



**MANNUM COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

*Believe to Achieve*



Government of South Australia  
Department for Education and  
Child Development

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# Decision Making Policy & Grievance Procedure



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### Rationale

- A clear decision making process is essential for the efficient and effective operation of Mannum Community College.
- All decision making must support the core business of Mannum Community College, namely quality teaching and learning.
- The decision making process must be explicit so that all members of the school community are aware of how decisions are made. In addition they must know how they can initiate, and how they can participate in school change.
- A sound decision making policy which reflects the school's vision and is the tool for making and evaluating decisions is essential for effective decision making.

### Principles

- All stakeholders within the school community, ie students, parents and staff, have the right and responsibility to participate in school decision making.
- Decisions will take into account the needs of students, staff and the community, both present and future, and the resources available to meet those needs.
- All school policies will be consistent with DECD policies and guidelines and the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector.
- Decision making processes will foster creative and positive thinking while allowing decisions to be made in a timely manner that contributes to positive morale.
- Information about particular policies or decisions will be available to all members of the school community and actively communicated to all relevant stakeholders.
- As policies are made, a plan and timeline for their implementation and review must be included.
- Policy implementation plans shall describe the roles, responsibilities and lines of communication between groups and individuals.
- All staff in the school community shall be committed to, and accountable for the implementation of policies and decisions.

### Types of Decisions

#### Strategic Decisions

These are decisions about the basic values and purposes of the school, the adoption of certain objectives for the school to pursue (goals), and setting guidelines which define how each objective is to be pursued to best reflect the agreed values and purposes of the school.

#### Operational Decisions

These are decisions about putting new strategies into action, maintaining the running of school programmes and day to day management issues.

#### Regulatory Decisions

These are decisions about legal requirements and meeting DECD regulations or guidelines.

These types of decisions can be made at any of the levels and by any of the modes described below.



### Levels of Decision Making:

#### Principal

The Principal is accountable to the Chief Executive, DECD, for all decision making at Mannum Community College.

There are three types of situations in which the Principal may act alone to make a decision. These are:

- Where the decision is a day to day operational decision forming part of the implementation of an existing school policy
- In an emergency situation
- In another situation where the principal believes he/she should act for the benefit of the school and later seek ratification of the decision.

In all cases the Principal will act with the vision and policy framework of Mannum Community College in mind.

Decision making by the Principal will be monitored and ratified, if necessary, by the Governing Council or the line manager.

#### Whole School

Decision making at this level concerns strategic decisions or issues that have implications for the whole school community. These decisions may be made in a variety of modes (see below for options).

#### Individuals

Decision making at this level concerns individuals making decisions as defined by their role and responsibilities, the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector or where it does not directly affect others.

### Modes of Decision Making

#### Individual (I decide)

A decision made by a single person without consultation but within a policy framework, e.g.

- Principal approves a staff member's leave with pay
- Teacher decides to change their lesson plan.

#### Consultation (We talk/I decide)

A decision is made by one person or a small group after consultation with others, e.g.

- A committee prepares a school policy
- Coordinator decides to purchase particular reference books.

#### Participate (We talk/We decide)

A decision is made by a group after discussion following an agreed process, e.g.

- Teacher and students agree on a set of classroom rules
- The school staff decide on the process to be used to implement a policy decision.

#### Delegation (You decide)

A decision which is given to an individual or a group by those who have the authority to make the decision, e.g.

- Deputy principal decides to suspend a student (delegated by Principal)
- Classroom teachers decide what happens in the classroom (delegated by the Principal).



### Decision Making Process

The decision making process is more than just the making of a choice. The process outlined below will occur whether a decision is made by one person or a small or larger group, ie whatever type, level or mode of decision is applicable.

1. Initiation
  - a problem, new issue or proposed initiative is identified
  - the situation is analysed and problem clearly identified
2. Information gathering
  - all relevant information is collected
  - possible alternatives are generated
  - all factors are considered
  - consequences are forecast
  - opinions and advice are sought from relevant groups
3. Making the decision
  - determine the appropriate individual or group to make the decision
  - state the objective
  - list possible strategies to reach objective
  - evaluate the alternatives and select the best course of action
4. Communication of the decision
  - to relevant audience
  - as soon as possible
  - in a way and language that is accessible to all groups
5. Taking the decision
  - plan how the decision will be implemented
  - outline expectations and timelines
  - put the plan into action
6. Monitoring
  - establish who has the responsibility for monitoring the decision
  - what will be done if the decision is not carried out?
7. Review
  - decide if the decision needs to be reviewed
  - then decide when, by whom, and by what manner

If the decision is about a policy the Leadership group must submit the draft policy to Governing Council, with an outline of the consultative processes undertaken in the development of that policy.



