

District School Improvement Team Plan

Smithtown Central School District
Smithtown, New York

Revised March 2006

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ABAA

SHARED DECISION MAKING

In compliance with the Commissioner's regulation for implementation of the New Compact for Learning, the Board of Education establishes the following as the membership of the District-wide Committee:

Superintendent
Smithtown Teachers Association
Smithtown Schools Administrators Association
Smithtown Parent/Teachers Association

Each group will have two representatives, however, only one representative from each group shall be allowed to vote at a meeting. If only one representative is present, that person shall have voting rights. Therefore, there will be four possible votes. It is determined that a quorum of three (3) voting representatives will be necessary for voting to occur. In the spirit of regulation, consensus shall be the primary goal in arriving at recommendations or resolutions submitted to the Board, voting by simple majority shall be the least desirable but final method of determining action.

The meetings are to be conducted in compliance with Roberts Rules. All meetings are open for observation to the public. Notification of the meetings will be through postings, similar to the Board committee meetings. Minutes will be kept to summarize the actions of the committee and kept on file with the Clerk of the Board.

The members of the Board of Education may attend any and all meetings.

Commissioners' Regulation 100.11

Adopted by the Board of Education -

2006

Smithtown Central School District
Smithtown, New York 11787

School Improvement Plan

I. The plan shall identify the educational issues subject to cooperative planning and shared decision making by school-based management teams, hereinafter referred to as the School Improvement Team.

The identified educational issues subject to cooperative planning and shared decision making by the School Improvement Team include budgetary expenditures as they relate to approved building allotments, curriculum materials used to teach a given curriculum, building personnel recommendations and other building specific issues, including improved student outcomes. Building specific issues include, but are not necessarily limited to discipline, maintenance, safety, security, routines and procedures. Total budget allotments remain a Board of Education responsibility. In all decisions, the Committee will be bound by the Board of Education Policies and the District Standard Uniform Practices.

Regarding the issue of curriculum, curriculum is defined as a concept that has several dimensions.

Written curriculum is a document which contains the educational goals and objectives or desired student outcomes of a particular course of study or instructional program. Written curriculum will continue to be a district responsibility.

Material curriculum, taught curriculum, learned curriculum and evaluated curriculum will be under the domain of the site-based committees. The committees will gather data which indicates a discrepancy between the current state and the desired outcomes, develop a plan to reduce the discrepancy, and periodically evaluate the success of the plan. The results of the evaluation will determine what further action will be addressed.

With respect to personnel, the School Improvement Team will articulate a process which describes genuine participation by School Improvement Team members and/or others in the interview process. The building and district administration will make the final personnel recommendations, based on candidates forwarded by the School Improvement Team, district policy, and legal hiring practices.

II. The plan shall describe the manner and extent of expected involvement of all parties.

Each school building will have a School Improvement Team. Membership on each School Improvement Team will consist of one representative from each of the following groups: principal, teacher, support staff representative and parent from the school attendance area. This core committee can be expanded to twelve (12) members, as

determined by themselves. In addition, as needs arise, subject specific teachers and/or students may be invited to participate.

It is agreed that the constituents of the parent, teacher, and support groups will select their representative for the core building School Improvement Teams. Volunteers from each constituent group will be encouraged. For the administrative group, the representative will be the principal. Wherever possible, the members of the School Improvement Team will be associated with the specific school. Moreover, it is generally desirable, but not required, that each member be associated with only one group. Should a replacement be necessary, the group affected will provide a new representative. If the core Team decides to expand its number, they will determine that number, but the respective groups will determine which people will be selected to fill the positions.

The chairperson of the Team will be selected by the group. Membership on the Teams will be for two years except for the beginning where half of the Team will serve for three years to ensure continuity and training. The School Improvement Teams will meet regularly and no less than six times a year. The option to meet more frequently will lie with each individual Team.

