

# HORSEHEADS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## Plan for Improving the Educational Achievement of ALL STUDENTS

### Mission Quality Education for ALL

Exit Outcomes  
The Horseheads Central School graduate will be a...

- life-long learner
- caring, productive citizen
- effective communicator
- creative problem-solver
- quality decision-maker
- healthy, well-rounded person

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## HORSEHEADS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT SHARED DECISION MAKING PLAN

### INTRODUCTION

The district plan for improving the educational performance of all students is in response to the goals and philosophy of the New Compact for Learning and Section 100.11 of the Commissioner's Regulations. It will serve to provide people in the Horseheads school and community with a structure that is focused on improving student performance through school-based planning and shared decision making.

This shared decision making plan outlines the purpose and responsibilities of the instructional site-based teams. This plan does not address the function of the district's other site-based teams.

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

A planning committee, formed by the CORE Compact Planning group in accordance with the Commissioner's Regulations 100.11 (see Appendix A), met for the first time in the spring of 1993. This committee was charged with developing the district's shared decision making plan. Serving on the committee were the following:

- Superintendent
- Parents (5)
- Teachers (5)
- Administrators (5)
- Teaching Assistant (1)
- Community Members (1)

(See Appendix B)

### DEFINITION OF SHARED DECISION MAKING

“Shared decision making is defined as a process by which all members of the education community at the district and school levels cooperate in identifying educational issues, defining goals, formulating policy and implementing and assessing activities to help students reach standards of excellence.”

“Developing A Shared Decision Making Plan”  
State Education Department, 1992

## ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

This shared decision making plan includes the following elements:

- I. The manner and extent of expected involvement of all parties.
- II. The means and standards for evaluating student achievement.
- III. Identification of educational issues subject to shared decision making.
- IV. A determination of accountability.
- V. A dispute resolution process.
- VI. A provision regarding state and federal requirements for parental involvement.

### I. MANNER AND EXTENT OF EXPECTED INVOLVEMENT

A district team, four K-4 elementary, one intermediate school, one middle school, and one high school site-based team will engage in shared decision making for the following purpose:

“...to improve the educational performance of all students in the school, regardless of such factors as socio-economic status, race, gender, language, background, or disability.”

Section 100.11 of the Commissioner’s Regulations  
Composition and Role of Teams

#### District Team

A district team, consisting of representatives of the site-based teams was initially formed in April of 1994, to serve until August 31, 1995. After that date, the suggested term of office is one year. The district team will be composed of the superintendent (or his designee) and two representatives from each site-based team. (It is recommended that each team consider one district employee and one parent or community member to serve on the district team.)

The role of the district team is to develop a system for effective communication among the site-based teams and to facilitate the shared decision making process.

#### Site-Based Teams

Each site-based team must be composed of teachers, parents, and administrators. It is recommended that the team also include others such as students, support staff, Board of Education members, central office staff, and business/community members.

Each K-4 elementary team shall consist of no more than 15 members, with a maximum of 8 teachers.

The intermediate school team shall consist of no more than 18 members, with a maximum of 10 teachers.

The middle school team shall consist of no more than 22 members, with a maximum of 12 teachers.

The high school team shall consist of no more than 34 members, with a maximum of 20 teachers.

If teams currently do not reflect these numbers, it is recommended that they do so within three years.

### Terms of Office

Each site-based team will provide for the selection, rotation, and replacement of members. It is recommended that members serve at least two years, with half of the group rotating every year.

Selection of team members will follow the Commissioner's Regulations. In particular, parents will be selected by parent groups and teachers selected by HTA.

### Role of Site-Based Teams

Site-based teams will engage in the following:

1. Identify areas of strength and areas of concern, based upon both quantitative and qualitative data, for each school.
2. Design action plans for school improvement based upon district outcomes and student achievement data.
3. Share the action plans with the school staff and community for the purpose of promoting understanding, seeking input, and developing support for implementation.
4. Present the action plans to the Superintendent and Board of Education for review.
5. Implement, evaluate, and annually update the action plans.
6. Monitor student achievement through multiple assessment methods.
7. Analyze disaggregated student achievement data according to relevant variables. The purpose of this analysis is to ensure quality and equity.
8. Provide guidance and direction for school improvement as determined by each school's staff.

9. Determine further opportunities for cooperative planning and shared decision making at the school level.

## II. MEANS AND STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Each site-based team will annually evaluate the achievement of students in its school. Disaggregation of data, according to factors determined by the site-based teams, will be provided to teams for their analysis of student achievement. Central office staff, with the assistance from the Director of Elementary Education and the Director of Secondary Education, will be responsible for providing teams with student achievement data.

Both traditional test data and locally developed performance-based data will be analyzed to evaluate the achievement of students. Site-based teams will set high expectations and high standards for students. Based on data, teams will annually develop objectives and action plans designed to improve the performance levels of all students.

