

*May 2012*  
*Sullivan West Central School District*  
*District Office ~ Jeffersonville, New York 12748*

**District Plan for School-Based Planning & Shared Decision-Making**

DLT ~ District Level Team

BOE ~ Board of Education

BLT ~ Building Level Team

Strategic Planning Committee

School Inquiry Teams

School-Community Leadership Forum

*Commissioner's Regulations Part 100.11, adopted in 1994, govern the Shared Decision-Making (SDM) process in New York's public schools. The State Education Department's 2011 Race to the Top initiatives required a re-evaluation of the Shared Decision-Making design for Sullivan West CSD. This "re-evaluation" is reflected in the following SDM plan.*

**1. Overview of the Shared Decision Making**

Shared Decision-Making in the Sullivan West Central School is designed to involve all school stakeholders in promoting the overall welfare of the district and the fulfillment of its mission through effective forums for "grass roots" discussion and decision-making.

Members of the Shared Decision-Making Committee (called the District Level Team or DLT), the Building Level Teams (BLTs) and other representative SDM groups are accountable to their specific constituencies and to all shareholders as well as the State Education Department, the Board of Education and our students.

**Committees and Teams:**

- The District's Shared Decision-Making Committee (*District Level Team or DLT*) serves as primary authority among the various SDM teams and committees. The makeup of the DLT is described on page 2 of this document.
- Each school has its own Shared Decision-Making Team which is called the *Building Level Team or BLT*. The BLTs include within their membership representatives of all school stakeholder groups. (administration, teachers, SRP, parents, and at the secondary level, students). *The Inquiry Team* in each school (see below) is a semi-autonomous part of the Building Level Team.
- Each school has its own *School Inquiry Team* whose primary responsibility is to address student achievement concerns, closely analyzing student achievement data and prescribing initiatives for improving teaching and learning. The Inquiry Teams include at least two teachers and the principal. The responsibilities of the former *Professional Development Team* (PDT) have now been subsumed by the School Inquiry Teams. Among those responsibilities is the development of the annual District Professional Development Plan. Though the Inquiry Teams function largely independent of the Building Level Teams, they attend all pertinent BLT meetings as ex officio members.
- The *School-Community Leadership Forum* is assembled annually to conduct a review of the prior year's District Goals and to begin the process of formulating the upcoming year's District Goals. Once every five years, it is convened for a series of meetings to review the existing District Strategic Plan, and if necessary, recommend to the Board of Education revisions and updates. Its membership for the annual review of goals is determined by the Superintendent, the

President of the WSUT and the President of the Board of Education. However, when convened every five years to revise and update the District's Strategic Plan, its membership is chosen by the District Level Team with the involvement of the BOE President. Its membership should be representative of the school community.

- *The Strategic Planning Committee*, though it functions as a Shared Decision-Making Committee, it is actually an official committee of the Board of Education. The Strategic Planning Committee has two primary responsibilities. The first is to assure that the District's Strategic Plan provides effective guidance to all decision-making within the School District. Its other responsibility is to monitor the District's progress toward fulfilling its annual District goals. Its membership is limited to six members. Three are members of the Board of Education; the other three are appointed by the DLT. The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee, the President of the WSUT or his/her designee, and the President of the Board of Education are all ex-officio members of the Strategic Planning Committee.

2. ***DLT Membership shall consist of:***

- School superintendent (or designee)
- Two bargaining unit administrators
- Two members of WSUT
- One member of the SRP unit
- Two members of our PTSO (one elementary school; one high school)
- A representative of each School's BLT

Members are appointed by their stakeholder group (PTSO, WSUT, etc.)

3. ***BLT Membership shall consist of*** representatives from the school's stakeholder groups, including teachers, School-Related Personnel, parents, administrators, and, at the secondary level, students. Members are appointed by their stakeholder group (PTSO, WSUT, SRP, Student Council, etc.)

4. ***Issues to be Addressed by Shared Decision-Making***

Virtually all issues related to the well-being of the schools, the District, and the fulfillment of the District's mission, are appropriate subjects for SDM discussions and input. Foremost of these are issues impacting the improvement of student achievement including, but not limited to:

- Selection of Advisory Sub-Groups
- Curriculum
- Staff Development Planning
- Scheduling
- Staffing
- Budget Development
- District Policies
- Analysis of student achievement measures
- Development and Achievement of Annual District Goals
- Fulfillment of the Strategic Plan

The above referenced issues are categorized in three general areas: direct empowerment for decision making, procedural recommendations to the administration, and policy recommendations to the Board of Education. A delineation and discussion of the specific issues follow:

