



**Commitment to  
Shared Decision Making:  
A Blueprint for Progress**

**District Partnership Team Plan**

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## ***I. Biennial Review Committee***

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### **District Leadership**

Dr. L. Oliver Robinson, Superintendent of Schools  
Jill Bush, Asst. Superintendent for Human Resources & Professional Development  
Rebecca Carman, Director of Policy & Community Development  
Elizabeth Wood, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Curriculum & Assessment

### **Building Level Administration**

Jill Gould, Skano Elementary School  
Greg Pace, Tesago Elementary School  
Lisa Mickle, Okte Elementary School  
Ben Roberts, Arongen Elementary School  
Karin Skarka, Chango Elementary School  
Michael Smith, Orenda Elementary School

### **Building Partnership Teams – Faculty & Staff**

Rose Beckett, Koda Middle School  
Chris Bergere, Acadia Middle School  
David Herrington, Teacher, Orenda Elementary School  
Milly Karoly, Skano Elementary School  
Christy McCarroll, Acadia Middle School  
Paul Morcone, Shatekon Elementary School  
Thom Van Gelder, Gowana Middle School  
Renee Young, Arongen Elementary School

### **Student Representatives**

Shannon Ryan, High School East

### **Parents**

Matthew Andrus, Karigon Elementary School  
Lisa Fletcher, Karigon Elementary School  
Meredith Haskins, Tesago Elementary School  
Kathy Kalish, Shenendehowa High School

### **Board of Education**

Mr. Rick Mincher, Vice-President

## **II. A SYSTEMIC APPROACH TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

### **A. District Mission**

The Shenendehowa Central School District accepts as its **Mission**, the responsibility to work continuously and in partnership with the community to ensure that all students develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, abilities and character needed to live useful, productive and rewarding lives.

### **B. Values & Beliefs**

The district's **Value and Belief Statements** define HOW and WHY students learn, based on ideals held in common by the school and the community. Most important of all is a strong commitment to the belief that all students can learn. Shenendehowa's values and beliefs serve to guide the actions and behaviors of all staff members, both in the classroom with students and in our community with one another.

### **C. Profiles of a Shenendehowa Student / Employee**

The **Profile of a Shenendehowa Student** at each program level (elementary school, middle school, and high school) identifies, in broad terms, what all students should know and be able to demonstrate upon completion of each level. The **Profile of a Shenendehowa Employee** defines the ideals which staff should model for Shenendehowa students.

### **D. Leadership Commitment**

The Shenendehowa Central School District is committed to providing a continuum of effective strategies, opportunities, programs and services that support all students' meeting or exceeding challenging learning standards, and maximizing their individual academic potential.

### **E. Strategic Goals and Objectives**

The district's **Strategic Goals and Objectives** serve to combine the expertise of staff with community involvement in partnership to yield continuous achievement by all students. The organizational structure and corresponding roles and responsibilities serve to provide the capacity to effectively plan and monitor the gamut of programs and services and ensure that the accountability for results is everyone's responsibility.

The purpose of shared decision making is to encourage shared responsibility and accountability for student success, regardless of such factors as socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, language background, and/or disability. The Shenendehowa Central School District exists as an

organization to ensure that every student recognizes and develops the essential skills, knowledge, and personal character needed for each to live a useful, productive and satisfying life. All students can achieve these expectations, but in different ways and over different periods of time.

The goals and objectives represents a compilation of data and information provided by principals, academic administrators, district-level administrators, supervisors, with tremendous support and contributions from the Board of Education, staff and the community. The five strategic goals adopted by the Board of Education and annually strategic objectives are identified for each goal to make this document dynamic and reflective of current practices and performance expectations.

- 1) **Instructional Programs** - To develop and implement high quality educational programs aligned with the *Profile of a Shenendehowa Graduate, Profile of a Shenendehowa Middle School Student, and the Profile of a Shenendehowa Elementary Student*. The high quality programs should be consistent with the *NYS Common Core Learning Standards* and the District's *Values and Beliefs*, recognizing that children develop and learn at different rates and in different ways. This entails the articulation and provision of a high-quality K-12 curriculum for all academic areas that are aligned with district, NYS and federal standards and embedded into classroom lesson plans.
  - a. Innovative Instructional Planning
    - i. Foster innovative 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and teaching that is aligned with the Profile of a Shen Student, common core standards and national core standards. Include flexible scheduling models to afford more student/teacher contact time.
    - ii. Implement curriculum mapping software and the curriculum review process to include vertical curriculum alignment (K – 12) which includes national and international models of exceptional education.
    - iii. Implement a balanced literacy approach using best practices across the content areas.
    - iv. Integrate Instructional technology by implementing innovative curriculum delivery models that use new and existing technologies.
    - v. Address the new mandates for evaluating teachers and principals (APPR) to be fully implemented by 2012-13.
  - b. Respond to student needs/college and career readiness
    - i. Implement the Pyramid of Interventions -AIS/RtI/IST (Instructional support Team) to provide a consistent continuum of programs and services to meet the needs of ALL students (including economically disadvantaged) and improve student performance
    - ii. Use the special education continuum to foster an inclusive learning environment in which every child with disabilities has access to the standard curriculum.
    - iii. Encourage more students to challenge themselves by increasing enrollment in more rigorous and enriching courses (honors, AP, STEM, accelerated, college-level, Critical Inquiry, QUEST). Provide opportunities that ensure college and career readiness.
  - c. Collaboration focused on learning
    - i. Increase collaborative partnerships through the expansion of Professional Learning Communities and co-teaching experiences, etc.