## III. EDUCATIONAL ISSUES

The New Compact for Learning encourages schools to engage all parties in decisions about such matters as curriculum, instructional materials, methodology, assessment, student grouping, scheduling, budgeting, staffing, communications with parents, and staff development.

In keeping with the intent of the New Compact for Learning and the primary role of site-based teams, the Horseheads teams may legitimately choose to engage in making decisions about a broad range of issues that influence student achievement in their schools. It is understood that the teams will communicate and seek input from a variety of constituencies. In areas where coordination between and among schools is required, site-based teams are encouraged to participate in district-wide development projects.

## IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Site-based teams are accountable for developing action plans that are designed to improve student learning. The total educational community is accountable for implementing these plans. Teams should be prepared to rethink decisions and revise action plans.

Site-based teams are accountable for operating in an open manner. Team meetings are open to all who wish to attend and minutes of meetings should be available to the staff and community.

## V. DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

In cases where conflicts occur, the following dispute resolution process is recommended:

### A. Within the Site-based Team

Step 1 – Attempt to resolve the conflict internally through discussion and consensus. Should there be opposition to a decision, it is the responsibility of those in opposition to offer alternatives for discussion.

Step 2 – Should lack of consensus still exist, it is recommended that an outside facilitator be invited to lead the team through problem solving .  
Step 3 – Should lack of consensus still exist, it is recommended that the team rethink the issue and perhaps develop a different approach to dealing with it.

B. Between the Site-based Team and Others

Step 1 – If for some reason an individual or group opposes a decision made by a site-based team, it is recommended that they state in writing the concern and a possible alternative. This proposal should be submitted to the facilitator(s) of the site-based team.

Step 2 – Within 30 days of receipt of the concern, the site-based team or its representatives will meet with the individual or group for the purpose of discussion and possible solution.

Step 3 – If there is no resolution, the site-based team may decide to reconsider its decision or move forward with the original decision.

C. Between Site-Based Team Decisions and Established Policies and Regulations

If after careful deliberation, a site-based team makes a decision that conflicts with established district policies or state regulations, the team may request a waiver from the appropriate authorities.

## VI. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

The Horseheads district plan enhances parent participation in the shared decision making process. Parents are encouraged to become active participants of the district and school teams. The regulations for parent involvement in special education and other programs will be adhered to, as in the past.

In addition, parents are invited to participate in school activities via parent organizations ([e.g., District Parent Council and monthly Superintendent's Roundtable meetings](#)), community announcements, the district webpage, newsletters, and personal invitations.

### REVISIONS TO THE PLAN

The district's plan for Shared Decision Making [was](#) reviewed at the end of the 1994-95 school year and biennially thereafter. The District Team is charged with initiating the review process. Revisions to the plan will be made at the end of the review process. All revisions are subject to Board approval.

Such review and revisions will be accomplished by a committee of any and all current and past members of the District Team who desire to serve. There is an expectation that all constituency groups will be represented.

Changes to the plan shall be made available to the public. The amended plan or a recertification of the previous plan, together with a statement of the plan's success in achieving its objectives, shall be filed with the district superintendent and submitted to the commissioner for approval no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year in which such biennial review takes place, commencing with February 1, 1996. (See Commissioner's Regulation 100.11f.)

## APPENDIX A

### Section 100.11 of the Commissioner's Regulations

Participation of parents and teachers in school-based planning and shared decision making.

(a) Purpose. The purpose of school-based planning and shared decision making shall be to improve the educational performance of all students in the school, regardless of such factors as socio-economic status, race, sex, language background, or disability.

(b) By February 1, 1994, each public school district board of education and each board of cooperative educational services (BOCES) shall develop and adopt a district plan for the participation by teachers and parents with administrators and school board members in school-based planning and shared decision making. Such district plan shall be developed in collaboration with a committee composed of the superintendent of schools, administrators selected by the district's administrative bargaining organization(s), teachers selected by the teachers' collective bargaining organization(s), and parents (not employed by the district or a collective bargaining organization representing teachers or administrators in the district) selected by school-related parent organizations, provided that those portions of the district plan that provide for participation of teachers or administrators in school-based planning and shared decision making may be developed through collective negotiations between the board of education or BOCES and local collective bargaining organizations representing administrators and teachers. For the purpose of this subdivision, school-related parent organization means a nonprofit organization or parents of children attending the schools of the school district whose purposes include the promotion of parental involvement in public education and that is chartered or incorporated under the laws of New York, or is affiliated with a statewide or regional parent organization that is so chartered or incorporated, or is an unincorporated association authorized to do business under an assumed name in New York. In districts in which teachers or administrators are not represented by a collective bargaining organization or there are no school-related parent organizations, teachers, administrators and/or parents shall be selected by their peers in the manner prescribed by the board of education or BOCES to participate in the development of such district plan. In the City School District of the City of New York, each board of education of each community school district and each high school superintendency shall develop a plan in the manner prescribed by this subdivision, and each such plan shall be incorporated into a plan by the central board of education, which plan shall comply with this section.

