



OODNADATTA ABORIGINAL SCHOOL

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Real learning is connected, constructive, fun, and based on trust, respect, and high expectations.

Decision Making Policy and Procedure

Quality decision making underpins the long term effectiveness of a school. It facilitates the achievement of strategic goals, the maximising of family involvement, the morale, well-being and productivity of staff, and ultimately the enhancement of student learning.

Oodnadatta Aboriginal School is committed to decision making that is consultative, participatory and that enhances collaboration and relationship-building within our school community. Accordingly, structures and processes must be in place to ensure all members of our school community are authentically involved in shaping the decisions that impact on them. This ensures that all we do is purposeful, efficient, effective, and democratic.

We acknowledge that there are different levels of decision making and we need to provide accountability and transparency about the procedures used and decisions made at all levels. The purpose of this decision making policy and procedures is not only to explain the processes for decision-making within this site but also to make transparent the rights and responsibilities of all members of our school community.

At Oodnadatta Aboriginal School we:

- Promote representation of the wider school community in decision making
- Use structures and processes to ensure all members have a voice
- Provide clear processes for decision making that identify the right pathways and people are identified.
- Provide a common understanding of how decisions are made

Decision Making Principles

- Good decision making requires and fosters a culture of trust, openness and honesty
- Any person or group involved in the school community has the right to raise an issue for consideration
- Effective decisions require ethical processes. Committees and groups streamline the decision-making process. They either make decisions or process the issue for decision in a broader forum whereupon the decision is made by leadership.

- All people who are affected by a decision should be involved in making the decision, and sufficient time should be given for the process to be carefully worked through
- People who are unable or choose not to attend decision-making meetings may pass their views on to the meeting via a proxy, but must abide by the decision taken
- Decisions must be communicated as soon as practicable to all affected by the decision.
- Not everyone will agree with every decision but once a decision has been taken through correct procedures everyone has the responsibility to enact the decision
- Consensus is desirable
- All members of the school community are regularly refreshed in their knowledge about the Site Decision Making Policy and Procedures.

Decision Making Protocols

All collective decisions are documented in meeting minutes. These sets of minutes are stored electronically and made accessible through the Curriculum and Administration Networks. It is a professional requirement for staff who miss meetings to find and read the minutes. When a new decision is made all stakeholders are to be informed of it in a timely manner through one or more of the following OAS communication modes:

- In person - 1:1
- Day Book
- Newsletter
- Email
- PAC Notice Board

When policy decisions are passed, policies will be re-drafted to reflect the decisions.

Monitoring and Evaluating Decisions

All decisions will be monitored by Leadership and/or the group which passed the decision. Once a decision has been made it cannot be brought back for further discussion until new or different information has been obtained, or before a reasonable length of time has passed.

Decisions should be evaluated regularly to ensure they continue to contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the school.

Challenging a Decision

Any non-consultative decision may be challenged. The challenge to the decision in the first instance should be put to the most relevant decision making committee or group. This committee or group will consider the challenge and make recommendations as per the "Decision Making Cycle".

Non-Consultative vs. Consultative Decisions

Non-Consultative

There are legal requirements and Departmental requirements governing the Principal's duties. Decisions in these matters can only be undertaken by the Principal and include:

- Suspension of students
- Work Health and Safety
- Under performance
- Duty of care for staff and students

Consultative

Most site decisions can be and are best made in consultation with key personnel, committees or groups. These could cover:

- Rosters
- Student Transitions
- Emergency procedures
- End of term matters
- Reports to Governing Council or DECD
- Induction programmes for new staff

(The Principal retains power of veto in all decisions but is expected not to exercise this right unless a decision contravenes the spirit of Departmental policy).

Role and Membership of Committees and Meeting Groups

Class Meetings

Facilitates the involvement of every student in discussions and decisions about the organisation and life of the School; Links to decision making across the School through class representation on SRC

Members

- The Class teacher
- All student members of the class

Meeting Structure

- Fortnightly

Communication

- Minutes taken
- Reports to SRC meeting by class representatives

Governing Council

Works with the Principal to set and monitor the strategic directions of the school. Oversees the health and wellbeing of the school and ensures it is operating in ways that reflect the views of the community. Makes decisions in areas that directly affect families e.g. school fees, uniform,

Members

- Chairperson (elected by Governing Council)

- Parent Reps
- Staff rep
- SRC rep (optional, 2 members desirable)
- Principal

Meeting Structure

- Weeks 4 & 8 on Monday at 3:30 in the Staff Room
- Agenda and Minutes published and distributed to parents

ICT Committee

Reviews current IT structures and processes; Ensures the school keeps current with all IT in the interests of student learning; Oversees the purchase and use of technology in the school.

Members

- Principal (Chair)
- Volunteers from Staff

Meeting Structure

- 2 x term

Communication

- Minutes kept
- Report to Staff

P A C

Provides advice on number, nature and tenure of Leadership positions; Advises on staffing of classes; Ensures all school resources are deployed and operate within DECD and AEU/PSA current arbitrated agreements. The PAC is not a decision-making committee, but it plays a vital role in ensuring decisions made by leadership are genuinely consultative.

Members

- Principal (Chair)
- Equal Opportunities Representative (or proxy) as elected by teaching staff
- A.E.U. Representative (or proxy) as elected by teaching staff
- SSO representative (or proxy) as elected by non-teaching staff

Meeting Structure

- Twice a term minimum or more as necessary

Communication

- Minutes taken and emailed to Staff
- Staff can request to meet as a group to bring items to PAC attention. This meeting would not usually involve leadership.

Staff meeting expectations

Staff are expected to give staff meetings a high priority and to have read any pre-reading, or analysed any data that will be considered during the meeting. Pre-reading will be distributed the week prior to the meeting.

AOB items to be brought to the Principal by close of school one day prior.

Agenda items will be released for viewing on Mondays.

Formal meeting procedures are to be respected:

- Only one person talking at a time
- Focus on the issues
- Side remarks/comments/use of mobile devices that is not purposeful is not acceptable
- All speakers are acknowledged by the Chair
- Straw polls are used frequently
- Where a majority deem it necessary, votes can be cast by secret ballot, with an impartial scrutineer recruited to ensure the integrity of the process and determine the outcome of the vote.

People involved in decision making need to have the following attitudes:

- Be prepared to compromise
- To demonstrate listening and supportive behaviours
- Be able to separate major and minor issues
- Be able to live with and support a decision
- Be able to identify their underlying beliefs and values
- Be sensitive to other people's opinions and beliefs
- Use a problem solving approach

PAC and WHS are to be permanent items for business. The role of the PAC and WHS business in staff meetings is to announce decisions that have been made or to vote on decisions where appropriate. WHS and PAC business is not debated in Staff Meetings.

Leadership will make every effort possible to ensure staff meetings are scheduled for Wednesdays, starting at 3:30 pm. From time to time, meetings may need to be postponed. If a delay is foreseeable, staff will be given 24 hours' notice of the delay and the new date.