- ii. Targeted professional development that addresses the increasingly changing pedagogy for 21<sup>st</sup> century learning.
        - iii. Use extra-curricular activities to further motivate students to improve academic performance.
        - iv. Pursue new or expanded P-16 partnerships with businesses, colleges, pre-schools or other organizations and agencies.
        - v. Ensure that the District complies with Board of Education policies and that they are in line with state and federal regulations.
      - d. Data analysis to enhance instruction
        - i. Development and use appropriate local and state assessments (pre-assessment, and formative/ summative assessments) that are rigorous, consistent, and viable to allow for appropriate benchmarking of student progress, growth and value added analysis, and systemic progress monitoring.
        - ii. Use the program evaluation model to guide decision making about programs and initiatives.
- 2) **Organizational Culture** - To cultivate and sustain an organizational culture consistent with the District's mission, *Profile of a Shenendehowa Graduate*, *Profile of a Shenendehowa Middle School Student*, *Profile of a Shenendehowa Elementary Student* and the school community's *Values and Beliefs*.
- a. Empowering a community of learners
    - i. Communicate with all stakeholders to provide greater understanding of district, state and federal education initiatives/ issues and promote the Profile of a Shenendehowa student and Shenendehowa Employee.
    - ii. Comprehensive evaluation of the District's systems to assess and improve the organization structure and culture. Fostering an ambitious and entrepreneurial perspective among staff and students to create and promote innovative learning environments.
    - iii. Fostering an ambitious and entrepreneurial perspective among staff and students to create and promote innovative learning environments.
    - iv. District - wide commitment to the physical, social and emotional safety of our students and staff and reinforcement that the entire community has a responsibility to ensure that safety.
- 3) **Human Resources** - The District affirmatively seeks to recruit, employ and retain diverse, highly qualified and well-prepared personnel in all capacities, and provide opportunities for professional growth and accomplishment of relevant district objectives.
- a. Recruit, employ, and retain highly qualified and diverse employees
  - b. Carry out a comprehensive update of the APPR process
  - c. Increase efficiencies through the use of electronically integrated forms, processes, and procedures
  - d. Increase effectiveness of non-instructional support services through professional development & training
- 4) **Facilities and Operations** - Ensure that adequate and appropriate resources are available and allocated to sustain quality facilities, and maintain effective and efficient operational processes and procedures to support learning and safeguarding community assets. This is inclusive of all four operational areas; Food Services, Transportation, Facilities, and Building Operations and Grounds, as well as the Network Operating Center for technology.

- a. Provide safe facilities with ample capacity
    - i. Assess technology infrastructure and hardware to preserve future needs.
  - b. Increase efficiency in support services
    - i. Access to utilized data across departments
    - ii. Improve operations through use of best practices.
    - iii. Use data as a resource in managing departments
- 5) Budget and Finance** - Maintain a sound financial base for the support and expansion of programs via comprehensive budget process that maximizes the use of available resources to support high quality instructional programs and provide quality facilities to enhance learning.
- a. Proactively maintain good stewardship of district / taxpayer resources while sustaining the Commitment to Excellence
    - i. Strong fiscal health of district to support high quality programs.
    - ii. Transparent financial protocols and processes
    - iii. Facilitation of a successful multi-year budget plan that preserves a passable budget.

### **III. SHARED-DECISION MAKING AND SITE BASED PLANNING**

In New York State public schools, decision making authority is vested, by law, in the Board of Education and the Superintendent of Schools, the Board's chief administrative officer. To facilitate effective and efficient decision making, the Board of Education and the Superintendent may delegate or "decentralize" decision making authority. This means that the Superintendent and Board empower other members of the organization to make certain decisions. Subsequently, decision makers are held accountable for the results.

The Shenendehowa school district endeavors to be as efficient and effective as can be reasonably expected. Subsequently, the district at times and under certain circumstances shall display a pattern of centralized tendency, meaning decision making authority is delegated to a limited number of individuals within an organization, as well as a decentralized tendency, meaning that many people representing different levels of an organization possess decision making authority. The challenge is to achieve an appropriate balance between centralized and decentralized decision making (i.e., school based decision making). Additionally, there must be a constant effort toward maintaining this balance over time as forces that shape the need for centralized and decentralized decision making change.

Consistent with the spirit and intent of the Shared Decision Making regulations, the district shall endeavor to display and engage in a more decentralized decision making mode, having a greater reliance on school based accountability. The ultimate outcome shall be the provision of schools

with ample authority to make decisions that shape and determine student learning. The exercising of authority shall be consistently focused on the creation and supporting of learning environments that best meet different student needs. The annually adopted district goals shall serve as the driving force and catalyst for building level decisions and actions, all of which shall be supported by and pursuant to applicable rules, regulations, and/or policies of the Board of Education.

As a policy board, the Board of Education sets direction by deciding "what" the school district must accomplish to fulfill its mission or purpose. When this direction has been set, the school board delegates to schools, through the Superintendent, the authority to decide "how" these things get done. The School Board and Superintendent then monitor progress and provide staff with the support that they need to achieve the expectations.

#### **A. Compliance with Commissioner's Regulation 100.11**

Commissioner's Regulation 100.11 (Appendix A.) requires that every public school district in New York State develop and adopt a plan for assuring participation by parents and teachers with administrators and school board members in school based planning and shared decision making.

The District Partnership Team is a representative group of stakeholders within the Shenendehowa Central School District community that develops, clarifies, and communicates expectations and guidelines for school based planning and shared decision making; provides guidance and support for achieving these expectations; and monitors and assesses progress. The composition of the District Partnership Team meets the requirements of Commissioner's Regulation 100.11.

Each building level Partnership Team shall select a representative to serve as a member of the District Partnership Team. That representative shall be responsible to attend both Building and District Partnership Team meetings. They will keep the District Partnership Team informed of the activities of their building teams, and be a part of discussions supporting and coordinating efforts to satisfy the District's Long Range Goals. They will also inform their Building Partnership Team of the activities of the District Partnership Team. In addition to the building level representatives, the District Partnership Team shall include representatives from other stakeholder groups, such as the Board of Education, PTA Council, and the collective bargaining groups. This shall serve to ensure that each partner has representation, and that the necessary lines of communication are open and clear.

