



**PETALUMA
CITY SCHOOLS**

**SHARED
DECISION MAKING
RESOURCE GUIDE**

Petaluma City Schools District

Petaluma Federation of Teachers

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew Harris", written over a horizontal line.

Matthew Harris, Superintendent

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sandra Larsen", written over a horizontal line.

Sandra Larsen, President

Revised July 2023

SHARED DECISION-MAKING RESOURCE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

The Petaluma City Schools District and the Petaluma Federation of Teachers agree that by working together we can exert a powerful and positive influence on the continued improvement of learning outcomes for all of our students.

We recognize that the most important interactions affecting student performance are those between teachers and students. As accountability for success is assumed by school sites, we believe that teacher involvement in decision-making will result in increased student achievement.

Shared decision-making is an integral part of the process of improving student achievement. The Federation and the District encourage staff to engage collaboratively in designing the teaching/learning models that best meet the needs of students in that school's community.

PURPOSE

By using a variety of strategies and building a common vocabulary, teachers and administrators will collaborate to make decisions. An effective decision-making process requires sufficient time allocated to planning, implementation, and evaluation.

In accordance with the PCS-PFT contract, the Trust Agreement Committee is committed to the utilization of the Decision-Making Resource Guide. Therefore, the committee meets regularly and welcomes feedback from sites and individuals about the utilization of the document. Contact the Federation President, District Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, or any member of the Trust Agreement Committee with questions, suggestions, or concerns.

DECISIONS ARE MADE IN MANY DIFFERENT VENUES

- School Site Councils
- Principals' Advisory Groups and Leadership Teams
- Student Study Teams
- Academic/Grade Level Teams
- Academic Departments
- School Site Meetings
- School Site Subcommittees
- District-level Committees
- Hiring Committees
- District Leadership Team
- Ad Hoc Meetings

THE SHARED DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

1. Identify the decision to be made.
2. Determine the Shared Decision-Making Model to be used (use Decision-Making Guide as reference)
3. Develop norms for the decision-making process and take personal responsibility for participating in the information-gathering and decision-making process
4. Gather information – develop a common understanding of the content underlying the issue(s):
 - a. Discuss the history of the issue(s)
 - b. Clarify the issue and examine assumptions
 - c. Gather factual information and data
5. Generate solutions
6. Advocate
7. Identify pros and cons of solution(s)
8. Decide on a solution and discuss next steps
9. Create a follow-up process for evaluation and improvement as needed
10. Support the process and decision

The Accordion Process should be used as appropriate at any stage of Shared Decision Making when a representative group is making decisions for a larger group of stakeholders.

THREE DECISION-MAKING MODELS

These models are not meant to imply that they are all inclusive. Each school is encouraged to develop its own models and examples.

CONSENSUS	CONSULTATION	COMMAND
<p>All Stakeholders</p> <p>Process: The Administrator is an equal member of the group. Stakeholders use consensus to reach decisions.</p> <p>After all voices have been heard, if consensus can't be reached, a vote can be an alternative.</p>	<p>Staff Input</p> <p>Process: Staff generates multiple solutions to a problem, reviews proposed options, and makes recommendations to the administrator who reports back to staff with decision and rationale.</p>	<p>Administrator Alone</p> <p>Process: Administrator makes decisions from information available. Administrator provides a clear explanation of the rationale for the decision</p>
Some examples of where these models apply:		
CONSENSUS	CONSULTATION	COMMAND
<p>Staff Development</p> <p>Curriculum and Instruction Adoption</p> <p>Curriculum Development</p> <p>Restructuring</p> <p>School Climate</p> <p>Scheduling of Additional Events</p>	<p>Teacher Assignments</p> <p>Master Schedule</p> <p>Student Placement</p> <p>Space Allocation</p> <p>Classroom Assignment</p> <p>Stipended Positions</p> <p>Bell Schedules</p> <p>Committee Assignments</p> <p>Funding Decisions/Budgets</p> <p>Hiring</p>	<p>Board of Education Policy</p> <p>Administrative Regulations</p> <p>Student Discipline</p> <p>Site Emergency</p> <p>Adherence to California State Education Code</p>

Decisions in the consultation model should be shifted to consensus when possible.

