RIVERTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Government
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Department for Education
and Child Development

DECISION MAKING POLICY

Rationale

Good decision making is a critical factor in the long term effectiveness of a school. It can contribute significantly to the achievement of organisational goals; the maximising of parent/carer involvement; the increase in the morale, well-being and productivity of staff, and ultimately the enhancement of student learning.

All individuals and groups within a school community have the right to participate and be fairly represented in relevant decision making. Involvement of members of the school community will vary according to the issue under consideration.

Decisions are made using a process of consultation with individuals and groups. Staff, parents and students are expected to participate in decision-making processes related to issues in which they have an interest, stake or expertise.

The school's organisational structure provides opportunities for people to make decisions on matters related to their roles and in accordance with established policies and procedures.

Principles

At Riverton Primary School we believe:

Our policies, practices and decisions will be characterised by:

- Democratic principles ensuring consultation, ownership and evaluation.
- An inclusive approach ensuring the needs of students as learners and teachers as professionals are addressed.
- Decisions will take into account the needs of students, staff and the community, both present and future, and the resources available to meet those needs.
- Decision making processes will foster creative and positive thinking while allowing decisions to be made in a timely manner that contributes to positive morale.
- Information about particular policies or decisions will be available to all members of the school community and actively communicated to all relevant stakeholders.
- As policies are made, a plan and timeline for their implementation and review must be included.

All decisions made at Riverton Primary School are governed by:

- The Education Act
- Regulations under the Act
- Legal and Policy Framework
- Administrative Instructions and Guidelines
- WHS Act
- Department for Education Policies and Expectations
- Lower Mid North Partnership Agreements

Decision-making works well when:

- Inclusive practices are in place.
- There is an atmosphere of trust and respect.
- Decisions are made within a framework of a shared vision, values and agreed goals.
- Different ideas and opinions are listened to and respected.
- People feel supported, considered and rewarded for their contribution.
- Stakeholders accept and support decisions made, although the decision may not always be their preferred position.
- The modes of decision-making vary according to needs of the groups and participants are clear on the process.
- People's roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and expectations made explicit.
- Consultation and participation are routine aspects of the decision making process.
- Processes are clear for information sharing, deliberation, negotiation, participation and making decisions.
- Organisational support ensures the implementation of decisions into practice.

Role of the Principal

The Principal is accountable to the Chief Executive for the educational leadership and management of the school, and to the Governing Council for the implementation of the school's Site Improvement Plan.

It is incumbent on the Principal to establish decision-making procedures which give full opportunity for staff and other members of the school community to participate as appropriate.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring there is a mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups.

Role of Teachers

Under the Education Act/Regulations, teachers are responsible to the Principal for the welfare and development of students in their care, participating in the development and review of policies and actively assisting in the general management of the school. In relation to decision-making, it is their responsibility to:

- Participate in decision-making and use the decision- making structures that are in place.
- Ensure that the decisions they make in relation to teaching and learning, or their job, follow the principles within this policy.

Role of Ancillary Staff

Ancillary staff are responsible to the Principal for providing quality support services, participating in the development and review of policies and actively assisting in the general management of the school.

General Principles

Those affected by a decision are given an opportunity to participate in the process so that their views are considered.

The introduction of new policies and procedures or major changes to existing policies must be ratified by the Governing Council.

Established committees are expected to consult more widely (i.e. outside the immediate group) on occasions when insufficient information is available.

Decisions are recorded in minutes of meetings and the person or group responsible for implementation is identified in the documentation.

Decision Making Process – Level of Decisions

There are three identified levels of decision making required within the school.

1. **Level 1**: Involves decisions that have little impact on others outside the role of the individual or group involved.
    a. Decisions can be made by individuals/groups without any consultation beyond the person or the group.
    b. Examples include: changing a class routine.

2. **Level 2:** Involves making a decision about a new proposal that occurs within the existing framework of policies and practices.
    a. Decisions that are made by an individual/group after consultation with stakeholders and those who must implement and/ or those impacted by the decision.
    b. The decision is achieved through agreement of a simple majority of those involved.
    c. Examples include: teacher decides to run an excursion.

3. **Level 3:** Involves proposals outside existing policies and practices and/or impacts on a majority of the school population.
    a. Decisions are managed through formal meeting structures.
    b. Effective consultation with stakeholders must occur.
    c. The process of how the final decision will be made is determined and made clear to all participants in the process. This may include:
        i. A formal vote at a staff meeting
        ii. Agreement at a Committee level, recommendation taken to a full staff meeting for ratification.
    d. Decision to be achieved through consensus, reflecting the preference of the majority (more than 50%) of individuals involved.
    e. Examples include: a change of the Pastoral Care system, decision to change the number of lessons in a day, the school priorities for the year, adjusting Whole Site Agreements.

If a staff member does not agree with the decision making process, they are directed to the Education Departments *Complaint Resolution for Employees Procedure.*

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