The School Improvement Teams will establish the time of the meeting schedule. Before and after school, evenings, and Saturday meetings should be considered to enable all members to attend. Meetings can occur during the summer. It will be the responsibility of the chairperson to notify all team members of the meetings. No business will be conducted without a quorum. A quorum is defined as at least three (3) of the representative groups present and one of these is the principal.

One representative from each School Improvement Team will serve as a member of the District Shared Decision Making Committee. The duties associated with this committee are described in Part IV of this plan.

The chairperson of each School Improvement Team will develop the agenda in cooperation with the Team members. Members of each group should make suggestions for the agenda to their representative. The agenda will be distributed to the School Improvement Team one week prior to the meeting.

Copies of each Team's agenda and minutes of the meetings will be sent to the Board Clerk for distribution to the Board and members of the District Shared Decision Making Committee. A complete set of agendas and minutes will be on file at all buildings.

III. The plan shall describe the means and standards to evaluate school improvement.

The School Improvement Team is responsible for developing an assessment plan which is related to the desired outcomes that are the focus of the team's activities. The assessment plan must address the following points:

- The plan must include a description of the current status. For example, if the School Improvement Team has decided to focus on improving student discipline, there must be some description of the current state of affairs.
- In this example, an analysis of disciplinary referrals, the results of surveys administered to students, teachers, parents, and administrators, and anecdotal records are all legitimate sources of data from which to generate such a description. If the focus of school improvement is in an instructional area, data from standardized tests, student writing, and/or systematic analysis of student portfolios are likely sources of data for such a description.
- Whatever sources are used, it is important that the resulting description, sometimes known as base line data, is thorough and comprehensive. In most cases, it will not be acceptable for base line data to be solely comprised of anecdotal data. It is expected that the School Improvement Teams collect base line data from multiple sources.
- The plan should identify the desired outcomes and what measures will be used to identify changes in the base line data. In most cases, if not all, the evaluative tools used to generate the base line data will be used at some later time to generate evaluative data.
- The plan should identify when the evaluation activities will commence. It is expected that evaluation will be both formative (conducted during the course of an activity so that adjustments can be made before the end of a particular effort) as well as summative.
- Each School Improvement Team shall report to the District Committee on Shared Decision Making, as outlined in Part IV.

IV. The plan shall describe the means by which all parties will be held accountable for decisions in which they share.

A District Committee on Shared Decision Making shall be formed, and be comprised of one representative from each building's School Improvement Team. Representatives are to serve two years on the District Committee. Within each team, the representatives will be selected according to the following rotation: Parent, Teacher, Administrator, Support Staff, and Team Choice. The original rotation is as follows:

Accompsett	Parent
Branch Brook	Teacher
Dogwood	Administrator
Mills Pond	Support Staff
Mount Pleasant	Team Choice
Nesconset	Parent
Saint James	Teacher

Smithtown	Administrator
Tackan	Support Staff
Accompsett M.S.	Team Choice
Great Hollow M.S.	Parent
Nesaquake M.S.	Teacher
High School East Campus	Administrator
High School West Campus	Support Staff
Central Office	Superintendent/Asst. Superintendent

The District Committee is charged with completing two tasks:

- A. Provision of a forum for information dissemination. The Committee shall provide an opportunity for each School Improvement Team to share information about its progress. The sharing may address the following:

What:	What are the outcomes the committee has focused on?
Why:	The rationale for selecting the outcomes.
Obstacles:	What difficulties have been encountered?
Resources:	What resources have been expended?
How:	What activities have been implemented?
Who:	Who was responsible for the activities?
When:	When were the activities completed?
Summary:	What is the evaluation relative to the outcomes? What is the recommended next course of action?

- B. Providing assistance. The District Committee may, as a result of its review of reports and discussion with specific School Improvement Teams, generate recommendations to the Superintendent for the provision of resources and/or assistance to Teams. In these cases, the District Committee may also request more frequent reporting of results.