The interconnections of the various Partnership Teams and members will help to ensure a systematic progression toward the achievement of excellence in all facets of the school district, guiding and shaping decisions that may be district-wide and / or building specific. The District Partnership team also serves the critical role of being a sounding board and a think tank on new initiatives, and a forum for collection and sharing of best practices.

### **B. What Is Shared Decision Making And Site Based Planning?**

Site or school based planning and shared decision making complement one another. Shared decision making provides opportunities for parents, community residents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and students to participate in the decision making process. Site based planning provides opportunities for this participation to be meaningful.

### **C. Shared Decision Making**

The key to the district's success is the effective planning and monitoring of the gamut of programs and services. The district's organizational structure and corresponding roles and responsibilities ensure that the accountability for results is everyone's task. Rigorous and viable curriculum combined with high quality instruction stands at the core of the organizational structure.

Shared decision making is driven by the belief that the most effective choices are made when those affected by the decision are involved in the decision making process. It is a process by which members of an educational community cooperate in identifying and implementing activities to advance and improve student learning. This process is used to collaboratively decide on issues, and resolve problems and the lowest level of impact and implementation.

### **D. Site Based Planning**

Site based planning empowers schools by providing the flexibility to create instructional environments that meet the needs of students and accomplish the district's Strategic Goals and Objectives. In so doing, decision making can occur at the level in the organization where information concerning the decision is most available, where the decision is to be implemented, and where accountability for the results of the decision will be assumed. Site based planning does not preclude or supersede the responsibility of the superintendent or his/her designee to oversee instructional planning

Building or department level decisions shall be consistent with the district's *Strategic Goals and Objectives*, applicable board of education policies, and in support of the *Profile of a Shenendehowa Graduate*, *Profile of a Shenendehowa Middle School Student*, *Profile of a Shenendehowa Elementary School Student* and *Profile of a Shenendehowa Employee*, *The Values and Beliefs*, *Common Core Curriculum*, and *The Performance Tasks* documents.

#### **E. The Requirements for Success**

The key to a successful shared decision making team is having all members committed to working together in a positive way to solve the issues of the school, lending to greater success for all students. This is a process and not a “quick fix.” There must be a commitment of time and patience, and the evolution of trust relationship marked by open and honest communications. See **APPENDIX B** for an overview of the characteristics of a successful and dynamic shared decision making team.

#### **IV. EXPECTATIONS FOR STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

Shared decision making is collaboration in decision making, shared responsibility, and shared accountability for student success. It is a partnership that includes administrators, teachers and other school staff, students, parents and community members. These stakeholders are involved in significant decisions about their school and they collaborate in decision making because each is affected to some degree.

In the Shenendehowa Central School District, stakeholders shall have an opportunity to participate in decisions that shape school and district operations. At the same time, sharing of authority and responsibility must not diminish the ability of the Board of Education, Superintendent of Schools, or school building administration to fulfill their roles as instructional leaders, as well as their legal responsibilities for the supervision and management of the school district or building.

For every decision, consideration must be given to the expected nature of stakeholder involvement. Two forms of involvement that should be considered are:

- Advisor (Makes recommendations to the decision maker)
- Decision Maker (Makes the decision)

For every decision, consideration must also be given to the expected range or extent of stakeholder involvement. Levels of involvement that should be considered are:

- Individual Participation (All interested parties participate)
- Representation (Interested parties ask one or more persons to participate on their behalf)

The expected nature and extent of stakeholder involvement must be determined and communicated to stakeholders. School level partnership teams shall develop and publicize mechanisms or ways in which feedback or suggestions can be readily garnered and provided to the various building constituents (parents, students, and staff). Such modes of communications may range from a comprehensive website to the simple provision of comment sheets located in a designated area in the respective offices. Additionally, processes must be designed to encourage and support this involvement. These processes can range from a single meeting of a few individuals to a complex process involving many meetings of different individuals over long periods of time.

## **A. School Partnership Team**

Here at Shenendehowa, stakeholder involvement will be fostered through "**School Partnership Teams.**" The Partnership team is charged with guiding and shaping shared decision making within the school to create and support a learning environment that best meets the needs of students in accordance with establishing district goals by doing the following:

- To develop, clarify, and communicate expectations described in this plan for shared decision making and site based planning within the school.
- To provide guidance and support for achieving these expectations. This includes developing and maintaining team operating procedures, working with the Center for Innovative Learning to provide necessary training, facilitating communication among all stakeholders, and serving as an information resource.
- To monitor and assess progress and, when necessary, initiate change. This includes evaluating the performance of the site based planning and shared decision making process and initiating improvement.

The building Principal or designee is responsible for providing leadership and guidance for the team, with the clear recognition that as the official administrative representative at the school building he/she is ultimately accountable for the final decision. Each school will develop a Partnership Team composed of the following partners:

- Principal
- Administrative Representative (ex. Academic Administrator)
- Parent / Community members (approved by the school-based PTA Executive Board)
- Student (High School/Middle School)
- Faculty (Certified staff)
- Staff (all other staff assigned to the school)
- Designated Board of Education Liaison(s)

Each partner on the School Partnership Team shall share equally in discussions and planning, and no one partner can control or veto the team's directions. The composition of a team shall be annually assessed to insure a balance of the representatives on the Team, allowing for the possibility that each stakeholder group may be represented by more than one representative.

