

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 26, 2009

TO: Board of Trustees

FROM: E. Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT: Framework for Involvement in Site-Based Decision Making

ORIGINATOR: B. Tams, Assistant Superintendent

RESOURCE
STAFF: Donna Barrett, Jenise Bidulock, Julia Cerisano-Niven; David Fraser, Allan Jack, Patrick Johner, Catherine LeBlanc, Mark Liguori, Ellen Ogilvy, Mark Ramsankar

INFORMATION

This report is being presented to Board by the District and ATA Local 37 joint committee reviewing the current status and application of the Framework for Involvement in Site-Based Decision Making. The report will also be presented to the Edmonton Public Teachers' Council of School Representatives on May 27, 2009.

This committee was originally formed in 1998 to review teacher involvement in site-based decision making. The committee published the Framework for Involvement in Site-Based Decision Making in 2000. In 2007, a survey of all District staff was conducted to determine the level of awareness with respect to the document, as well as the current status of staff involvement in decision making. The results were presented to the Board February 26, 2008 and to the Council of School Representatives March 5, 2008. The 2007-2012 Teachers' Collective Agreement provided for a new standing committee charged with monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Framework for Involvement in Site-Based Decision Making. The committee was also to provide recommendations regarding future use of the Framework.

In 2008-09, the committee examined themes in the values and behaviours found in relevant District and ATA documents (e.g. the District Basic Beliefs, Commitments and Expectations, Roles and Responsibilities statements, EPSB policies, the profession's vision, the ATA definition of the Collegial Role, the ATA Long Range Policy, and Teachers' Rights and Responsibilities). Bearing in mind the priorities of the District and the Local and the recommendations of the previous committee, and considering the common values, the committee decided to broaden its focus. Initiatives were undertaken to explore how involvement and engagement might best be supported. The group's work led to a conclusion that positive, trusting relationships and strong communication are fundamental to fostering staff involvement. Throughout the year, the committee:

- supported and reflected on staff involvement in the context of District and Local initiatives including the New Teacher Induction program, the Aboriginal task force

- and the multicultural task force, the proposed employee engagement survey, and other initiatives that involve collaboration between the District and the Local;
- discussed how the building relationships component of the Principal Quality Practice Standard might fit with the committee's work;
 - participated in the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) training in November. The strategies involved in this training have direct application to teacher involvement, engagement and participation;
 - reviewed the revised Healthy Interactions program as a potential source of professional development for District staff in the area of relationship strengthening;
 - discussed initiating pilot book studies using *The Speed of Trust* by Stephen M. Covey in an elementary and a high school as a strategy for fostering engagement;
 - proposed an amendment to the Letter of Understanding to more closely reflect the direction that the committee had identified as important.

The committee believes that its work has positively influenced the relationships between the Local and the District, and suggests that a cultural shift is occurring in how the District and the Local collaborate. Examples of District-Local involvement include or have included joint committees or consultation involving:

- staff professional development
- development of AISI round four
- District Occupational Health and Safety
- sick leave
- delivery of service from ASEBP
- electronic surveillance
- review and revision of personnel policies
- development of the District Staff Code of Conduct
- Return to Work committee
- Medical Management committee
- regular consultation with the substitute teachers' committee
- inclusion of topics for discussion as part of Liaison Agenda

Future Directions

The committee will continue to seek out opportunities for the District and the Local to involve each other in matters of mutual interest. Specific goals include:

1. supporting participation in the District employee engagement survey and using the results to inform the committee's work;
2. examining the revised Healthy Interactions training program and the IAP2 program in more detail, as well as identifying other appropriate materials for possible use as tools in a pilot professional development program whose purpose would be to foster staff engagement;
3. encouraging the use of joint committees and collaborative processes in areas of mutual interest and importance, e.g. AISI, Professional Learning Communities.

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