

Syosset Central School District
Syosset, New York
A NEW COMPACT FOR LEARNING

THE MISSION STATEMENT FOR THE SYOSSET CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

This mission statement encompasses the thinking of the school community and the building teams' goals for the schools represent the goals of the school district.

The mission of the Syosset Central School District is to prepare students to thrive in both the future we imagine and one which may evolve in ways yet to be envisioned.

Academic

To enable students to realize their full intellectual potential and to inspire lifetime learners. Syosset will be known for:

- Students who are agile, creative, adaptable learners;
- Instruction that not only increases students' knowledge, but their capacity to think;
- Programs that are innovative, engaging, effective, and comparable in every building;
- Attracting, training, and retaining outstanding faculty and leaders;
- Exceptional programs in the fine and performing arts;

Culture, Climate and Character

To prepare students to face the evolving challenges in their lifetime and to make exemplary contributions in an increasingly diverse society, Syosset will be known for:

- Students, staff, and parents who exemplify: patience, respect, integrity, dignity and empathy (PRIDE);
- Students whose compassion and kindness inspire altruistic efforts to improve their communities and the lives of others;
- Athletes who exemplify teamwork and sportsmanship as they compete at the highest levels.
- Supporting students' mental wellness by giving them a sense of safety and belonging, committing to a robust character education program, developing their interpersonal skills, and intervening early to support those who struggle;
- Supporting students' physical wellness through physical and health education.

Community

Syosset's excellent schools are the heart of the community and an essential part of families' life. To maintain this position as a major community asset, Syosset will be known for:

- Exceptional communication of the District's academic successes and fiscal responsibility;
- A community that celebrates and supports its rich multi-cultural makeup;
- Engaging parents and intentionally welcoming new families, including those for whom a language challenge may exist;
- Its appreciation of the senior citizens who built this community;
- Public resources (police, fire, parks, library, etc.) who serve the community in partnership.

Operations/Fiscal

Syosset's excellent schools are an asset to the community and an attractant to new families. To preserve this resource while operating responsibly, Syosset will be known for:

- Communicating its budgeting decisions with clarity and detail;
- Continually seeking greater efficiencies in operations;
- Investing in the safety and security of students and staff;
- A safe and secure physical plant that supports cutting-edge instruction through continuous improvement.

A NEW COMPACT FOR LEARNING

A New Compact for Learning states that parents and teachers will participate in school-based planning and shared decision making. Its purpose is to improve the educational performance of all students, regardless of such factors as socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, sex, language background, or disability.

The plan for participation in school-based planning and shared decision-making specifies:

- 1) The educational issues which will be subject to cooperative planning and shared decision-making at the building level by teachers, parents, and administrators. At the discretion of the Board of Education, other parties such as students, school district support staff, and community members may be part of the process.
- 2) The manner and extent of the expected involvement of all parties.
- 3) The means and standards by which all parties shall evaluate improvement in student achievement.
- 4) How all parties will be held accountable for the decisions which they share in making.
- 5) How disputes presented by the participating parties about the educational issues being decided upon will be resolved at the local level.
- 6) How the plan provides for State and Federal requirements for parent involvement in planning and decision making.

Building level teams operate under the following conditions:

- 1) The educational issues subject to cooperative planning and shared decision-making are included in Appendix A (Issues Which May Be Addressed by Building Level Teams), Appendix B (Issues Which May Not Be Addressed By Building Level Teams), and Appendix C (Contractual Items).
- 2) Each team must meet periodically throughout the year.
- 3) Each building organization will select team members, approximately 6-12, comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, and possible others (for example, students, support staff, or community members). It is recommended that the building team be representative of the school community, wherever possible, (e.g., ESL, Special Education, Gifted and Talented, etc.)
- 4) Terms for members of each building team will be two years, but a team member may serve more than one term. For the first year's designated

membership only, terms for one-half of the team will be two year; terms for one-half of the team will be three years. Parents selected for membership on the building teams must be the parent of a child in that school and membership ceases when the child leaves the school.