V. The plan shall describe methods for resolving disputes.

The School Improvement Teams will use the consensus method for making key decisions and arriving at recommended action plans. A consensus is reached when:

- A. All team members can acknowledge they have had an opportunity to voice their opinions on an issue.
- B. All members agree to support the decision reached even though it may not be 100% of their thinking.
- C. A decision has the agreement of the entire committee, not just those who strongly support it.
- D. Consensus does not require unanimity since members may still disagree with the final decision but can accept it and are willing to work toward its success.

Team consensus techniques will prove effective when:

- A. There is no clear answer.
- B. There is no single expert in the group.
- C. Commitment to the decision is essential.
- D. Sufficient time is available.

Consensus decisions can be facilitated by team members who:

- A. Press for reasons and data to support decisions.
- B. Discourage the use of other decision making tactics, i.e. voting and one-person rule.
- C. Are willing to go along with the team's consensus even though they may disagree with it.

Whenever an issue cannot be reached by consensus, the issue should be tabled by a member of the team. Such unresolved issues may be reintroduced by any team member in the future whenever new or additional information/data may bring the issue to consensus.

VI. The plan, when appropriate, can describe methods for complying with relevant Federal and State requirements for cooperative planning and shared decision making.

There are several grant and entitlement programs in the Smithtown Central District Schools. Since these programs are implemented on a district-wide basis, when and where appropriate, the particular administrator responsible for each program should meet at a mutually convenient time for articulation and explanation. It is suggested that these meetings be attended by a representative(s) from each School Improvement Team.

Examples of such programs include Title I, Title II, Pupils with Special Education Needs (PSEN), Committee on Special Education (CSE), and Drug Free School and Communities Act (DFSCA).

Discussion must remain within the limits allowable by law. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times, and at no time should a student's or parent's right to confidentiality be compromised.

Glossary

Written Curriculum - A document which contains the educational goals and objectives, or desired student outcomes, of a particular course of study or instructional program. In addition to goals, it usually contains an outline of the course content, an organization of that content into units of instruction, a suggested timeline for instruction, and some specification of instructional materials. It may contain suggested instructional activities and evaluation procedures. The written curriculum expresses a district's intent with respect to student outcomes; that is, it states what is expected of all students upon completion of the course or instructional program.

Material Curriculum – This comprises the actual texts, materials, media, equipment, and supplies used in the classroom in connection with a course or program.

Taught Curriculum – This involves what is actually taught. In general, there is always some discrepancy between the written curriculum and the taught curriculum. This is because the teacher must adjust to student responses, and because the teacher may have particular strengths in some areas. A good rule of thumb is that the written curriculum should comprise 75% of the taught curriculum.

Learned Curriculum – This comprises the skills, knowledge, and attitudes actually acquired by students as a result of instruction.

Evaluated Curriculum – This comprises the skills, knowledge, and attitudes of students which are actually tested or in some way evaluated by the teacher or the district. Evaluation can focus on individual students and/or the course itself.

Personnel Section

Recruiting/Hiring Procedures

Following are the procedures to be used by the Smithtown Central School District when recruiting, interviewing and hiring candidates. These procedures shall be revised, as needed, during the biennial SIT review process, approved by the signatories of the SSAA, STA, and PTA Council, and adopted by the Board of Education. Any of the signatories to this agreement may seek an earlier than scheduled revision by obtaining consensus from the other signatories and the Board of Education. None of these procedures shall diminish the authority of the Board of Education as established by New York Education Law and the applicable regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Members of the interview committee should be reminded of the importance of their ability to be objective. Anyone who has personal knowledge of a candidate and feels they can not be objective about hiring the individual, should remove themselves from the interview committee.

The interview committee must keep their deliberations absolutely confidential. They should also address the question of how to handle inquiries from candidates relative to their status after the interview. The administrator in charge at each level of the committee should keep written notes about each candidate and serve as the spokesperson for the decisions of the committee. Unsuccessful candidates will be informed in writing upon the completion of the interview process.

