

## **SITE BASED DECISION-MAKING**

### **Background**

The Division believes Site Based Decision-Making is a process of operating that decentralizes decision making from the Board and Division Office to the basic operating unit within the broad parameters of policy set by the Board, Alberta Education or by parameters from collective bargaining agreements.

The premise of Site Based Decision-Making is those most closely associated with the outcome are in the best position to make decisions for that operating unit.

This provides greater opportunity for persons in the basic operating unit to assume ownership for staffing, programming, and budgeting.

### **Procedures**

1. The Division believes an increased level of responsibility, accountability, and ownership occurs by placing authority for decisions as closely as possible to those areas most affected by a decision. In “working together to help every student learn and excel” (NLSD No. 69 Mission Statement), school-based decision making must have student achievement as a primary focus.
2. The Division also believes the allocation of resources to meet the needs of each individual school is best decided by the stakeholders of the school to as great a degree as possible. This should be done within Board, provincial, federal, and collective agreement parameters that are intended to create issues of alignment and commitment to the system and province while encouraging creativity and flexibility for the individual site. Therefore, the Division expects instructional block money for school-based staffing, programming, and curriculum to be directed to school budgets to be managed by the school principal with input from the School Council and staff.
3. The Division believes the majority of instructional block funds from the province should be directed to schools for local decision making. However, the Division believes some instructional support for schools is best managed centrally where an economy of scale can be optimized or where stakeholders at the school level believe the funds should be centralized. Therefore, the Division expects that a portion of instructional block funds shall be allocated centrally.
4. The Division believes stakeholders should have input into the amount of instructional block funds allocated to schools and into the formula by which those funds are dispersed to the schools. The Division expects school-based administrators to represent staff, students, parents, and community in a consensus process whereby the funding formula for schools is determined. Once the formula is determined, the Division expects school-based administrators to be system ambassadors in supporting the formula.
5. The Division believes that deficit budgeting is unacceptable unless unforeseen circumstances or factors at the Division or provincial level create cost pressures that cannot be accommodated through skillful budget management. In such instances,

the Division expects central administration to monitor site decision-making that led to the deficit. The Division further expects the site with the projected deficit to present a revised plan that will see the deficit eliminated within one year.

6. The Division believes grant money received in a particular school year should be spent on programming, staffing, and other budget requirements, as outlined in the three-year plan, during that particular year.
7. The Division recognizes that surplus figures at the end of a school year can represent "committed but not yet expended" funds. Where funds are committed but not yet expended, the Superintendent expects the Principal to be able to quantify such figures. The Superintendent also expects a portion of the "committed but not yet expended" funds to be designated for 1) equipment replacement; and 2) unforeseen circumstances.

Legal Reference: Section 60, School Act;  
School Based Decision-Making, Policy 1.8.2

Cross Reference: Site Based Manual,  
School Based Decision Making Resource Guide (1997)