- 5) Being a member of a school-based team is a time-consuming endeavor. Members will be expected to attend meetings and consensus training sessions. Each school-based team must determine how to handle absences of a team member, e.g., when that person should be replaced due to excessive absences. Participants are permitted to be on one building team only.**
- 6) The building team will choose, by consensus, a facilitator and a secretary. For the first two meetings, the principal will serve as the facilitator. A different secretary could be selected for each meeting.**
- 7) Participants on the building team cannot be members of the same family.**
- 8) All decisions of the building team are to be made by consensus, not by a vote of the committee.**
- 9) Goals are regularly reviewed and delineated at the building level. The building team shall decide on two or three goals initially, if necessary and forward them to the district committee by April 1st of each year. Once established, means and standards by which all parties shall evaluate improvement in student performance must be determined for each goal.**
- 10) Each building team shall determine a process for its own accountability to ensure that its goals are being met or, if not met, what further steps will be taken.**
- 11) In order to resolve disputes, the following plan was implemented:**
 - a) A consultant was brought in to assist the building team in reaching consensus. A consultant will be utilized again should the need arise.**
 - b) If a dispute remains unresolved, it will be reviewed by the district team.**
- 12) As mandated by the State and Federal requirements for the involvement of parents in planning and decision making, all existing advisory committees such as Chapter I, Committee on Special Education, etc., will be maintained.**

The Board of Education, at its October 18, 1993, meeting adopted the plan for participation by administrators, parents, and teachers in shared decision making and school-based planning.

APPENDIX A

SHARED DECISION MAKING

Issues Which May Be Addressed by Building Level Committees

1. **Strengthening public information program about what is happening at the school**
2. **Examining ways community and business organizations can help schools**
3. **Discussing instructional strategies to attain districtwide performance outcome goals**
4. **Using technology and other supplemental materials**
5. **Discussing grade level articulation**
6. **Combining or integrating subject areas**
7. **Examining the length of instructional periods and scheduling**
8. **Improving student attendance and decreasing tardiness**
9. **Reviewing co-curricular and extracurricular activities and sports programs**
10. **Examining drug and alcohol abuse prevention programs**
11. **Examining staff development programs**
12. **Examining use of community resources**
13. **Reviewing end-of-day dismissal procedures**
14. **Assessing internal building communications plan**
15. **Finding ways to improve communication between teachers and parents**
16. **Recommending pilot programs**
17. **Evaluating ways to improve student self-esteem**

APPENDIX B

SHARED DECISION MAKING

Issues Which May Not Be Addressed by Building Level Committees

1. Establishment of proposed budget
2. Adoption of a contingency budget
3. Initiation of probationary appointments
4. Determination of tenure
5. Decision on whether to apply for EIT funds
6. Waiver of no-strike provision of Taylor Law
7. Quality and character of retirement benefits under retirement system
8. Access of school board or its members to personnel files
9. Resubmission of proposition following voter rejection
10. Power to levy taxes
11. Establishment of academic calendar
12. Determination of class sizes
13. Discussions of individual students or teachers
14. Discipline of employees
15. Evaluation of employees
16. Issue of employee salary and fringe benefit
17. Working conditions of employees
18. Qualifications for employment
19. Maintenance of teaching and non-teaching positions
20. Matters in conflict with statute and regulation
21. Overall educational policies and mission of Board of Education

Issues Which May Not Be Addressed by Building Level Committees
(continued)

- 22. Determination of maximum teaching load**
- 23. Placement of students in specific grades, including advancement and/or retention**
- 24. Assignment of academic credit or grades**
- 25. Establishment of school attendance zones**
- 26. Closing of school buildings**
- 27. Decisions on what instructional programs will be offered**
- 28. Determination of district discipline code for student behavior**
- 29. Items subject to collective bargaining**
- 30. Any items relating to Board of Education policy, Education Law, and Commissioner's Regulations**
- 31. Matters which may have the effect of amending, modifying, adding to, or deleting from a district-wide instructional practice/instructional policy must be brought through appropriate committees, i.e., curriculum councils, assistant superintendents, etc.**

APPENDIX C

CONTRACTUAL ITEMS RE SHARED DECISION MAKING

Any negotiated items must be incorporated into the plan required under the shared decision making regulation.

In reviewing our contracts, these items include:

- 1. Selection of instructional materials (library books, periodicals, textbooks, supplementary textbooks, films, filmstrips, and recordings)**
- 2. Involvement in curriculum development and in planning for curriculum implementation**
- 3. Involvement in facilities development and the use of building space**
- 4. Consultation on the school calendar and its preparation**