

NORTH HAMPTON SCHOOL CONSTITUTION

Adopted by the staff, August 24, 2001
Amended by the staff, August 27, 2002
Amended by the staff October 10, 2003
Amended by the staff September 2, 2004
Amended by the staff August 27, 2007

PREAMBLE

The vision of North Hampton School is to be a community of learners that respects the individual interests, abilities and learning styles of its members. The curriculum ensures the continual development of every aspect of the child. Learners are challenged to explore, question, problem solve and apply knowledge to life situations. Technology, as well as all other available resources, is utilized to connect with the local and global community. The school, as the center of the community, provides learning opportunities for all residents. The interaction between children and adults creates respect for each other and a shared responsibility for continued learning. Decisions are grounded in our guiding beliefs and are made using a democratic process as our framework. Everyone has an opportunity to be involved in the decision making process. Once a decision is made the implementation is fully supported.

PURPOSE

- * To be a democratic institution with open communication among members of the school community.
- * To focus democratic decision making on student learning.
- * To determine whether the decisions and actions are actually improving student learning.
- * To provide opportunities for members of the school community to make responsible group and individual decisions.

PRINCIPLES OF SHARED GOVERNANCE

1. Any individual of the school community has the opportunity to be involved in the decision making process about school wide instructional improvements.
2. Any individual of the school community who does not desire to be involved in the decision making process about school wide instructional improvements is not obligated to do so.
3. Once a decision is made about school wide instructional improvements, all staff must implement the decision.

COUNCIL

PURPOSE

The Council is a representative body that will collect and evaluate evidence and establish priorities for school-wide improvement; implement school improvement plan; initiate and/or approve task forces; and consider recommendations. Decisions will be based upon the following criteria:

- * greatest need
- * greatest instructional impact on a school-wide basis
- * within the control and sphere of responsibility of the school

MEMBERSHIP

Council Membership

Representatives from the following groups will make up the 22 members of the Council:

- 1 K
- 1 1
- 1 2
- 1 3
- 1 4
- 1 5
- 1 6
- 1 7
- 1 8
- 1 UA
- 1 Tech
- 1 Staff - Cafeteria Personnel, Maintenance Staff and Office Staff
- 1 PAL Representative
- 3 Parent / Community Representatives
- 4 Administrators
- 1 School Board Representative **** Non-voting
- 1 SAU Representative ***** Non-voting

*Membership will be decided by each represented group in any manner the group chooses.

*Representatives from Teachers, Instructional Support Personnel and Staff will each serve a two year term with the exception of the first year.

*The following representatives will serve an initial one year term: 1, 3, 5, 7, UA and Staff.

*Representatives of grades Pre-K / K, 2, 4, 6, 8 , Instructional Support, School Wide Educational Position and Parent/Community member will serve for two years.

*Each representative will be entitled to appoint an alternate who will attend and vote in the absence of the representative.

*A vacancy on the Council for an unexpired term will be filled by selection from the representative group. Any member who is reassigned to a different position during their term must give up their Council seat and another representative will be chosen.

Procedures- Meetings will be open to the public.

*Establish talk teams.

- *Elicit input, disseminate information, and promote involvement of the staff they represent.
 - *Make decisions on action plans presented by task force groups.
 - *Council will review, ask for clarification, and discuss proposals.
 - *A quorum of 14 members must be present in order to hold a vote.
 - *The ultimate goal is to have unanimous agreement.
 - *The hope is that those who are opposed would share a rationale and suggestions for revisions.
 - *If unanimity cannot be reached then consensus (80%) will suffice.
 - *Communicate Council decisions in a timely manner at staff meetings and in writing.
 - *Concerns submitted to the Council that are not within the parameters of shared governance or school-wide issues will be referred to the appropriate group or individual.
- *Depending on the issue, the Council may make a recommendation to the staff for a decision.
- *If a Council member receives pertinent information that will affect a decision that has already been made, then this information will be shared with the Council. At that time, the chairperson can call for reconsideration and a new vote.

JOB DESCRIPTIONS

1. Chairperson*

- a. organizes agendas for regularly scheduled Council meetings and posts agenda in public places 48 hours prior to the meeting
- b. schedules all meetings in consultation with the Council
- c. conducts Council meetings by:
 - 1. opening and stating the objective(s) of meeting
 - 2. manages the flow of the meeting agenda
 - 3. outlining procedures for reaching decisions
 - 4. facilitating communication among Council members
 - 5. summarizing decisions reached by committee
 - 6. soliciting tentative agenda items for next meeting
 - 7. adjourning the meeting.
- d. votes to break a tie when a non-voting member.