### Establishment of Committees

The establishment of a committee can be initiated by any member of the school community but must be formed within the framework of this policy.

New standing (permanent) committees must be approved by Governing Council before operation.

Standing committees may establish subcommittees as *ad hoc* committees (having a specific task to complete within a specific timeframe).

Within this policy, Governing Council is responsible for ensuring that the school community has been thoroughly consulted in all appropriate decisions. This will generally, but not always, mean that committees will include representation from the three groups within the school, ie students, staff and parents.

A decision to establish a committee must include a clear statement of:

- committee composition
- roles and responsibilities
- processes
- reporting responsibilities
- timeline

MCC Staff will be expected to self - nominate for membership of at least one MCC committee early in the school year. For several committees, such as the Personnel Advisory Committee, members may be elected by a majority of people entitled to vote.



### Meeting Procedure

A quorum for all committees shall be 50% of the membership plus 1.

It shall be the responsibility of the convenor, unless specifically stated otherwise, to gather items for and publish the agenda prior to the meeting.

Standard meeting procedure

- Apologies
- Confirmation of minutes
- Business arising from the minutes
- Correspondence
- Business arising from the correspondence
- Reports
- General Business:
  - Longstanding items
  - New Items
  - Decisions; in the form of a motion
  - Any other business
  - Next meeting date
  - Close meeting

It is the responsibility of the convenor to ensure that meeting procedure allows for free and open discussion and the generation of ideas. Decisions shall be taken by consensus and if this cannot be achieved shall be taken in the form of a formal motion which shall be passed by a simple majority.

### Roles of Specific Committee Members

#### Committee as a Whole

The committee shall:

- At its first meeting elect a convenor, either for the duration of the committee or for a specific period of time
- Establish a process to record the minutes of the meetings
- Clarify the role and responsibilities of the committee
- When formulating or reviewing a policy or making proposals to implement policy, consider the following:
  - Consult affected people and record the results of that consultation into the outcomes.
  - Specify and check the availability of the resources (time, personnel, money, hardware, facilities) necessary to implement the decisions.
  - Construct a time line for the necessary planning, implementation and evaluation of the decisions.
  - Put in place objective criteria for evaluation.
  - Consider the impact of the proposal on the general running of the school eg timetabling, facilities, faculties, workloads.
  - Check that the proposal is in line with the school's Statement of Purpose.

Failure to use this checklist will be considered adequate reason to implement the Grievance Procedure. Should personal representation to the relevant committee convenor fail to resolve the issue, a formal written representation should be made to the convenor of the Governing Council.



## **Convenor**

The convenor shall:

- Formulate and publish the agenda
- Ensure that the meeting processes allow for free discussion and the full participation of all members
- Ensure that decisions are made within the framework of this policy
- Ensure that minutes of meetings are taken
- Ensure that decisions that complete part or all of the work of a committee are reported to the Governing Council and when appropriate to staff.

## **Minutes Recorder**

The Minutes Recorder shall:

- Ensure that an accurate record of all decisions taken is made
- Be guided by the committee about the recording of general discussion and limit the dispersal of confidential information as necessary
- Ensure that the minutes are typed and distributed to each committee member, the Principal, the staff room and the Governing Council pigeon hole

## **Individual Committee Members**

Each member shall:

- Participate fully in the work of the committee
- Ensure that the group whom they represent receives a report of the work and decisions of the committee as soon as possible. If any objections are received to a decision they should be communicated as soon as possible to the convenor of the committee and considered at the next meeting. The convenor should judge whether the matter requires an extra meeting to be called at short notice.



## Components, Links and Review

### Components Of The Decision Making Process At Mannum Community College

Each of the components of the decision making process described here may be delegated authority, by the Governing Council, to manage particular lines within the school budget.

Committees are delegated the authority to spend funds within budget and in conformity with school plans and priorities.

An individual will be approved by Governing Council as the budget line manager via the recommendation of the Principal.

Initiatives which require funding outside the allocated budget must be submitted to the Finance Committee for decision and then to the Governing Council for ratification.

### Links Between The Component Parts Of The Decision Making Process

Issues should be raised in the appropriate committee or group. If an individual is unsure of the appropriate group in which to raise a matter it should be raised in the general forum most relevant to that person, ie. for students, the Student Representative Council, for staff the staff meeting and for parents the Governing Council. Those groups should then deal with the matter or direct it to the appropriate committee or group for resolution. In the spirit of this policy consultation should occur with each section of the school community affected by a decision.

### Review And Change Of The Decision Making Policy

Any individual or group within the school may seek support for a review of this, or any, policy at any time. The Governing Council will ensure that the policy and process of decision making in the school is reviewed biannually. This may be done in an informal or formal way at the discretion of the Council. The results of the Council's deliberations on this matter will be communicated to all elements of the decision making process.