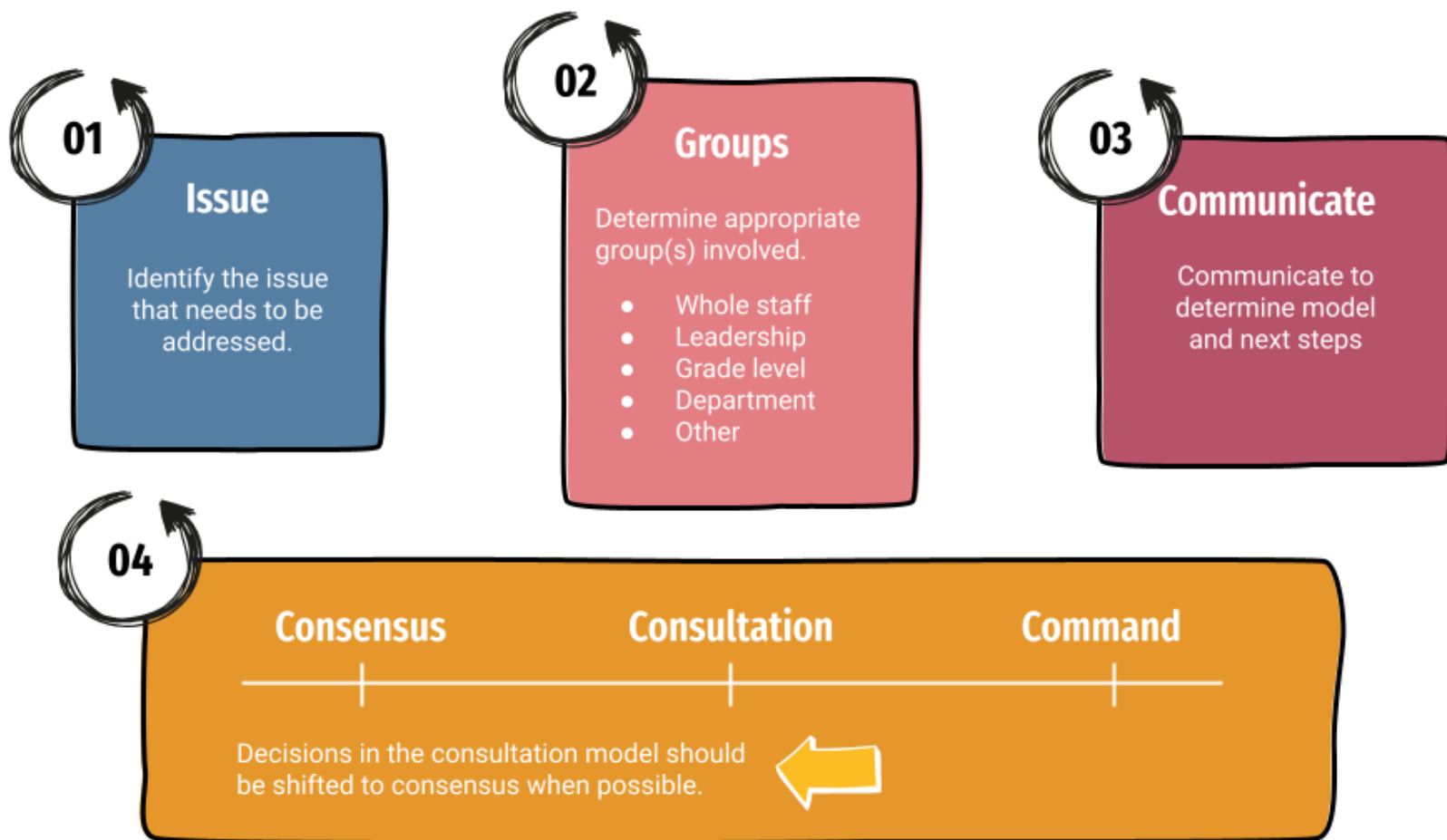
THE ACCORDION PROCESS

The accordion process is a back and forth communication process between a representative group and the larger group of stakeholders. When a representative group has generated possible solutions or decisions, the accordion process is used to share that thinking with the larger group and get feedback before a final decision is made. If feedback makes the representative group realize that larger changes are needed to the original idea, the revised idea will go back out to the larger group for more feedback. This process of back and forth continues like an accordion until the representative group feels comfortable that the decision reflects the general will and consensus of district stakeholders.

PRE-DECISION MAKING CHECKLIST

- How is the issue identified?
 - Who will be affected by the decision?
 - Who should be included in the decision-making process?
- What are the time constraints?
- Are there legal policies or other constraints involved?
- How will the decision be made?
 - Consensus (decision made by group agreement - everyone agrees to support, not sabotage, the decision)
 - Consultation (decision made by recommendations to administrator)
 - Command (decision made by administrator alone)
- What is the composition of the group making the decision?
 - All stakeholders
 - Representative group selected by large group
- Do the decision-makers have the information they need? Will outside expertise be required?
- How should the decision be communicated?

DECISION MAKING FLOWCHART



GLOSSARY

Accordion Process	The Accordion Process is back and forth communication between a representative group and the larger group of stakeholders.
Advocate	Support of a cause or idea
Brainstorming	A group process whereby ideas are generated without argument or refutation; intuitive, creative and rational approaches to solutions are encouraged.
Collaborate	Work cooperatively with colleagues to achieve a common goal.
Command	Administrator makes decisions without input and discussion by the group.
Consensus	A process of coming to agreement characterized by rational discussion of the issues until everyone involved in the discussion agrees with the decision, or at least agrees not to obstruct the decision.
Consultation	Administrator makes decisions with input and discussion by the group.
District	Petaluma City Schools
Federation	Petaluma Federation of Teachers
Jigsaw	A process used to speed up the understanding of a document. The process involves having small groups become expert in a part of the document, and sharing their knowledge with the larger group.

Norms	Agreed-upon rules for discussion and advocacy
Professionalism	The standards, procedures and ethics characterized by those who are educated in a specific body of knowledge.
Shared Decision-Making	A process in which team members collaborate, where appropriate, in identifying problems, defining goals, formulating policy, shaping direction, and monitoring program implementation.