(c) The plan for participation in school-based planning and shared decision making shall specify:

(1) the educational issues which will be subject to cooperative planning and decision making at the building level by teachers, parents, administrators, and, at the discretion of the board of education or BOCES, other parties such as students, school district support staff, and community members;

(2) the manner and extent of the expected involvement of all parties;

(3) the means and standards by which all parties shall evaluate improvement in student achievement;

(4) the means by which all parties will be held accountable for the decisions which they share in making;

(5) the process whereby disputes presented by the participating parties about the educational issues being decided upon will be resolved at the local level; and

(6) the manner in which all State and Federal requirements for the involvement of parents in planning and decision making will be coordinated with and met by the overall plan.

(d)(1) The district's plan shall be adopted by the board of education or BOCES at a public meeting after consultation with and full participation by the designated representatives of the administrators, teachers, and parents, and after seeking endorsement of the plan by such designated representatives. The plan shall be made available to the public. Each board of education or BOCES shall file such plan with the district superintendent or, in the case of city school districts having a population of 125,000 inhabitants or more or a BOCES, with the commissioner within 30 days of adoption.

(2) Each board of education or BOCES shall submit its district plan to the commissioner for approval within 30 days of adoption of the plan. The commissioner shall approve such district plan upon a finding that it complies with the requirements of this section and makes provision for effective participation of parents, teachers, and administrators in school based planning and decision making.

(e)(1) In the event that the board of education or BOCES fails to provide for consultation with, and full participation of, all parties in the development of the plan as required by subdivisions(b) and (d) of this section, the aggrieved party or parties may commence an appeal to the commissioner pursuant to section 310 of the Education Law. Such an appeal may be instituted prior to final adoption of the district plan and shall be instituted no later than 30 days after final adoption of the district plan by the board of education or BOCES.

(2) Any aggrieved party who participated in the development of the district plan may also appeal to the commissioner pursuant to section 310 of the Education Law from action of the board of education or BOCES in adopting, amending, or recertifying the plan. The grounds for such an appeal may include, but shall not be limited to, noncompliance with any requirement of subdivision(c) of this section and failure to provide within the district plan for meaningful participation in school-based planning and shared decision making within the intent of this section.

(f) The district's "Plan for the Participation by Teachers and Parents in School-based Planning and Shared Decision Making" shall be reviewed biennially by the board of education or BOCES in accordance with subdivision (b) of this section. Any amendment or recertification of a plan shall be developed and adopted in the manner prescribed by subdivision (b) and paragraphs (d)(1) and (2) of this section. The amended plan or a recertification of the previous plan, together with a statement of the plan's success in achieving its objectives, shall be filed with the district superintendent where applicable, and submitted to the commissioner for approval no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> of each year in which such biennial review takes place, commencing with February 1, 1996.

(g) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivisions (b) through (f) of this section, where a district has implemented a plan for participation in school-based planning and shared decision making as of February 1, 1994 through its excellence and accountability pilot

district program, such district shall not be required to develop a new district plan pursuant to this section.

(h) A school district or BOCES which has developed or implemented a plan for participation of teachers and/or administrators in school-based decision making as the result of a collective bargaining agreement between the board of education or BOCES and local collective bargaining organizations representing teachers and/or administrators shall incorporate such negotiated plan as a part of the district plan required by this section. The board of education or BOCES shall develop the remainder of the district plan, including the portion relating to parental involvement, in the manner prescribed by subdivision(b) of this section.

\*This is the exact text of the regulation as found in 8 NYCRR.

## APPENDIX B

### PLANNING COMMITTEE

A planning committee, formed by the CORE Compact Planning Group in accordance with the Commissioner's Regulations, met for the first time in the spring of 1993. This committee was charged with developing the district's shared decision making plan. The following people served on the planning committee:

Mary Ann Balland – Teacher  
Barbara Collins – Parent  
Linda Congdon – Parent  
David Dallaportas – Principal  
Barbara Deignan – Library Media Specialist/Teacher  
Chris Delaney – Curriculum Supervisor  
Beth Forsythe – Parent  
Ken Galbraith – Director of Human Resources  
Jim Jacobus – Teacher  
Linda Langevin – Teacher  
Marsha Naus – Teacher Assistant  
Bea Parker – Assistant Superintendent/Facilitator  
Robert Reidy – Superintendent  
George Rose – Community Advisory Committee Member  
Jim Snyder – Assistant Principal  
Fran Soroka – Parent  
Sue Ungvarsky – Parent  
Judy Zimmerman - Teacher