the issues.

- Call in an expert in the related fields.

- Get further information through research that may include checking with other schools that have struggled with the same concept and implemented related ideas. If a decision is made to contact other school districts, the principal is to inform the Superintendent Office of this decision.

- Agree to discussion guided by a facilitator.

Phase V: _Set Criteria for Determining when Consensus has been Reached_

Members will know that the conflict is resolved when they reach consensus by determining the extent to which each member can accept, "live with", and publicly support the disputed course of action.

VI. **MEANS OF COORDINATING WITH STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

The Center Moriches School District will implement parental involvement and participation as required by and through state and federal programs. The building principals, in conjunction with the support of the Director of Pupil Services, will provide an annual update regarding parental involvement issues and concerns. Parents of designated groups will be specifically invited to serve on Ad Hoc Committees whenever possible, and the principals will confer with the Director of Pupil Services whenever a specific federal and/or state program issue has the potential to impact designated parents or their children. The principals will share all information with their building teams.

Additionally, the teachers of students in state or federally funded programs will make themselves available to communicate with building teams as needed. This will enable the building teams to design communications that invite involvement.

Building teams will work to facilitate involvement by **ALL** parents, including parents who may tend to be less involved in school affairs.

**BIENNIAL REVIEW**

This plan will be reviewed by the Board of Education for possible modification, at least by January 2015, as outlined in CR 100.11. At that time, a report will be filed with the Commissioner and the District Superintendent indicating the results of the teams' work, and any amendments to the plan that have been made. Additionally, changes may be suggested to the Board of Education on an as needed basis.

Adopted: 3/20/13

APPENDIX A

The following is meant to guide building teams in interpreting the list of educational issues on page 2.

- **Learning environments may include discussion, study, and recommendations regarding facilities, security, health and safety, and maintenance.**

- **Student scheduling and placement may include discussion, study and recommendations regarding tracking, pull-outs, enrichment, changing classes, scheduling of specials, placement practices, remedial programs, and alternative programs.**

- **Educational relationships and communications refers to aspects of school life and practices which can enhance relationships between and among students, staff, parents, community, business, etc.**

- **Staff development is meant to focus on promoting promising practices through professional in-service. This may also include parent education**