- Selection of Advisory Sub-Groups  
The membership of each subcommittee will be representative of stakeholder groups.
- Curriculum  
The DLT, BLTs, and Inquiry Teams will share responsibility for making recommendations for curriculum and program development, textbook selection, course requirements, student outcome standards and means of assessing them, and student grading policy. The Committees' and Teams' authority are limited in those situations where issues and actions are specifically defined by statute, regulation, BOE policy, contracts, and collective bargaining agreements.
- Staff Development Planning  
The DLT, the BLTs and the School Inquiry Teams share responsibility for the overall planning, coordination and implementation of the faculty's professional development initiatives. For the purposes of staff development, faculty shall be defined as district's teachers, teaching assistants, support professional staff (i.e. school counselor, school psychologist) and SRPs. The responsibility formerly held by the Professional Development Team for developing and annually updating the District's Professional Development Plan is now assumed and subsumed by the School Inquiry Teams. The School Inquiry Teams, (with input from the School-Community Leadership Forum and the Strategic Planning Committee who annually formulate and monitor the annual District Goals for adoption by the Board of Education), will develop and annually update the District's Professional Development Plan.
- Scheduling  
The BLTs recommend various scheduling options to the DLT and to School and District administration. The BLTs' authority, in this instance, is advisory only as scheduling is an administrative function. The administration reserves the right to make the final decisions relating to the district's master and subsidiary schedules and any and all of their components parts. Faculty input through the BLTs, Inquiry Teams, or directly from individual staff members is both encouraged and expected.
- Staffing  
The BLT will share responsibility for recommending various staffing options to the DLT and School and District administration. The BLTs' authority, in this instance, will be advisory only as staffing is an administrative function. The administration reserves the right to make the final decisions regarding the district's staffing decisions. Faculty input through the BLT's, Inquiry Teams, or directly from individual staff members is both encouraged and expected.
- Budget Development  
The BLT will share responsibility for making various budgetary recommendations to the DLT and School and District administration. The BLT's authority, in this instance, will be advisory only as budgeting is a function of the Board of Education based on the recommendations of the administration. The Board and the administration reserve the right to make the final decisions regarding the district's budget. Faculty input through the BLT's, Inquiry Teams, or directly from individual staff members is both encouraged and expected.
- District Policy Considerations  
The BLTs will share responsibility for recommending new policies and revisions of existing policies to the DLT who in turn will make recommendations to the Policy Committee of the Board of Education through the district administration. The BLTs' authority, in this instance,

will be advisory only as policymaking is an exclusive function of the Board of Education. The Board reserves the right to make any and all decisions regarding the district's policies. Faculty input is both encouraged and expected.

- Analysis of Student Achievement Measures

While primarily the responsibility of the schools' Inquiry Teams, virtually all other SDM teams and committees share this role. This responsibility goes beyond just analysis and diagnosis, to prescription for improvement. In exercising this shared responsibility, theirs is largely advisory, as the Administration and BOE retain most statutory authority.

- Annual Development and Achievement of District Goals

Annual District Goals will be developed, monitored and assessed through Shared Decision-Making involving all school stakeholder groups. This process will be followed:

- The annual summer School-Community Leadership Forum will meet to brainstorm initial proposed District goals for the upcoming school year.
- The Superintendent, President of the WSUT, President of the School Board, and Principals will word-smith, revise, and prioritize the initial proposed goals.
- The schools' BLTs will then prioritize goals and make recommendations to the DLT.
- The DLT will then prioritize goals and make recommendations to the Strategic Planning Committee.
- The Strategic Planning Committee will make final recommended changes and present the District Goals to the Board of Education. The Board will adopt these at its regular September BOE meeting.
- Though all SDM teams and committees share responsibility for achieving annual District Goals, primary responsibility for their monitoring through the school year lies with the Strategic Planning Committee.
- The Superintendent conducts the annual review and assessment of the year's District Goals at the annual summer School-Community Leadership Forum. The Superintendent is also responsible for preparing an annual mid-year District Goals Review for the Strategic Planning Committee and the Board of Education.

5. ***Manner and Extent of Expected Involvement of All Parties***

- DLT

The DLT will meet a minimum of twice annually, at mutually agreeable times. A quorum of the team, with membership representative of all school stakeholder groups (as required in Commissioner's Regulation Section 100.11), will address any and all issues presented for consideration.

- BLT

The BLT will meet, at a minimum, on a monthly basis. Input and information is welcome and encouraged from all advisory sub groups and any individuals.

- School Inquiry Teams

The School Inquiry Teams will meet on an "as needed" basis.

- **Strategic Planning Committee**  
The Strategic Planning Committee will meet at least five times annually. Its meetings will be included on the official BOE calendar, and like all other BOE Committee meetings, are open to the public.
- The School-Community Leadership Forum is a large (typically 40-60 members) group representative of all school stakeholder groups including Board members, administrators, WSUT and SRP members, parent and community leaders, and student leaders. It is convened once annually to conduct the review of the prior year's District Goals and to brainstorm draft District Goals for the upcoming school year, and then every five years to revise and update the District's Strategic Plan over a series of meetings.

**6. *Means and Standards to Evaluate Improvement in Student Achievement***

The means and standards used to evaluate student achievement will be addressed through both formal and informal assessments as defined by NYS and local decision making. Primary guidance will come from the School Inquiry Teams who will regularly analyze various types of student achievement data for the purpose of improving student academic achievement.

**7. *Means by which all Parties will be held Accountable for their Decisions***

Student achievement, as measured by congruence with the state and federal benchmarks, will be the primary determining factor relative to the accountability for all SDM Teams and Committees. Members of Shared Decision-Making groups are ultimately responsible to the stakeholder group (PTSO, Board of Education, WSUT, administration, etc.) that appointed them.

**8. *Dispute Resolution***

The Shared Decision Making Teams will resolve any disputes through consensus. If consensus is not reached, the following guidelines will be used as a dispute resolution process:

- The issue will be tabled until the following meeting.
- In the interim concerned members will further research available data to facilitate consensus at the next meeting.
- The issue will be re-addressed at the subsequent meeting. If consensus is not reached a super majority vote of 75% will be utilized.

**9. *Manner by which Requirements for the Involvement of Parents in the Decision Making Process will be Coordinated***

The District Level Team, Building Level Teams, and the School-Community Leadership Forum will include parents as participating members.

**10. *Amendments to the DLT Plan***

The DLT has the authority to alter its plan. The document can be altered by a 75% majority of the DLT. Changes to its plan will be effective upon approval of the Board of Education.