*** The Council Chairperson shall serve yearly terms for as long as the council permits by vote. The chairperson may be from the council membership or the staff at large. When the chairperson is from the staff at large they shall be a non-voting member (except in the case of a tie vote) to maintain the balance of representation.**

2. Chairperson Elect

- a. assumes duties of Chairperson in Chairperson's absence
- b. assists Chairperson in planning and conducting Council meetings

3. Recorder

- a. records minutes, including the names of those in attendance. Minutes will be distributed to each member for feedback and revision before publication. Minutes be kept on file at the NHS Office.
- b. records pertinent data such as committee assignments, schedules of next meetings, etc.
- c. maintains or arranges maintenance of file containing all Council Meetings

TASK FORCES

PURPOSE

A task force may be organized to study a school-wide issue and to make recommendations to the Council.

MEMBERSHIP

Staff members may form a task force related to any issue of school-wide improvement.

PROCEDURES

1. The organization of task forces will be approved and coordinated by the Council.
2. Task forces will submit a written Action Plan Form (Part A).
3. Task forces will seek input from all constituent groups.
4. All meetings will be open to the public. Notes of each meeting will be taken, including the names of those in attendance. Minutes will be sent to each member for feedback and revision before publication.
5. Task force recommendations (Part B) will then be discussed with and approved by the Council before implementation. Any recommendation requiring School Board approval will be presented to the School Board in writing at a regular monthly meeting.
6. At any point in the process, a task force may reconsider/revise its recommendations.

TALK TEAMS

PURPOSE

Small Talk groups will meet to disseminate information, and study concerns/ ideas for school-wide improvements. The overarching focus of discussion will be how to improve student learning.

MEMBERSHIP

These groups may be formed in two ways:

1. Council initiated groups for task force feedback/discussion/issues. Groups will be randomly divided consisting of a cross section of personnel from the school.
2. Initiated by one or more of the membership to discuss school issues/topics. Council needs to be made aware of topic and meeting dates so that all interested may attend. Participation in these groups would be voluntary. Contact person, meeting minutes and list of those in attendance must be made available to all.

PROCEDURES

Council initiated talk groups will be led by a Council member (s). Discussions from all talk groups will be taken back to the Council for dissemination to all staff. Minutes forms will be utilized and turned in within one week of the meeting.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Standing committees will deal with ongoing concerns such as Safety, Maintenance, Sunshine, Technology, PAL, Student Government, Culture Club, North Hampton/ UNH Partnership and Scheduling.

MEETING SCHEDULES

Council will meet at least once a month and more often if necessary. For the purpose of decision making, 14 members will be considered a quorum.

*Talk groups will meet as necessary.

*Task forces will meet for the first time as scheduled by the Chairperson Elect of the Council. After the initial meeting, they will determine their own schedule of meetings, based on convenient times for members and the number of meetings deemed necessary to accomplish the group's specific task.

*Standing committees will determine their own schedule for meetings, normally at least once a quarter. All meetings are open to all members of the school community.

*Whole staff meetings will be scheduled on an "as needed basis".

AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

Amendments to this constitution will be submitted to the Council in writing. A Task Force will be formed to research, write and publish the amendment. Amendments to the constitution must be passed by an 80% majority at the Council level, and then 80% majority of those present at a designated staff meeting.

DECISION MAKING CONTINUUM

SAU	ADMINISTRATION w/ recommendations / input	STAFF by consensus	COUNCIL
Personnel evaluation	Budget	Ratify and amend Constitution	Implementation of Assessment
Professional Development Master Plan	Emergency situations and procedrures	Adoption of philosophies, beliefs	Implementation of Curriculum
Transportation	Hiring	Adoption of annual School Improvement Plan	Implementation of Instruction
	Lunch Program		
	Pesonneel		
	Transportation		

ACTION PLAN FORM

Part A - (For approval by the Council)

1. What is the purpose of your task force?
2. What is the long term plan of your task force?
3. How is your plan going to impact students?
4. How is your plan going to impact staff?
5. How are you going to collect data and input from students, staff, parents ...?
6. What do you envision as the calendar for your work?

ACTION PLAN FORM

Part B - (Once the task force is approved by the Council)

1. What are the goals for student learning?
2. List task force members.
3. Describe implementation plan with timeline (including presentations, training, research, data collection, plan evaluation ..)

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