

# Communication and Decision Making Improvement Plan

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**Demographics:** The ESD Special Education Department provides services to 16 districts across the county. The specific supports are outlined in a local service plan that is approved annually. Districts elect to have the ESD manage and provide the staff for classrooms. The Life Skills Education Program serves students from K - 21 with moderate to severe disabilities (I.Q. 55 or below). In 2008/09 program served 321 students within 31 classrooms that are housed in general education buildings. There are 282 ESD special education employees located across all of these locations. The entire staff meets twice per year. Teachers meet in level groups twice per year. Communication and collaborative decision making under these circumstances is extremely challenging.

**Improvement Goals:** (In response to the 2009 “Good to Great” survey that identified the #1 misalignments as communication and decision-making practices.)

Goal: By 10/ 2009 The ESD will develop and implement a proactive decision-making protocol, based on student needs and core values that 1) provides staff with clearly-defined guidelines on how decisions are made 2) outlines who will be involved in the process 3) how decisions will be communicated and 4) how the process will be assessed.

### Options: All Selected

- Continue to utilize the existing “FLASH” and other electronic message venues of communication
- Instigate a monthly newsletter from the office of the superintendent
- Review research, develop and implement a decision-making protocol utilizing the team approach.

### Projected Outcomes:

- Provide a systemic & sustainable approach to team decision making.
- Foster two-way communication that builds trust, increases the quality of services to students, and positively impacts employee morale.

### Budget Impact

**Use of Existing Resources** - Implementing this project will be dependent upon reallocated resources. Existing management & core team meetings will be restructured to allow for development and implementation of the plan.

### Timelines:

- By 10/2009 a draft/ template for decision making will be created by the leadership team.
- By 1/2010, the decision making protocol will be reviewed and amended by an employee representative team.
- By 2/2010 at the all-staff meeting, the proposed decision-making protocol will be presented as part of the “Good to Great” update on action plan/ progress.
- Pilot decision- making protocol during spring 2010, with full implementation 9/2010.

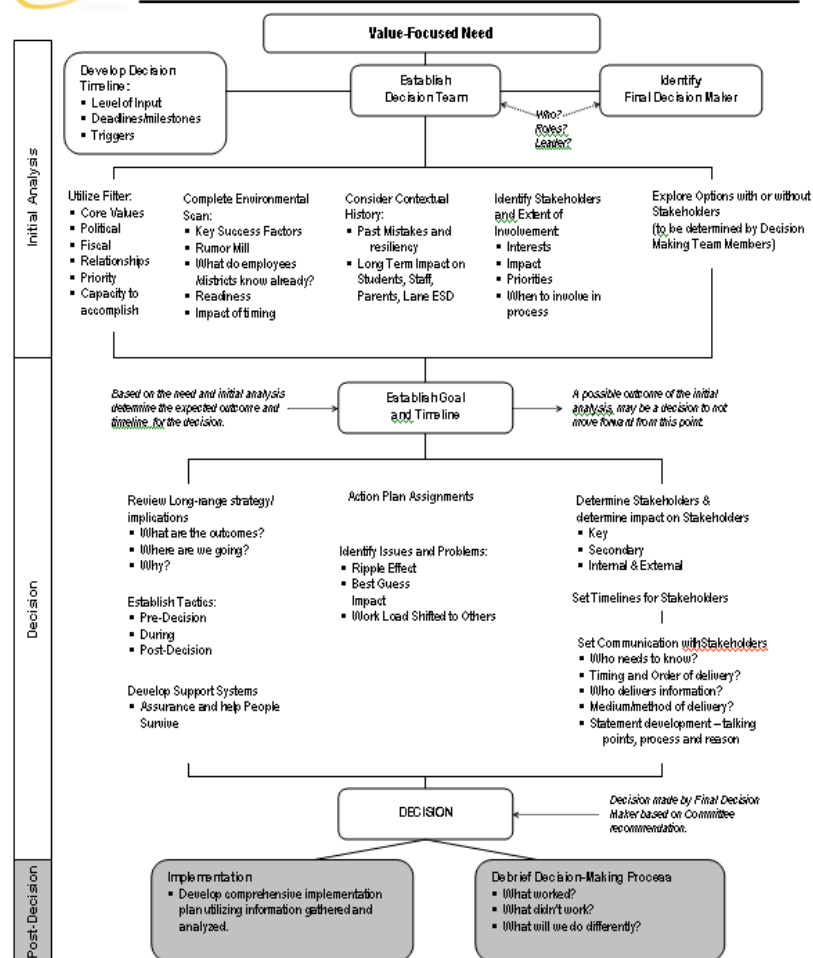
### Connection to Research

- Chiarelott, L. (1991). “Lessons in Strategic Planning Learned the Hard Way”. *Educational Leadership*. April 1991 p. 36-39
- Lumby, J. (1999). “Strategic Planning in Education: The Business of Values”. *Educational Management & Administration Leadership*. 1999; 27; 71-76.
- Nebgen, M. (1991) “The Key to Success in Strategic Planning Is Communication”. *Educational Leadership*. April 1991, 45-52.



## Decision Flow DETAILS For Level 2 Decisions

DRAFT



## **References:**

-Chiarelott, L. (1991). "Lessons in Strategic Planning Learned the Hard Way".  
*Educational Leadership*. April 1991 p. 36-39.

-Lumby, J. (1999). "Strategic Planning in Education: The Business of Values".  
*Educational Management & Administration Leadership*. 1999; 27; 71-76.

-Nebgen, M. (1991) "The Key to Success in Strategic Planning Is Communication".  
*Educational Leadership*. April 1991, 45-52.