## **B. Charge & Operating Expectations for Team**

It is a clear expectation that:

- Partnership Teams will seek the active participation of parties affected by the decision.
- All Team members should be viewed as equals when the group is seeking support for a course of action.
- Members can choose to express varying levels of support using a variety of methods or approaches.
- Those not supporting the direction must offer another alternative.

Once a course of action has been resolved, all members of the School Partnership Team are expected to support the Team's directions and the course of action will be actively communicated to key stakeholders.

## **C. Selection of Members**

The stakeholders representing each partner will determine the process for selecting its members.

- The school-based Teams must ensure that a process is in place so that all interested parents/guardians with children in the building are given equal and fair consideration. It is extremely important to emphasize that membership in PTA is not a prerequisite to being a member of the partnership. The PTA however, is not precluded from recruiting parent members, and informing parents about the Shared Decision Making plan for the respective schools and district. A common practice is to canvass the parents of the respective schools and randomly select the name of an interested parent member (s) to fill a vacancy.
- STA should assume responsibility for identifying and selecting faculty (members).
- Support staff represented by CSEA should assume responsibility for identifying and selecting staff members for the Partnership Team from all staff members in the building.
- Student Senate should assume responsibility for recruiting and selecting members. Membership in Student Senate is not a prerequisite to be a member of the partnership.

## **D. Membership Terms**

In order to provide more continuity, Teams shall develop procedures which will ensure overlapping member terms. Individual term limits should be set, at least 2 to 3 years in duration.

### **E. Team Member Roles and Responsibilities**

Roles and responsibilities for members of School Partnership Teams shall be determined by each Team. Team roles may include but are not limited to: leader, facilitator, recorder, time keeper, coach, and chart recorder. The “leader” is typically the Principal or designee, someone who is keenly aware of relevant policies, processes and protocols, to provide guidance and insure compliance and appropriateness of deliberations.

Responsibilities for the Partnership Team shall include:

- Model proper civility and decorum for Shenendehowa students.
- Attend each meeting.
- Establish meeting agendas.
- Develop lines of communication with stakeholder groups evidenced by reporting on the work of the team, gaining feedback on topics and issues discussed, and representing and reflecting the views of respective stakeholders.
- Schedule meetings.
- Provide notice of team meetings.
- Convene meetings.
- Facilitate meetings.
- Maintain and distribute minutes of the meeting.
- Members shall encourage participation by the entire school community in School Action Teams.

### **F. Team Meetings**

School Partnership Team meeting times shall be selected to assure genuine participation by all team members. Commitment is needed to a schedule which provides an opportunity for members to participate on a regular basis.

Advance notice of School Partnership Team meetings shall be given to all members and shall be prominently displayed in the school. Team members shall receive a meeting agenda prior to the meeting.

School Partnership Team meetings shall be open to interested parties. Interested attendees may request time to speak at the meeting by making their request known to a Team Facilitator prior to

the meeting. Everyone in attendance is expected to follow the Code of model proper civility and decorum for Shenendehowa students.

Minutes of School Partnership Team meetings shall be taken. These minutes will be kept on file in the office of the school Principal. Meeting minutes shall be available upon request to any interested party.

#### **G. Compliance with Requirements**

Decisions and recommendations stemming from School Partnership Team deliberations may not supersede or violate state or federal law and regulations, district policies or regulations, or provisions of collective bargaining agreements, nor may be inconsistent or contrary to established district strategic goals and objectives.

#### **H. Training**

Every year, each team shall provide an orientation for all new School Partnership Team members. This should include history and procedures for the team. There shall be periodic training for the entire Partnership Team members, which shall be the provided by the district and participation is required. Each school Partnership team shall coordinate the scheduling of said training with the Superintendent's Office. Training sessions and topics will be the discussed and decided by the District Partnership Team.

## **V. ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STUDENT OUTCOMES**

First and foremost, members of School Partnership Teams are accountable for the effect collaborative decisions have on student outcomes. Hence, as individuals, and as a group, the School Partnership Team has accountability for student outcomes. This means recognition of the legitimacy of a request by any stakeholder to explain their rationale for a specific recommendation. The Principal, as the official representative of the district at the building level, is responsible for providing leadership and guidance for the Team so as to ensure that all decisions are within the purview of his/her authority and in accordance with applicable district policies, goals, and federal and state laws and regulations.

To be accountable, members of a School Partnership Team shall adhere to the following practices:

- Representatives must actively seek input from their constituents.
- Representatives must communicate proposals and decisions of the team to their constituency in a timely manner.
- Decisions with a wide range of impact must be communicated through district and school newsletters and other media.
- All meetings must be open to anyone who wishes to attend.
- Each School Partnership Team must develop a uniform format for agenda and minutes of their meetings. These agendas and minutes shall be distributed to all team members in a timely manner.
- Minutes of team meetings must be a matter of public record and be available to the public on request.
- Once every other year, School Partnership Teams must assess the success of their shared decision making and school based management process. This assessment must be based on data pertaining to improvements in student achievement and stakeholder beliefs about their level of involvement in school and district decision making.

Members of School Partnership Teams are also accountable to each other:

- After establishing ground rules, it is the responsibility of all members to assure that members adhere to the ground rules.
- Each member must respect the opinions and perspective of other members.
- Team members must actively support consensus decisions. (Support is defined as working to fully and successfully implement the team's decision and to be available to explain the

decision and its implications, in a positive manner, to stakeholders. This support is expected even in situations where the decision was not the first choice of the individual team member.)

Accountability also extends the right of stakeholders to replace their representatives on Partnership Teams and to establish procedures for this purpose.

## **VI. TYPES OF DECISIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Any issues brought before a school level Partnership Team for consideration must:

- Focus on student learning and continuous improvement;
- Relate to the district and school mission, goals and objectives, and
- Positively impact the overall learning community.