## Decision Making Committees:

### Governing Council

The role of the Governing Council is established under the Education Act and includes:

- To ascertain the educational needs of the local community and the attitude of the local community to educational developments within the school and to advise the Principal on these matters.
- To advise the Chief Executive Officer (DECD) of any improvements that the council considers necessary to the accommodation, grounds and equipment of the school.
- Where the Minister has made a grant to the Council - to determine (with the agreement of the Principal of the school to which the grant relates) the application of the money granted.
- Subject to such directions as may be given by the Minister from time to time, to establish and conduct residential facilities for the accommodation of students.



## Student Representative Council

The role of the SRC includes:

- Consider matters relating to the welfare of students and to the governance of the school.

## Staff Group

The convenor of staff meetings is rotated through the teaching staff group. The convenor shall:

- Organise the agenda for meetings.
- Ensure that items raised are those which require the participation of staff and that items which are only information and do not require discussion are dealt with in writing.
- Allow free and fair discussion by all members who wish to speak and encourage processes which involve as many people as possible.
- Remain impartial.
- Ensure that the meeting is kept to the pre-determined time for the meeting.

The minutes shall be taken by staff members on a roster basis. Once written, the minutes are retained in the staff room for all staff to see.

All new policies and any alteration of current policies will be ratified at a general staff meeting. To assist the decision making process, items on the agenda should be listed as "for discussion" or "for decision". If an item is for decision a formal motion should be displayed on the agenda.

If at some time during a discussion a staff member wishes to formalise the feeling of the meeting, a motion may be moved and using formal procedures discussed and voted upon. Alternatively a procedural motion may be moved that the motion lie on the table, in which circumstances the motion will be put at the next general business staff meeting. If no formal motion is made and the Convenor believes consensus has been reached, he/she should formulate a statement of that consensus and seek an indication of agreement or dissent from the meeting for recording in the minutes. Any staff member may ask for a vote to be taken instead and should then move a formal motion.

## Canteen Committee

The Canteen Committee is a standing committee reporting to Governing Council, Staff Meeting and SRC.

## School Grounds Committee

The Facilities Committee is a standing committee reporting to Governing Council, staff meeting and the SRC.

The role of the Facilities Committee is established under the Education Act and includes:

- To investigate, review, discuss and formulate policies that affect the school grounds and facilities (Ovals, Tennis Courts, furniture, fittings, equipment-including technology such as computers, videos etc.)
- Monitor policy statements from DECD and WHS Act, which are applicable to the grounds and facilities.
- Review actual expenditure against budget, and report to the Governing Council and the Finance Committee as required.
- Prepare the Minor Works submission.
- Make recommendations to Governing Council, Staff, SRC, regarding Facilities projects for which funds could be raised or spent.
- Decide when appropriate to carry out specific projects with volunteers eg working bees.
- Prepare reports and recommendations for the Governing Council.



## Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is a standing sub-committee of the Governing Council and reports directly to the council, advising the Council in regard to that group's role to oversee the management of school finances.

The role of the Finance Committee is established under the Education Act and includes:

- Investigate, review and formulate school financial policy and practice to continually improve the school's financial management.
- Prepare the annual budget to be submitted to the governing council for approval before 1st November of each year.
- Publish notes and procedures to staff for annual budget preparation.
- Monitor procedures relating to financial management of the school (in particular requests for funding outside the normal budgeting process) and ensure they are in accordance with decd policies and audit procedures on financial management.
- Monitor actual expenditure against budget and report to financial managers and governing council regularly.
- Approve the annual financial statement before its presentation to the school's annual general meeting and submission for audit.

## Fundraising Committee

The role of the Fundraising Committee includes:

- To decide on fundraising activities for the school
- To organise the implementation and completion of fundraising activities
- To support school activities
- To decide on the allocation of funds raised by the committee

## Personnel Advisory Committee

The Personnel Advisory Committee is a key resource in personnel management in the school. In particular, the Committee will advise the Principal on:

- The number, nature, profile, tenure and special emphasis of leadership positions within the context of school planning
  - The final draft of all job and person specifications
  - Establishing a school policy in consultation with staff for filling all acting/limited tenure leadership vacancies
  - The selection process to be used in the selection of a person for a position, including emergency vacancies
- Strategies to manage class organisation, structure, specialist teaching loads, and allocation of classes
- Allocation of instruction time and other duties
  - The nature and extent of conversions of staffing classifications in line with any agreement between DECD and AEU
  - Implementation of the part-time policy, including deployment of all part-time staff, access to training and development and to promotion positions
  - Strategies to settle disputes related to the above

## Worker Health and Safety Committee

The role of the Worker Health and Safety (WHS) Committee is to be a permanent forum for communication between workers and management on health and safety issues.

## Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) Committee

The role of the ICT committee includes:

- Discuss and make recommendations regarding the organisation and maintenance of the ICT within the school.
- Plan for future MCC ICT initiatives and infrastructure.



### **Garden Committee**

The role of the Garden Committee includes:

- Plan and implement the direction of the garden.
- Coordinate the whole school approach to the garden facility.
- Encourage an integrated approach to learning using the relevant curricula.
- Encourage healthy eating, sustainability and aboriginal cultural perspectives.

### **Library Committee**

The role of the Library Committee includes:

- Discuss and make recommendations regarding the organisation and maintenance of the School Community Library.
- Plan for future School Community Library initiatives and infrastructure.

### **Pedal Prix Committee**

The role of the Pedal Prix Committee includes:

- Organising participating students to attend events
- Organise and facilitate fundraising initiatives for Pedal Prix
- Organise and maintain Pedal Prix equipment

### **Sports Committee**

The role of the Sports Committee includes:

- Plan, prepare and organise school based sporting events, as well as interschool and SAPSASA events
- Gather data about participants' results
- Discuss necessity of equipment replacement and purchase equipment accordingly

### **Wellbeing Committee**

The role of the Wellbeing Committee includes:

- Discuss and make recommendations regarding the organisation and maintenance of the Wellbeing initiatives within the school concerning students, staff and their families.
- Plan for future MCC Wellbeing initiatives and infrastructure.

### **Individual Staff Responsibilities**

A number of staff members have individual responsibility for aspects of the school operation. For example there is an Occupational Health and Safety Representative. In all cases those with such responsibility have someone or some group within the decision making framework to whom they report and are responsible.



## Grievance Procedure

In line with DECD philosophy “*children are at the centre of everything we do*”- our role as educators at Mannum Community College is to provide for the best student learning underpinned by social and educational wellbeing. From time to time issues may arise and to address these in a timely and respectful manner is important to our entire staff. We acknowledge that some issues may require higher level intervention but the starting point is with the individual concerned and the Grievance Procedures should be followed as outlined against our RIVER values and Code of Conduct.

## Rights and responsibilities of the individuals involved

- To communicate honestly
- To reflect on the issue or concern
- To seek constructive solutions and adopt a “no blame” approach
- To expect opinions to be heard and sought
- To be supported throughout the process
- To be listened to
- To be given the opportunity to present all sides to an issue
- To expect that agreed actions are adhered to
- To have the right to information according to DECD policies
- To consult outside agencies at any stage of the proceedings
- At all times to maintain CONFIDENTIALITY including through the use of social media

## Guidelines

- Raise the issue with the school in a calm and rational matter, bearing in mind that you have one side of an issue.
- Be prepared to talk specifics. That is, be prepared to talk about your own child and a particular incident.
- Use an advocate (support person) to assist in raising an issue if required.
- At times, you may seek support from friends to gauge your reaction. It is important to do this wisely.
- At all times, it is important for the students’ sake that the school and the teacher are not criticised in the student’s realms of communication ie hearing or social media .
- When a grievance is discussed, the student involved needs to hear that there is a confidence that it will be resolved at the school level.
- The school can only deal with issues that are raised in this way. If we are not approached about any concerns, then we assume that all is well.
- We emphasise again, the grievances need to be kept CONFIDENTIAL.



## Grievance Steps

**Step 1** Make an appointment with the person concerned

*(This makes the most productive use of the time available and it ensures that the person is free to give you their full attention)*

**Step 2** If dissatisfied: - make an appointment with the child's section leader, the staff member's line manager, or Wellbeing Coordinator.

**Step 3** If dissatisfied: - make an appointment with the Principal. ***If the grievance is with the Principal move to step 6.***

**Step 4** Meet with the Principal.

- This could also be followed up with a phone call at later times to monitor the situation.
- It may also result in a further discussion with students, parents, class teacher and Principal.

It might include inviting outside support for the family or school, eg. Guidance Officer, Social Worker, Behaviour Management Coordinator, AEU, SASSLA etc

**Step 5** If the problem is still apparent a further meeting will be arranged.

*(The school will aim to resolve the matter within 15 working days)*

**Step 6** Contact the DECD Education Complaint Unit (ECU) on 1800 677 435 which has the following functions.

- To provide advice and support about concerns or complaints.
- To review complaints which have not been resolved at the school or regional level.

**Step 7** If after steps 1-6, parents are still dissatisfied contact the Ombudsman at [www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au](http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au)

At Mannum Community College we actively encourage our stakeholders to raise the issues they may have with the school or member of staff in a positive and constructive way.

A Governing Council Councillor may also consult with the Principal to assist with raising a matter to resolve with the appropriate forum.

A general school matter or policy issue may be considered on the agenda of Governing Council or at a staff meeting or raised with an individual depending upon the nature of the concern.



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