

McGRAW CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

PLAN for SCHOOL BASED PLANNING and SHARED DECISION MAKING

Commissioner's Regulation Part 100.11 Subdivision (a)

**Approved by the McGraw
Board of Education**

**on _____
Date**

Board President's Signature

VISION STATEMENT

The Mission of the McGraw Central School District is to pursue the maximum fulfillment of each student's potential. We will accomplish this by identifying student outcomes based on excellence, fostering and enhancing student opportunities, emphasizing student enthusiasm, and promoting parent, school and community involvement.

- **By identifying student outcomes based on excellence,**
we see a school community whose members demonstrate personal pride in their accomplishments, are self-motivated and focused, make informed decisions, and strive for their highest quality through continual development and accountability.
- **By fostering and enhancing student opportunities,**
we see a school community where the students and staff are motivated, aware of possibilities available to them, goal-oriented and who possess self-esteem, inquisitiveness, independence, and perseverance.
- **By emphasizing student enthusiasm,**
we see a school community where students are confident, inspired to achieve, and recognized as stakeholders, and who exhibit appreciation, respect for self, and a positive attitude.
- **By promoting parent, school, and community involvement,**
we see a school community whose members work collaboratively in creating and encouraging responsible role models and demonstrate an awareness of others' rights and needs.

Adopted by BOE 10/1/03

THE SHARED DECISION MAKING PLANNING COMMITTEE

Composition of the District Committee:

- *Superintendent of Schools* *Mary E. Curcio*
- *Principals* *Mark Dimorier, High School*
 Beth Carsello, Elementary
- *Board Member* *Barb Closson*
- *Teachers* *Amy Kring, HS*
 Kathy O'Donnell, Elem.
 Eric Robb, Elem.
 Bob Schlicht, HS
 Brian Shelley, HS
 Maureen Gorman, Elem.
- *Parents* *Cheryl Kenyon*

Selection Process:

- Board Member selected by peers
- Teachers selected by the Teachers' Association
- Parents selected by the PTO
- Principals and Superintendent as prescribed by the Board of Education

McGraw School District Shared Decision Making Plan

1) Purpose, Beliefs, and Application

a) Purpose:

This document is intended to provide guidance for teachers, parents, administrators and school board members in school-based planning and shared decision making.

Shared Decision Making (SDM) is one of a variety of tools to be used by the District in achieving its overall purpose: continually improving the educational performance of all students, regardless of such factors as socioeconomic status, race, sex, language, background, or disability.

b) Statement of Beliefs

In adopting this plan, stakeholders agree that, in general, Shared Decision Making is the optimum operational model for decision making. The heart of SDM is consensus. It is a trust-based process in which individuals are committed to the free exchange of ideas and to respect for differing views. SDM empowers the group, rather than the individual, in the quest for achieving best educational practices.

While beneficial and desirable, it is also understood that SDM may not necessarily be appropriate or in the best interest of the District in all situations. Nonetheless, in embracing this model, the District is adopting a fundamental cultural shift in which participants, regardless of rank or authority, participate as equals. Viewpoints are no longer considered “input” to be selected but rather as essential ingredients in arriving at a final decision. The process by which the decision is made becomes as important as the decision itself. Indeed, they are integrally connected and inseparable. It is essential to develop trust in the process and in the people participating.

Effective Shared Decision Making has four key elements:

- i) **Purpose:** There must be a clear understanding of the purpose of the group or the decision. This may be expressed as a goal, objectives, mission statement or outcomes.
- ii) **Participation:** Parties directly involved or affected by, or with knowledge pertaining to a decision, should be represented in the shared decision making process. Participants have the responsibility to work as a team – to take an active part in the process.
- iii) **Decision Making:** Consensus will be the preferred method of decision making whenever possible. This means that involved parties have had ample opportunities to contribute to the process and to affect the outcome, and all agree to support the final decision. The group must clearly understand its level of empowerment: for example, whether the decision is the group’s to make or if it is advisory to a person in authority.
- iv) **Communication:** Clear communication with involved parties is essential. This consists of open sharing of relevant information with the involved parties and opportunities to contribute to the process.

c) Application:

Shared decision making via consensus is the default model. The need to deviate from that model should be discussed and agreed to by the team. In other words, the decision to deviate from consensus should be agreed on by consensus.

There are some types of decisions in which shared decision making may not be the appropriate model. In cases where SDM is not appropriate, there remain other models under which a team can operate. These could include discussions between individuals and decision makers and consideration of input in various forms. The principles of SDM, or deviations therefrom, also apply to teams who serve in an advisory capacity rather than as decision making groups.