The school partnership team model will be largely applied to issues, activities, or initiatives that impact the environment and culture of a school. While there is a clear recognition that issues or decisions impacting the environment and culture of the school should be facilitated through the respective partnership teams, school buildings often utilize ad-hoc committees such as those associated with the respective school levels (high school, middle school, and elementary).

It is important to note that the charge of an ad hoc committee may change and can be revised over time. Subsequently, the accountability for the outcome of the ad-hoc committee may vary with the change in charge. In every instance however, the role of the school level partnership team should be to objectively review the respective proposal(s), complete a thorough assessment of the strengths and weaknesses thereof, and provide the applicable ad-hoc committee with specific feedback or recommendation(s) as to how the proposal or recommendation can be enhanced or modified to be effectively implemented and meet the needs of students.

All proposals and subsequent implementations should lend to a more positive learning environment, positive working environment, and increased cooperation among stakeholders). In all instances, the building Principal is responsible for providing the leadership and guidance, with he/she being ultimately accountable for the final decision.

## **A. Categories of Decision - Role of Partnership Team**

Recognizing that there are differences in the types of decision and the subsequent involvement or interplay with the school partnership team, appropriate decision making matrices must be developed to determine the types of decisions and the responsible parties.

**Category 1** – Issues which are typically within the purview of the Partnership team include those which are specific to that building and have an impact on student achievement. The team shall deliberate and come to a collaborative decision that the building principal can support and execute within his/her scope of authority. The team shall then be accountable for communicating and ensuring ownership amongst the school community.

Examples include but not limited to:

- Building environment issues
- Model proper civility and decorum for Shenendehowa students.
- Expectations and guidelines for volunteer projects
- Developing building goals
- School climate
- Communication within the building
- Field trip procedures

**Category 2** – Building team input will be advisory to district committees or administrators in cases or instances when they have broader district implications that may affect multiple buildings, programs or Board policy. Building team input will be advisory in nature.

Examples include but not limited to:

- Grading policies
- Student/Teacher Assignments
- Development of the Student Code of Conduct
- Class size and Classroom utilization
- Safety/Crisis response procedure

**Category 3-** Building teams would not consider issues that are governed by state or federal law or regulation, board policy, or contractual issues. The principal or district administration may, however, review these with the team to help shape or enhance decisions or implementation of outcomes.

Examples include but not limited to:

- Board of Education Policies
- Curriculum/Course Offerings
- School Calendar
- Public Referendums

## **VII. Continuum of Shared Decision Making Processes**

### **A. Matrix of Administrative and Partnership Team Responsibilities**

This matrix framework calls attention to critical responsibilities of the administration and school level partnership teams, grouping them into related areas: Leadership, Instruction, Students, Staffing, Partnerships and Community Relations, and Budget and Resources. The continuum is not meant to be all inclusive, recognizing that there are numerous critical responsibilities and decisions that rest with the Board of Education. It is recognized, however, that in many instances, the Board and /or the Superintendent may engender participation and involvement of others to assure the effectiveness of said decisions and the ultimate outcome for students.

By articulating these critical aspects of school and district operations and corresponding accountability, it clarifies the responsibilities of the school level administration and partnership teams. The framework clearly recognizes that each school will probably create different learning environments, knowing that there is no singular way of achieving excellence for all students. School level administrative teams and partnership teams are expected to “assure” desired outcomes in the respective areas, as well as be responsible for “supporting” the direction and/or decisions that have been made to achieve the most desirable outcome in the designated aspects of the school or district operation.

**Administrative:** The District will be responsible for providing the leadership to assure the implementation of decisions or procedures with the goal of positively impacting the outcome for students. This shall encompass the scope of authority vested in the Board of Education, District Leadership and Support Staff Team, Principals, and Academic Administrators.

**Partnership Team:** The partnership team is charged with guiding and shaping shared decision making within the school to create and support a learning environment and school culture that best meets the needs of students. Such participation and involvement is grounded in the belief that the most effective choices are made when those affected by the decision are involved in the decision making process. It is a process by which members of an educational community cooperate in identifying and implementing activities to advance and improve student learning. This process is used to assist with the realization of programs and services, collaboratively decide on issues, and resolve problems. The goal is utilize the expertise and perspective of the representatives and key stakeholders to develop recommendations for improving student outcomes.

## **LEADERSHIP**

<b><u>Administrative Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Partnership Team Responsibility</u></b>
Provide leadership and support the achievement of district goals and building level plans.	Provide input and support the development of a goals and priorities that are consistent with district's mission and vision.
Provide leadership and support compliance with all District policies and regulations.	Provide input and support school practices and procedures that are consistent with applicable policies and regulations.
Provide leadership and support the effectiveness of the District and building level plans.	Provide input and support the shared decision making processes that endeavors to positively impact outcomes for students
Provide leadership and support the use of effective communication processes.	Provide input and support communication processes that are comprehensive and effectively reach all impacted or interested parties.

## **INSTRUCTION**

<b><u>Administrative Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Partnership Team Responsibility</u></b>
<b><u>Program/Service Development</u></b> Provide leadership and support the development and communication of district expectations for student outcomes, instructional programs and student support services.	Provide input and support the development and communication of district and school level expectations for student outcomes, instructional programs and student support services.
<b><u>Program/Service Delivery</u></b> Provide leadership and support the effective delivery of instructional programs and student support services.	Provide input and support the effective delivery of instructional programs and student support services.