Members of the interview committee must also understand that certain types of questions are not permitted. Interviewers cannot inquire into matters such as the applicant's age, marital status, religion, and ethnicity. They cannot make indirect inquiries about these matters. For example, asking the year of college graduation is not permissible, because that could be construed as an attempt to ascertain the applicant's age. The general rule is that the interview questions should be directly connected to the position for which the candidate is interviewing. Refer to Addendum II and III for detailed guidance in this area.

All participants in this process should understand that if a candidate is forwarded to the next level, then the participants can accept the fact that the candidate may be named to the position. If not one of the candidates is acceptable to the committee at Level 2, then it is back to Level 1 to begin the process again. If the finalist is rejected at Level 3, then the committee at Level 2 must deliberate and decide if they wish to advance one of the other candidates. If not, then the process will begin again at Level 1. The basic operating principle is as follows: no candidate will be recommended for a position unless he or she has successfully completed all four steps, i.e. screening, first, second, and third level interviews.

Teachers

Transfers

Transfers are a contractual and administrative procedure and are not a part of the SIT based hiring procedures. Transfer requests will be made prior to the start of the hiring process. An employee who wishes to be considered for a transfer should submit their request as soon as possible. Employees who are denied transfers will be notified by the Personnel Department.

Change of Tenure Area

Teachers requesting a position in a new tenure area will do so in writing and be advised of their rights concerning the tenure laws by the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services. Once advised, the candidate will follow the same procedure as for a transfer.

Selection of New Teachers

The process for selecting new teachers should include four steps:

- **Initial Screening** – This is a paper screening and involves an administrative review of the applications of candidates for the position. The Principal, subject area Director/Chairperson, Coordinator of Technology, Director of Physical Education, Athletics, and Health, Director of Guidance, or the Administrator of Special Education will complete this screening. Personnel will provide technical assistance as needed and, when appropriate, forward candidates for review. Following the paper screening at the secondary level, if deemed necessary by the Director of the appropriate tenure area, an additional screening protocol to further discern the content and proficiency of the candidate can be conducted. The appropriate Site Based Team(s) will be informed of this additional screening protocol. Based on the screening, a number of candidates may be forwarded to the interview process. The number will vary according to the strength of the candidate field and the number of openings to be filled.
- **First Level Interviews** – At the elementary level, the School Improvement Teams should develop the structure for these interviews. Included in the structure is the composition of the interview committee, the development of selection criteria, interview questions, and rating procedures, and the charge to the committee. The School Improvement Team is advised to consult with the appropriate department for assistance in assembling the interview committee and developing its structure. The interview committee will forward a number of candidates to the second level interview; the specific number is determined by the charge to that committee.

At the secondary level, appropriate tenure area committees will be established by the secondary SITs. These committees will be comprised of representatives from all the secondary buildings and will provide greater efficiency in the hiring process. The coordination of the interviewing process will be the responsibility of the Director.

When interviewing for positions that are split between elementary buildings, the building with the greater portion of the assignment should determine the interview committee. They are advised, however, that it makes sense to involve members from the other building in the first level interview. If the position is split 50/50, then the two principals will meet and develop a proposal as to how the interview committee will be comprised, which will then be presented to the respective School Improvement Teams.

Candidates should be asked to arrive early the day of the Level 1 interview to fill out an application form and complete a writing sample. Copies should be made for the committee's use during and after the interview. The originals should be sent to Personnel for all candidates being forwarded to Level 2.

- **Second Level Interviews** – The building principal and at least one other administrator will interview the candidates forwarded by the Level 1 committee. At the secondary level, the other administrator will be the subject area administrator, who is usually the Director/Chairperson. For district-wide programs, the program administrator should be on the second level interview committee. One or more candidates should be forwarded to Level 3. A completed record is required for the Level 3 interview, including the interview form (the blue sheet).
- **Third Level Interviews** – Central Office administrators, usually the Superintendent, the Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Administration, and the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel will conduct an interview of the candidate. If they approve, they will recommend to the Board of Education that the candidate be appointed to the position.

