

# Site Based Decision Making Council By-Laws

## Razdolna School



### **Acknowledgments**

The school is grateful to the individuals of the Village of Razdolna who play an important role in improving Razdolna School. Similar to the District's plan, ours has developed in phases beginning with a dream to improve education. Next came ideas for putting theory into practice. Over the course of several years, progress was steady and the plan evolved. This document is a testament to the dedication and success of the parents, staff and community of Razdolna School. We appreciate your efforts and foresight.

### **Vision Statement**

Razdolna embraces the partnership between students, parents, staff and community to prepare for our children's future. We will inspire and support all students to be lifelong learners with the courage and confidence to make positive contributions to the world. We strive to achieve high standards by integrating core academic rigor. We seek to inspire individuals to their fullest potential.

### **I. Statement of Purpose**

The Razdolna School Site Council is a joint planning, problem solving, and recommendation making body comprised of representatives of parents, teachers, classified staff, administration, and community. Its purpose is to insure that plans and decisions that affect our school are aligned with our school's stated vision, district performance expectations, and student achievement goals. Recommendations made by this group will be reached by consensus. Members will represent their respective constituency. Recommendations will follow the committee bylaws and parameters set in the guidelines by the school district. The principal is responsible for the final decision.

### **II. Site Council Accountability**

On an annual basis, our Site Council will set forth student achievement goals with yearly performance targets based upon the district's assessment policy and other quality indicators as identified by the Board of Education. The Site Council will annually evaluate the goals and targets.

### **III. Goal Setting Process**

The Site Council will decide on one or two goals for the upcoming year. Recommendations for yearly goals will come from representatives of the member groups.

### **IV. Selection Process**

The principal shall be a member of the Site Council by virtue of his/her position and shall have the responsibility to guide the committee in developing an organizational structure for conducting the committee's business.

Community members of the Village of Razdolna, Razdolna School Certified and Classified staff, shall have optional membership and participation in the Site Council meeting by virtue of his/her position, and shall be able to provide input and feedback regarding Site Council based decisions.

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## **V. Meeting Procedures**

### Schedule and Meeting Notification

The Site Council will meet at least four times a year on a regular schedule that will be established by the committee. The date, time, and agenda will be announced in the Razdolna School WhatsApp group and/or printouts sent home through Razdolna School students and/or staff.

### Approval of Agenda Items

All agenda items may be suggested and/or requested to the Razdolna School principal no later than 1 week prior to the meeting. Exceptions may be given on a case-by-case basis. An agenda will be sent on the week of the Site Council Meeting, with a recommended timeframe of one week before the scheduled meeting. Suggested or requested agenda items are subject to confirmation by the principal.

### Approval of Agenda Items

Items for the agenda should come in the form of a recommendation. As much as possible, such should be a continuation of the school goal process.

### Meeting Details

Meetings should be kept to a maximum of 2 hours in length unless there are special circumstances. At each meeting, there will be two jobs assigned, facilitator and recorder. Minutes of the meeting will be sent to the superintendent, posted Razdolna School WhatsApp group, and posted on the Razdolna School website.

Additional meetings may be called when needed. The member requesting the meeting must get permission and coordinate the meeting with the principal.

Members are expected to act in good faith in resolving issues.

The principal or other Site Council member gives notification of an upcoming event, issue, concern, etc. The issues, ideas, concerns are discussed with appropriate meetings of sub groups (staff meeting, parent group meeting, Student Council). Recommendations or lists of ideas are given to representatives. Representatives arrive at Site Council meeting to share information. Action may be taken by the Site Council using the consensus method. Once consensus is reached, representatives are responsible for supporting and explaining the recommendation.

## **VIII. General Operational Rules**

The principal remains the sole administrator of the school and will operate the school within the normal constraints of the district, including working with the Site Council and seeking their input when appropriate. Whenever an administrative decision is required, efforts should be made to gather input from the Site Council committee members. Site Council recommendations will be made using a consensus process. The committee shall conduct its business in compliance with documents, statements and resources listed in the KPBSD guidelines.

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### Hiring

When teaching or support positions become vacant, the superintendent will cause those positions to be advertised. Applications will be accepted consistent with district hiring procedures. A list of qualified and acceptable candidates will be referred to the principal. The principal will incorporate village feedback regarding the selection of the most qualified candidate. The principal will make the final selection and will inform the personnel department of the selection. The personnel department will verify compliance with district hiring procedures and will complete the hiring process. The principal may request additional candidates or reopen a position if needed.