## **STUDENTS**

<b><u>Administrative Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Partnership Team Responsibility</u></b>
<p><b><u>Student Placement</u></b> Provide leadership and the placement of students into appropriate instructional programs and support services.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the development of guidelines and procedures for assigning students to schools and special programs,</p>
<p><b><u>Student Safety and Conduct</u></b> Provide leadership and support the preservation of a safe and orderly environment for all students.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the preservation of safe and orderly school environments for all.</p>
<p><b><u>Student Life</u></b> Provide leadership and support the preservation of a positive and supportive school environment.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the preservation of a positive and supportive school environment and building.</p>

## **STAFF**

<b><u>Administrative Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Partnership Team Responsibility</u></b>
<p><b><u>Selection and Placement</u></b> Provide leadership and support the appropriate hiring and assignment of staff.</p>	<p>Be made aware of the hiring processes and protocols, as well as the APPR process used in evaluating teachers and principals.</p>
<p><b><u>Guidance and Support</u></b> Provide leadership and support the effective communication of performance expectations and use of the evaluation processes for staff.</p>	<p>Be made aware of the hiring processes and protocols, as well as the APPR process used in evaluating teachers and principals.</p>
<p><b><u>Staff Development</u></b> Provide leadership and the development of procedures and opportunities for staff to advance their understanding of current research, methodology, trends and critical issues in education.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the maximization of opportunities for staff to advance their understanding of current research, methodology, trends and critical issues in education.</p>

## **PARTNERSHIPS & COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

<b><u>Administrative Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Partnership Team Responsibility</u></b>
<p><b><u>Parent Support</u></b> Provide leadership and support the preservation of a school environment which encourages parent involvement and support of schools and the district.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the preservation of a building environment which encourages parent involvement and support of schools and the district.</p>
<p><b><u>Community Support</u></b> Provide leadership and support the preservation of a school environment which encourages community involvement in and support of the school.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the preservation of a building environment which encourages community involvement and support of schools and the district.</p>
<p><b><u>Institutional Support</u></b> Provide leadership and support the preservation of a school environment which encourages involvement and support of the school and the district by institutions and agencies.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the preservation of a building environment which encourages institutional involvement and support of schools and the district.</p>

## **BUDGET & RESOURCES**

<b><u>Administrative Responsibility</u></b>	<b><u>Partnership Team Responsibility</u></b>
<p><b><u>Financial Management</u></b> Provide leadership and the effective use of allocated funds.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the effective use of funds.</p>
<p><b><u>Facility Management</u></b> Provide leadership and support the effective assignment of school facilities to support school, district and community use.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the effective assignment of school facilities to support school, district and community use.</p>
<p><b><u>Information Management</u></b> Provide leadership and the development and effective use of available information systems.</p>	<p>Provide input and support the effective use of information systems needed to support school and district directions and operations</p>

## **VIII. MEANS AND STANDARDS FOR ASSESSING SUCCESS**

The primary intent of shared decision making and site based planning is to improve student achievement. Consequently, schools shall use student achievement data as their basis to assess the success of shared decision making and site based planning, and for initiating improvements. Such improvement planning is now required of all New York public schools.

The Shenendehowa Central School District has a comprehensive system of evaluation for all grade levels. This system includes a wide range of national and state tests. Schools shall continue to use this system of assessment as their means and standards for evaluating improvement in student achievement.

In addition to this system of program evaluation, the district now has Profiles for each level of student; the Profile of a Shenendehowa Graduate, Profile of a Middle School Student, and the Profile of an Elementary Student. This definition of what students need to know and be consistently able to demonstrate, shall be a key for the basis of a review of all instructional programs, and instrumental to the determination of the district or schools' success in achieving the mission and long-standing commitment to excellence. The purpose of the review is to ensure that our programs reflect higher learning standards at the state and national level. Additionally, students will be completing long-term projects and inquiry-based learning experiences, in which their learning comes to life in "real world" situations.

A second intent of shared decision making and site based planning is to strengthen community support for schools by fostering greater public involvement in and "ownership" of the schools. See Commissioner's Regulation 100.11 (Appendix A.)

Shenendehowa Central School District will periodically (no less than every five years) administer independently constructed surveys to be used to assess parent and student satisfaction with their schools. These surveys will also assess parent and student satisfaction with their opportunity for involvement in school planning and decision making. Similar professionally prepared, reliable surveys may also be prepared for other stakeholders, including staff and community members.

Each school based partnership team should also complete an annual assessment of their effectiveness as a team. The assessment tool, outlined in APPENDIX C, is a recommended

instrument for teams to use to evaluate their effectiveness. Teams may use other means, but must ensure that the characteristics outlined in APPENDIX B are taken into consideration.

## **IX. DECISION-MAKING AND PROCESS RESOLUTION**

School Partnership Team decision making shall generally be reached by consensus. Consensus decision making is a process used to ensure that every individual has involvement in a decision. It requires everyone's participation. Listening, sharing, trust, and respect are values inherent in the process. All members must agree to support or, at least, not undermine a decision. Reaching consensus **does not** mean the vote is unanimous, the result is everyone's first choice, or everyone agrees. Consensus lends to the development of the commitment and ownership necessary in collaborative decision making. Said in another way, consensus is reached when all members agree to one of the following statements:

- ❑ "I'm all for this decision and I will be a leader."
- ❑ "I'm all for this decision and I will give a lot of support."
- ❑ "I can live with this decision; I will be supportive."
- ❑ "I don't agree with this decision, but I will trust the opinion of the group."

Any team member has the authority to shape a recommendation. Those opposing a decision must present alternative solutions and ideas that have not yet been considered by the group. The team shall establish procedures for considering such alternative solutions and ideas. If no alternative can be offered after the team member has been given a period of time to develop and propose alternatives, the team member is expected to support the opinion of the group. (i.e., "I don't agree or I'm not sure, but I will trust the opinion of the group.") When presented, the group is obligated to consider the alternative presented.

### ***A. What if consensus is not achieved?***

Situations may arise when a team cannot reach consensus. In the unlikely case that this should occur, the issue shall be resolved by using the Partnership Resolution Process (PRP) as follows:

1. Each stakeholder group will identify one individual to participate in representing their views.
2. The School Partnership Team will work with the District Partnership Team in order to determine the appropriate course of action, recognizing the existence of dissenting views. (See Charge and Operating Expectations).