SSAA Administrators

Change of Tenure Area

Teachers or administrators currently working in the District and requesting a change in tenure area will be required to go through the same process as outside candidates, proceeding from Level 1 through Level 3 in the interview process, with one exception. If a consensus cannot be reached at Level 1, a pro/con rating sheet will be filled out and the candidate will be forwarded to Level 2.

Selection of New SSAA Administrators

Initial Screening – Applicants will be sent an application to be filled out prior to any other action being taken. At this time, other documentation will be requested as well, including transcripts and evidence of certification. The Assistant Superintendent for Personnel Services will then paper screen applicants for administrative positions, check their certification and good standing with the State Education Department. Candidates invited to a Level 1 interview shall be notified of the salary range for the position.

Qualified candidates will be sent to the appropriate interview teams who will conduct Level 1 interviews. Committee membership and organization of the committee will be dependent upon the position to be filled. For example, if the vacant position is for a building principal, the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel will contact the SSAA President and request a building principal to chair the first level committee. If, however, the vacant position is for an assistant principal or director/chairperson, the appropriate building administrators will complete this step. The Assistant Superintendent will work with the appropriate administrators to establish the timeline for the process. The dates for the first and second level interview committees will be established and a tentative appointment to be interviewed by the Superintendent of Schools will be scheduled. Whenever possible, it is the expectation that this process will be completed within 15 business days.

- **First Level Interviews** - The first level interview committee should be limited to members of the site-based SITs of the affected building(s). If the position being interviewed for is one that is responsible to several buildings (such as a director), and/or has K-12 responsibilities, the committee should include representatives from each school or level. The interview committee will forward a number of candidates to the Level 2 interview; the specific number will be determined by the charge to that committee.
- **Second Level Interviews** – A larger committee of administrators will conduct the second round interview. The composition of the committee will be dependent upon the position being interviewed for, but will include administrators from other buildings since the candidate will have to function as part of the larger, district administrative team. The interview committee will then forward a smaller number of candidates (1 or 2) to the Level 3 interview along with the district interview form (the blue sheet)
- **Third Level Interviews** – Central Office administrators, usually the Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Administration, and the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel will conduct an interview of the candidate(s), and the successful candidate will be recommended to the Board of Education for appointment to the position.

A record of the screening and interview process must be maintained. The district interview form (the blue form) will document the person(s) who completed the screening, those who participated in the interviews, and which candidates were interviewed. A completed record is required for the Level 3 interview.

Central Office Administrators

Change of Tenure Area

Teachers or administrators currently working in the district and requesting a change in tenure area will be required to go through the same process as outside candidates, proceeding from Level 1 through Level 3 in the interview process, with one exception. If a consensus cannot be reached at Level 1, a pro/con rating sheet will be filled out and the candidate will be forwarded to Level 2.

Selection of New Central Office Administrators

- **Initial Screening** – Applicants will be sent an application to be filled out prior to any other action being taken. At this time, other documentation will be requested as well, including transcripts and evidence of certification. The Superintendent of Schools will then paper screen applicants for administrative positions and invite several candidates in for a brief screening interview. Administrators who are in a direct line of authority over the position may be asked to attend these screening interviews. At this stage, the salary range will be discussed with the candidates and only individuals who are comfortable with the range will be forwarded to the next level.
- **First Level Interviews** – The Superintendent will send qualified candidates to a district interview team. Committee membership and organization of the committee will be dependent upon the position to be filled. Usually, unit presidents and/or their designees will be asked to participate on this committee. The interview committee will forward a number of candidates to the Level 2 interview. The specific number will be determined by the charge to that committee.
- **Second Level Interviews** – A committee of central administrators will conduct the second round of interviews. The interview committee will then forward a smaller number of candidates (1 or 2) to the Level 3 interview along with the district interview form (the blue sheet).
- **Third Level Interviews** – The Superintendent will conduct an interview of the candidate(s) and the successful candidate will be recommended to the Board of Education for appointment to the position.

