Gulfview Heights Primary School
Decision Making Policy

Decision making at Gulfview Heights Primary School is the process by which an individual or group choose the best course of action in response to a new idea, challenge or concern.

Decision making is underpinned by our school values of Collaboration, Respect, Empathy and Integrity.

Decision making processes may vary depending upon the issue, context and level of decision making required ie levels of decisions:
- Level 1 – a decision made by an individual person without any consultation.
- Level 2 – a decision made by a small group of people after consultation with others.
- Level 3 – whole staff and/or Governing Council decisions.

All decision making processes carry an element of responsibility and accountability once decisions have been made or agreed upon.

Principles of Effective Decision Making.
1. The Principal is ultimately responsible to the Chief Executive for all decisions made within a school. The Principal is expected to report to the Director and Assistant Director of the Northern Adelaide Region, and as such is directly accountable to DECS and the School Community.
2. Decision making occurs at various levels within a school setting.
3. All decisions must comply with DECS legislative requirements, guidelines and policies.
4. Decisions are best made within an agreed realistic timeline.
5. Any change must serve to enhance the Health, Safety and Wellbeing of all, maintain a duty of care to students and improve learning opportunities for all students.
6. Effective decision making where appropriate (Level 2&3 decision making processes) should involve consultation, participation and collaboration with relevant stakeholders and the wider school community. All level 1 decisiona are made in line with individual roles & responsibilities (as defined by relevant Job & Person specifications).
7. The school has structures and policies which guide input into effective decision making processes eg Learning and Priority Teams, SRC, PAC, Working Parties, OHS&W, Governing Council Sub Committees, Leadership/Administration. Each of these groups fulfil a specific role and function. These forums provide opportunities for all community members to be involved where possible, subcommittee meetings comprising of staff and parent representatives will be scheduled after school hours or at any agreed time to majority of members. Teaching staff will not be released during lesson time, however meetings may be scheduled during a staff members NIT to support their attendance.
8. Team meetings, staff meetings, bulletins, daybook are all means of communication whereby information can be shared in an open and transparent manner. Minutes are expected to be kept for each meeting and it is the responsibility of all staff (including part timers) to access these on a regular basis.
9. Gulfview Heights Primary School is working under a model of Local Management and has a clear framework for Governance and making decisions at a Governing Council level. Generally, all decisions pertaining to the broader future direction and improvement of the school (ie. site aims/objectives, principles and targets of school and relevant policies, site learning plan, annual budget, pupil free days, annual report) must be approved and endorsed by Governing Council.
10. The school community (staff, parents, students) direct involvement in decision making is through the auspices of elected staff and/or community members through the various committees.

Decision Making Rules
The executive decision making individuals and groups are the Principal, Leadership and Administration teams, Governing Council, Finance and Staff Meeting. There are a number of consultation groups which advise the above in the process of making a decision eg. PAC advise the Principal on staffing matters, Fundraising advise the Governing Council on fundraising matters.

The following consultative groups/teams/committees are appropriate forums for items to be tabled/discussed before presenting to any of the above executive decision making groups.
1. Staff meeting- all teaching staff are expected to attend weekly on Tuesdays from 3.30 to 5.00pm. This time comprises 1 hour professional learning and 30 minutes administration time. All SSO staff are invited to attend. Attendance is compulsory for all teaching staff and apologies need to be made direct to your line manager or the principal.
2. Leadership meets at least 3 times per term. All teaching staff with leadership responsibilities are required to attend. Responsible for leading and coordinating the implementation of Site Learning Plan and whole school professional learning programs.
3. Administration meets weekly for 1 hour. Front office staff, Assistant Principal and Finance Officer are required to attend. Responsible for managing finances and administration of school.

4. Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) meets as required. Comprises of SSO rep, staff rep, AEU rep (elected annually at the end of term 1) and the Principal. Provides advice to the Principal on staffing related matters (see PAC guidelines).
5. Finance meets 1 week prior to upcoming Governing Council meeting. Comprises of Governing Council Treasurer, Finance Officer, Principal, Staff rep. Responsible for development of school budget annually and monitoring spending against the budget.
6. Learning Teams meet as required. Both Early and Primary Years teams are representative of respective year level teachers and SSO staff. Responsible for collaborating planning and implementing teaching programs relevant to their year levels. Where possible staff meeting time is allocated to support team meetings.
7. Site Priority Teams meet twice termly. Representative of R-7 teaching staff, SSO Staff and a member of Leadership team. Responsible for implementing initiatives/strategies identified within each priority plan.
8. OHS&W meets once per term or as required. Comprises Principal, SSO staff rep, OHS&W staff rep elected annually. Responsible for implementing DECS OHS&W requirements within GHPS.
9. SSO Meeting – meet once per term or as required to discuss any work related issues, professional development needs.

The process for decision making is:
1. An item is tabled for discussion within the appropriate forum.
2. All involved participants are given a negotiated time for discussion prior to any decision being made.
3. The group aims to make a decision achieved by consensus.
4. An appropriate review date is determined at the time a consensus decision is reached, if necessary.
5. All policy decisions must be endorsed by Principal, Governing Council and District Director where necessary.

Principle of Consensus
Consensus means that a decision adopted by the school community is accepted and implemented by all. A consensus recognises that individuals within the school community may need to 'adjust' their personal philosophical view points in order to achieve a satisfactory outcome. Individuals who are unable to accept or 'live with' a decision that is acceptable to the majority will need to propose an alternative through the appropriate forums and have it accepted by a majority.

Quorum
50% + 1 of participants represents a quorum for each meeting forum, enabling a motion to be considered and a decision to be reached by consensus. Consensus by majority requires more than 50% of participants to accept or 'live with' a decision.

It is the chairperson's responsibility to ensure quorum is reached prior to any decision being made. Before a decision is reached on any motion the proposer clarifies the motion.

Participants declare their position (ie whether they accept and can 'live with' a decision by a show of hands, unless requested otherwise eg. secret ballot if requested by any participant).

Individuals who may be absent from a meeting can declare their position by proxy. It is the absent individual's responsibility to inform either the Chairperson or Principal of their position.

All teaching, learning and curriculum related issues will be considered by teaching staff on a level 3 basis. Some decisions may include a trial period at the end of which they may be reviewed and modified accordingly.

All decisions are recorded in minutes which are accessible by all stakeholders, and when necessary policies updated to reflect new practices.