2) **Shared Decision Making Plan Development and Review**

- a) This plan was developed by the Shared Decision Making Planning Team, composed of the superintendent of schools, administrators selected by the district's administrative bargaining organization, teachers selected by the teachers' collective bargaining organization, 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, and Board of Education members.
- b) Shared Decision Making Planning Team meetings shall be conducted by a neutral facilitator acceptable to all members.
- c) The Shared Decision Making Plan shall be reviewed biennially by the Shared Decision Making Planning Team and submitted to the Board of Education for approval, as described in SED Regulation 100.11.
- d) For the first two years of implementation, the SDM Planning Team will meet at least twice each year—by Dec. 1 and May 1—to assess the effectiveness of SDM implementation.

3) **SDM Guidelines**

a) **Procedures**

- i) **Purpose:** The team's purpose, mission, or goal is agreed upon by team members and stated in writing.
- ii) **Participation:** SDM groups should provide the option for inclusion of representatives from constituencies that are directly involved in, affected by, or have knowledge pertaining to a decision. Teams will be invited to participate by the appropriate administrator. (The fact that students are minors may require special criteria.) The representatives from each constituency should be chosen by their group, by a method of their own choosing.

iii) **Decisions:**

- (1) The scope of the team's work should be described in writing. It may be necessary to describe some actions as advisory recommendations and some as decisions.
- (2) Decisions are made by consensus. This means that all members agree to support the decision. Members have the opportunity to express their opinions and engage in dialogue.
- (3) Best practices for successful meetings are followed, such as the following: designated and trained facilitators; visible charts for agendas and important information; structured conversation to ensure balanced participation; large and small groups; development and use of ground rules, etc.

iv) Communication:

- (1) Minutes of meetings are distributed to team members, the Superintendent, Board of Education members, and principals. A format for record keeping will be distributed that will include goals, success indicators, membership, timeline, decisions made, and evaluation of the decision making process. (See attachment A) Minutes are kept in an accessible location in each school.
- (2) Meeting times and locations are decided and publicized in advance.
- (3) Time must be provided for team representatives to communicate with and solicit feedback from their constituents regarding decisions under consideration.
- (4) Each team shall designate an individual to establish (and maintain) two way communication with other groups within the district: Board of Education (President); McGraw Faculty Association (President); Administration (Superintendent); Parent-Teacher Organization (President); Student Council (President).

b) Evaluation:

The ultimate goal of SDM is improvement of student achievement. However, many of the decisions will not necessarily show immediate results in this area, as they affect school functions that are somewhat removed. Evaluation of shared decision making processes takes place at a number of levels. Indicators of success need to be identified at each level.

Team level:

Teams should identify indicators of success for both the decision making process and the effects of decisions. These indicators could include:

What are the desired outcomes?

What student data are used in designing outcomes?

How would the outcomes lead to improved student learning or achievement?

Was the decision implemented as planned?

Were the immediate targeted outcomes realized?

What was the impact on student learning or achievement? (Is it measurable?)

Did the team's SDM process work?

District level:

The Shared Decision Making Planning Team will convene as needed to conduct periodic assessments of shared decision making processes.

Over time the Shared Decision Making Planning Team will assess the impact of shared decision making on the ultimate goal of improved student achievement. Indicators of student achievement will include but not be limited to those established by the State Education Department.

c) Dispute resolution process:

When teams are unable to resolve disputes within the normal process, a review process shall be used. The review process shall consist of the following steps sequentially as needed until a resolution can be reached:

- i) Meeting of the persons involved to define and attempt to resolve the issue
- ii) Meetings with others in the district agreeable to all parties.
- iii) Meeting conducted by an outside facilitator acceptable to all involved parties.
- iv) Referring the issue to a special meeting of the full Shared Decision Making Planning Team

McGraw School Team: Minutes

Team:	
Meeting Date:	
Members Present:	
Agenda:	
Decisions Made:	
Other Information:	
Next Meeting Agenda:	
Next Meeting Date:	

**McGraw School District
Shared Decision Making Teams
Team Overview**

Team:	
Purpose, Time, Membership (Complete at start of team's work)	
Purpose:	Task Dates: Start: Finish:
Objectives:	Team Members:
<p><u>Task Evaluation</u> (Complete when task is accomplished or periodically for ongoing teams)</p> <p>Purpose: Was the defined task accomplished? Were the objectives met?</p> <p>Participation: Were all affected parties represented? Was participation balanced?</p> <p>Decision Making: Were effective practices used? Did the team reach consensus?</p> <p>Communication: Has the team followed communication guidelines—minutes, meeting notification, communication with constituents and other groups?</p>	