### **IX. Evaluation Process**

The Site Council will review and evaluate itself in terms of its stated purpose, and completion of yearly goals using the evaluation designed by the district. Evaluations will be published in the May minutes.

### **X. Protocols & Consensus**

#### A. Protocol For Addressing the Site Council

- There are opportunities during a Site Council Meeting when any citizen may address the Committee on subjects relating to education.
- Remarks that attack the character of any one are out of order. Persons in the audience should not interrupt the comment period of any other speaker.
- Before addressing the Committee, please discuss grievances with the teacher or principal. Most problems are solved through these channels.
- Please refrain from sharing information which could cause embarrassment later.
- The meeting schedule will be posted in newsletter(s), WhatsApp, and on the school's website.
- If you have an idea for a new program, be willing to participate in its implementation.

#### B. What is Consensus?

Consensus is different from other kinds of decision making because it stresses the cooperative development of a decision, with group members consent. Of course, consent does not mean that everyone will be completely satisfied with the final outcome-in fact, total satisfaction is rare. However, the decision must be acceptable enough so that all will agree to support it.

Consensus is not applicable to a group in which one or more persons come with an inclination to sabotage the group. It may be useful to establish a ground rule to which each person will work within a framework that creates the best solution for the whole group. Fear can prevent people from doing so. However, in a group where trust and respect have been built, people may be able to lose their reticence, e.g., fear of not being listened to, shyness, or fear of being laughed at. The facilitator can make certain that group members remain sensitive to that person's needs throughout the discussion.

#### *Consensus Decision Making Process Requires*

- **Unity of Purpose:** There must be a basic core of agreement within and about the group. Of course there will be many areas where group members have varying opinions about what is best. But there must be a unifying underlying base that is recognized and accepted as a common starting place by all members.

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- **Commitment to Listening:** Each member listens carefully to others' contributions. Communication requires both sharing and receiving information. It is important to:
  - Listen actively. People tend to think of the listener's role as a passive one. A good listener, though, shares the responsibility for group comprehension by paying close attention and trying to understand. Good listening means using your own communication skills to help the speaker get the message across.
  - Try to put your whole self in the speaker's shoes.
  - Let the speaker know that you are listening, that you care. Eye contact and head nods can reassure the speaker that you are involved and that you are making an effort to understand.
  - When you don't understand, ask questions or determine whether what you comprehended was indeed the speaker's point.
- **Commitment to sharing:** Each member accepts the responsibility to share their thinking with the group, including concerns, questions, fears, reluctance, insights or challenges, knowing the group consists of none but supportive listeners.
- **Commitment to flexibility:** Each member holds their position lightly enough to be able to let go of it and adopt a position which represents the best conclusions for the group.
- **A well trained facilitator:** The many roles of a facilitator are: making certain everyone gets a turn to speak and that all points are discussed thoroughly and summarizing discussion to determine whether or not consensus has been reached.

### *Overcoming the Stumbling Blocks*

- **Let go of competition:** In a cooperative group, members perceive themselves as having mutual goals. Members recognize that there is not always a single right solution. A group caught by an either-or decision faces a false dilemma. Other creative options may be available, which may respond to the needs and goals of all. When members realize that no single choice is right, rendering all others wrong, they may be more open to others' viewpoints.
- **Attend meetings with the intention of listening to others:** Let go of the traditional concept that the purpose of attending a meeting is to present/defend a certain idea to which one is attached.
- **Fear of conflict, emergence of feelings:** Conflict itself is neither good nor bad. It signifies the presence of different options. Conflict shouldn't be a clash of one personal interest against another, but a cooperative effort to bring out all perspectives. Welcome diverse opinions as a means of becoming aware of ideas, strengths and weaknesses. This will allow strong and workable solutions to emerge.

### *Consensus Decision Making*

- is a powerful tool for building group unity and strength.
- enables a group to choose wise, creative courses of action.
- develops sensitive listening skills of all group members.
- shares the responsibilities of preparation, group input, reflection, and of weighing options among group members.
- trains individuals to assume the demanding task of facilitating group discussion.
- encourages the honoring of diverse viewpoints.
- reassures us that even a diverse group can find ways of reaching solutions acceptable to all.