## **B. Appeals Process**

Shared decision making means broad representation in the decision making process, ample communication, and using input from affected stakeholders. If this is done correctly, decisions will be accepted and beneficial to concerned stakeholders. However, it is possible that a grievance or dispute may arise concerning a decision making process. Two examples of such a dispute are:

- My/our view was not adequately considered in the decision making process.
- I/we were not given sufficient time to propose alternative decisions.

Disputes about a decision making process (not the decision) can be appealed. The appeals procedure shall be as follows:

1. Grieving stakeholders shall request, in writing, that the District Partnership Team review the decision-making process (not the decision). The written request must state the reason for the stakeholders concern and a possible alternative.
2. Within 15 days of receiving the request, representatives of the School Partnership Team will meet with grieving stakeholder(s) to discuss the issue. If a change in process is agreed upon, the revised process will be recommended to the School Partnership Team for action. If no change is agreed on, the grieving stakeholders can appeal to the District Partnership Team.

## **C. Waivers**

If a School Partnership Team wants to make a decision that conflicts with established district policies and procedures, district strategic goals and objectives, state and federal laws and regulations, or collective bargaining agreements, the team may request a waiver from the appropriate authorities. The basic waiver process shall proceed as follows:

1. A written inquiry will be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools to determine that the waiver is necessary. The Superintendent should provide the team with a written response.
2. If a waiver is necessary, the team submits a waiver request to the appropriate party with a rationale.
3. If the request for a waiver is denied, the body denying the waiver can be requested to provide written rationale for the denial and an alternative solution.

Requests for waivers from collective bargaining agreements need to be submitted to both the association and district leadership. A file of all waivers will be maintained in the District Office.

## **X. REVISIONS TO THIS PLAN**

The initial plan was approved by the Board of Education and the Commissioner in 1994. At a minimum, the District Partnership Team is required to review and update this plan every two years. However, it shall be the intent to review the document on an annual basis to ensure consistency of and with practices and protocols. Any substantive modification of the document must be approved by the Board of Education at the regularly scheduled business meeting. The District Partnership Team is responsible for completing this review. All revisions are subject to the Board of Education approval.

All revisions to the plan will be made available to the public. The amended plan, or recertification of the previous plan, together with a statement of the plan's success in achieving its objectives, shall be filed with the Superintendent of Schools and submitted to the Commissioner of Education for review. In addition, the District Partnership Team meets quarterly to discuss implementation issues.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **REGULATIONS OF THE COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION**

- (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 of 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 shared 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.

## **APPENDIX B**

# Dynamic Teams

### **Clearly states its missions and goals:**

A team requires a clearly stated purpose and goal: not just an understanding of what needs to be done at the moment, but an understanding of the overall focus of the team. Shared goals and objectives lead to commitment. Team members involved in the goal setting process will feel ownership and be better involved in carrying out what is needed to be done.

### **Operates creatively:**

Experimentation and creativity are vital signs of a dynamic team. Such teams take calculated risks by trying different ways of doing things. They don't let a fear of failure stop them from trying new processes or techniques. They are flexible and creative when dealing with problems and making decisions.

### **Focuses on results:**

The ability to produce what is required, when it is required, is the true test. A dynamic team is capable of achieving results beyond the sum of its individual members. Team members continually meet time, budget and quality commitments. "Optimum productivity" is a shared goal.

### **Clarifies roles and responsibilities:**

A dynamic team member clarifies the roles and responsibilities for its members. Each member knows what is expected of him or her and knows the roles of fellow team members. A dynamic team updates its roles and responsibilities to keep up with changing demands, objectives and technology.

### **Is well organized:**

A dynamic team defines protocol, procedures and policies from the beginning. Structure allows a team to meet the demands of any task it must handle.

### **Builds upon individual strengths:**

Coaches of sports teams constantly inventory their player's skills. Likewise, leaders of dynamic business teams regularly catalog their team's knowledge, skills and talent. Team leaders are aware of their members' strengths and weaknesses, so they can effectively draw upon individual competencies.

### **Supports leadership and each other:**

Dynamic teams share leadership roles among members. Such teams give every member the opportunity to "shine" as a leader. The team members also appreciate formal supervisory roles because formal leaders of a dynamic team support team efforts and respect individual uniqueness.

### **Develops team climate:**

A high performance team has members who enthusiastically work well together with high degrees of involvement and group energy. Collectively, individual members feel more productive and find that team activities renew their interest and spirit. Such a team develops a distinct character of its own.

### **Resolves disagreement:**

Disagreements occur in all teams. It's not necessarily bad or destructive. A dynamic team openly deals with conflict when it occurs. The team members recognize conflict and try to resolve it through honest discussions tempered by mutual trust.

### **Communicates openly:**

Members of a dynamic team talk to each other directly and honestly. Each person solicits suggestions from other members, fully considers what they say, and builds on their ideas.

### **Make objective decisions:**

Dynamic teams have well-established, proactive approaches to solving problems and making decisions. Decisions are reached through consensus; everybody must be able to "live with" and willingly support the decisions. Members feel free to express their feelings about any decision. The team members clearly understand and accept all decisions, and they come up with contingency plans.

### **Evaluates its own effectiveness:**

A team needs to routinely evaluate itself to see how it is doing. "Continuous improvement" and "proactive management" are operating philosophies of dynamic teams. If performance problems arise, they can be resolved before they become serious.