A record of the screening and interview process must be maintained. The district interview form (the blue sheet) will document the person(s) who completed the screening, those who participated in the interviews, and which candidates were interviewed. A completed record is required for the Level 3 interview.

Note: Candidates should be advised that, if they have not already done so, they should submit the following information to the Personnel Office before they proceed to a Level 3 interview:

- Copy of New York State Certification or Certificate of Qualification or
- Letter from BOCES Certification Office, college, or university stating that the candidate has satisfactorily completed a state education approved program leading to certification, including all testing requirements, student teaching, Child Abuse Identification Workshop, and any necessary internship requirements. The letter must state that the application for certification has been forwarded to the State Education Department.
- Copies of unofficial transcripts
- Completed Smithtown Central School District application form
- Updated resume
- Fingerprinting Clearance (when appropriate)

Interview Questions

May I Ask This Question?

<u>Question:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. What is your date of birth?		X
2. Are you 18 years or older?	X	
3. Where were you born?		X
4. Are you a citizen of the U.S.?		X (Use #6 instead)
5. What is your citizenship?		X
6. Can you lawfully work in the U.S.?	X	
7. Where did you attend school?		X (Refer to resume)
8. Name/Location of school.	X	
9. Degree/Subject	X	
10. What year did you graduate?		X
11. Did you graduate?	X	
12. What years did you attend school?		X
13. What is your native language?		X
14. Do you speak any foreign languages?	X	
15. What languages do you speak?	X	
16. Have you ever had your employment terminated?	X	
17. Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed forces?	X	
18. Last year, how many days were you out?	X	

<u>Question:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
19. State the number of workers' compensation claims you have filed.		X
20. List any prescription medications you take.		X
21. Does any religious observance prevent you from working on particular days of the week?		X
22. The job requires you to lift 30 pounds occasionally. Can you perform this job function with or without a reasonable accommodation?	X	
23. Have you ever been treated for carpel tunnel syndrome or repetitive motion disorder?		X
24. Have you ever filed for personal bankruptcy?		X
25. Do you have a valid NYS Driver's license?	X	
26. Do you have any family obligations that would prevent you from traveling?	X	
27. What kind of accent is that?		X
28. Are you pregnant?		X
29. State your height and weight.		X
30. Please attach a photograph to your application.		X
31. Are you a heterosexual?		X
32. What was your maiden name?		X
33. How many children do you have?		X
34. Does your spouse work?		X
35. Were you ever married?		X
36. Do you plan on having a family?		X
37. Who can I contact in case of an emergency?		X

<u>Question:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
38. What kind of organizations do you belong to?		X
39. What religious holidays will you be celebrating?		X
40. Do you belong to any organizations which relate to your subject area?	X	
41. Do you smoke?		X
42. Are you related to anyone working in the District?		X
43. Are you dating anyone in the District?		X
44. Are you a Republican?		X
45. What experience do you have supervising employees?	X	
46. Were you ever active in union affairs?		X
47. Do you have any experience in collective bargaining?		X
48. Were you ever admitted to any facility for the treatment of depression?		X
49. What kind of physical problems or disabilities do you have?		X
50. Do you now have or have you ever been treated for drug or alcohol addiction?		X
51. Have you ever been convicted of a crime?	X	
52. Have you ever been arrested?		X
53. Do you have any pending arrests against you?	X	
54. Where was your last job?	X	
55. Why did you leave that position?	X	
56. How long did you work for your last job?	X	
57. When did you start?	X	

<u>Question:</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
58. When did you finish?	X	
59. May we contact them for a reference?	X	
60. Why do you feel you are right for this position?	X	
61. What is your educational philosophy?	X	
62. How did you find out about the job?	X	
63. Do you ski?		X
64. Are you a New York Islanders fan?		X
65. Are you a fan of the show "Desperate Housewives?"		X