## APPENDIX C

# Dynamic Team Assessment

Rating your team:	7 = Exceptional	1 = Deficient
1. Clearly states its mission and goals.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
2. Operates creatively.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
3. Focuses on results.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
4. Clarifies roles and responsibilities.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
5. Is well organized.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
6. Builds upon individual strengths.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
7. Supports leadership and each other.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
8. Develops team climate.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
9. Resolves disagreements.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
10. Communicates openly.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
11. Makes objective decisions.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		
12. Evaluates its own effectiveness.		
1      2      3      4      5      6      7		

TOTAL SCORE \_\_\_\_\_

### INTERPRETING YOUR SCORE

75 – 84: Congratulations! Your team is at or near optimum performance. Maintaining your team at this level should be your goal.

65 – 74: Not bad! Your team's in pretty good shape, although there is room for improvement.

55 – 64: Your team has some problems, some of which may be serious. To rectify them, your team needs to focus on improving its lowest-scoring characteristics.

Below 54: Your members are not functioning as a team. Your team needs to work on the basics of team building.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **SHENENDEHOWA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**2006** 4110

Administration

#### **SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATIVE ORGANIZATION AND OPERATION**

The Board of Education shall formulate education policy in coordination and in conjunction with the Superintendent of Schools.

The Superintendent shall ensure the development and execution of administrative regulations to ensure compliance and consistency of practices and protocols with applicable policies and laws.

The lines of responsibility/reporting shall be as depicted on the board sanctioned organizational chart. The Superintendent shall maintain an updated organizational chart of administrative and supervisory personnel considered to be those District employees officially designated by Board of Education action as responsible for the administrative and supervisory tasks required to carry out Board of Education policy, programs, decisions, and actions.

These employees shall meet all certification and/or Civil Service requirements as outlined in New York State Civil Service Law, and the Rules and Regulations promulgated by the Commissioner of Education of New York State. The administrative and supervisory staff must be eligible to meet these requirements at the time of employment.

Areas of responsibility for each individual shall be clearly defined. There shall be full opportunity for communication between all levels in the school staff.

Education Law Sections 1709 and 2503(5)

Ref: Policy #4212-Organizationl Chart

Adoption Date: February 13, 2007

## **APPENDIX E**

### **SHENENDEHOWA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

*2006*

4250

Administration

#### **SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, COMMITTEES**

The Superintendent of Schools shall establish such administrative committees, teams, or councils as he/she deems appropriate to facilitate the efficient and effective operation of the District. The Superintendent may alter the membership or charge of any such committee or group and may disband or discharge such committees, teams, or councils. The operation and functioning of said groups are not subject to the requirements of the open meetings laws.

The composition of each committee shall reflect its purpose and each committee shall have a clear assignment and time line for task completion.

Ref.: Policy 1210

Adoption Date: February 13, 2007

## **APPENDIX F**

### **SHENENDEHOWA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

2006 4310

1 of 2

#### **Administration**

#### **SUBJECT: DUTIES OF SUPERINTENDENT**

The Superintendent of Schools shall be the chief executive officer of the school district. He/she shall administer all policies and enforce all rules and regulations of the Board of Education. The superintendent will be empowered to assign and use resources; employ, promote, discipline and deploy staff; to translate policies of the Board into action; to speak as agent of the Board; to organize and delegate administrative authority and duties; and to exercise such other powers as are customary. The superintendent may not perform, cause, or allow to be performed any act that is unlawful, in violation of commonly accepted business and professional ethics; in violation of any contract into which the Board has entered; or, in violation of policies adopted by the Board which limit the superintendent's authority. When law or other authority calls for Board approval of decisions that the Board has delegated to the superintendent, and those decisions are within the limits of Board policies, the decision will be presented for routine approval.

The superintendent shall be responsible for organizing, administering, evaluating, and supervising the programs and personnel of all school departments, instructional and non-instructional. He/she shall have the responsibility and authority to plan the district's administrative structure and implement any reorganization, following communication with administrators, in consultation with, and following approval by the Board.

He/she shall be responsible for recommending for hire, evaluating, promoting, and dismissing all professional and support personnel. The responsibility and authority for the placement and transfer of staff shall be vested in the superintendent. The superintendent or his/her designee shall have responsibility for the recruitment, selection, and recommendation of all new employees for final approval by the Board of Education.

The superintendent shall routinely monitor the local school situation and recommend to the Board modification of current or development of new policies as needed. Regulations will be developed and maintained when necessary to implement Board policy or when such regulations will help ensure effective and consistent practice.

He/she shall be responsible for the preparation and recommendation to the Board of the annual School District budget in accordance with the format and development plan specified by the Board.

He/she shall determine the need and make recommendations for plant expansion and renovation.

**SUBJECT: DUTIES OF SUPERINTENDENT** continued

He/she shall be responsible for the construction of all salary scales and for the administration of the salary plan approved by the Board. Some of these salary scales will be developed within staff contracts negotiated under the provisions of the Taylor Law.

He/she shall acquaint the public with the activities and needs of the schools through his/her written and spoken statements, and shall be responsible for all news releases emanating from the local schools.

The superintendent of schools shall have the right to attend all meetings of the Board, (except those at which matters relating to his/her employment are being considered in executive session), and all Board and district committee meetings, serve as an ex-officio member of all school board committees, and provide administrative recommendations on each item of business considered by these committees.

The superintendent shall continually strive to distinguish for all concerned between areas of policy decisions appropriate to the Board of Education, and administrative decisions appropriate to the District's administrative staff.

The Board of Education, after consulting with the superintendent, may, from time to time, adopt and amend policies affecting the powers and duties of the superintendent in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

The superintendent shall have all such other powers and duties as provided by law, commissioner's regulations, or board policy.

Education Law 1711, 2508 and 3003  
8 New York Code of Rules and Regulations (NYCRR)  
Section 100.2(m)

Ref: Policy 4260 – Evaluation of the Superintendent

Adopted: February 13, 2007