Glenunga International High School Decision Making

GLENUNGA INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL

STAFF DECISION MAKING POLICY

Background

At Glenunga we are committed to a positive, appreciative culture where we all work together to create a great school that delivers on our Values and Purpose. An important contributor to this culture is the clarity of the decision making processes and the quality engagement of staff in these processes.

Every staff member is a leader in his or her own classroom and area of responsibility. Each one makes many decisions every day: some decisions affect individuals or small groups; some decisions impact more widely. Currently staff members contribute to wider whole school decisions electronically and/or in person through:

- Active participation in the range of staff, Sub School and Learning Area meetings/forums.
- Formal committees eg PAC, OHSW.
- Discussing ideas and concerns with the person responsible for the decision or portfolio.
- Discussions with their line manager, Chair of staff meeting, PAC, the Principal or a member of the Executive Leadership Team.

The challenge is how to manage change effectively given the amount and pace of change in the 21st century. We know that schools moving from 20th to 21st century approaches need to have the decision making capacities that enable them to move quickly to seize opportunities and to trial initiatives then to use implementation information to refine, reshape or discard the innovation. Given this changed context our decision making processes need to reflect a 21st century approach that matches the changes we are making in our classrooms and that are happening in the wider world.

Leadership is about continuous improvement within the context of schools redefining themselves for 21st century curriculum delivery. In this context leaders are often required to take difficult decisions that impact on individuals for the good of the school particularly in relation to resourcing and personnel issues. The challenge for leaders is how to enable meaningful input from staff and still make effective decisions for the good of the whole school on the timelines required. Another challenge is how to maintain continuous feedback loops so that everyone knows the progress of a particular decision without contributing to the information overload or distracting people from the improvement process.

We know that the pace of change means that decisions are likely to be made 'just in time' using all the data available and with appropriate risk assessment, but that they will be the 'best fit' at the time. Consequently decisions need to be continuously monitored and revised as new information emerges.

School leaders are genuinely committed to consultation, but consultation is complex particularly in a large school where time is at a premium and staff have different levels of desire for involvement in decision making. Consultation does not automatically equate to agreement with the final decision. One of the challenges is that consultation is a judgement call. Hence it is important for staff members to take the professional initiative to provide feedback if they think the right process has not been used or the right decision made. This advice is essential if our school processes are to continuously

improve and all staff are encouraged to take up this invitation. Once a decision is made all staff are required to implement the decision.

Policy Statement

Our organization (ECD) develops the policies that schools implement. The Governing Council consisting of parent, staff and student representatives makes the final decision on finances, policy implementation, school Values, Purpose and strategic directions in partnership with the Principal. Final decisions in relation to resources, curriculum and human resources are made by the Principal in consultation with the people affected by the decision and with advice from relevant groups eg Personnel Advisory Committee, Curriculum Leaders, Sub School Leaders, and School Leaders. In this context schools develop their decision making guidelines.

School leaders are committed to consensus-building decision making that enables people to say 'yes they can live with a proposal' or 'no they can't'. Consensus decision-making increases the traditional options by allowing for two other categories of responses - 'yes with these refinements' and 'no unless these things can be accommodated'. Consensus is canvassed in a range of different ways: on paper, on line, by show of hands, by nods around the table and is defined as the majority of people involved can live with, or support, the decision.

Our current Enterprise Bargaining Agreement enshrines a commitment to continuous improvement and to consultation. It defines consultation as: *the sharing of information and the exchange of views. It involves a genuine commitment for employees to contribute effectively to the decision making process and a bona fide opportunity to influence decision making.* The Regulations state that *an employer must consult with any relevant health and safety representative/committee where the implementation requires a change to a workplace, work process, policy or procedure which may affect the health, safety or welfare of an employee at work.*

Decision Making Guidelines

In summary our decision making guidelines are as follows:

- The first step is that the issue is raised with, or by, the individual who has the portfolio responsibility – any individual or group can raise issues.
- If a decision impacts upon a person they will be involved in discussions prior to the decision being finalized.
- Leaders make the operational decisions associated with their portfolio – they consult with staff affected by the decision within the constraints of the timeline.
- If there is a concern that the right processes weren't used or the right decision made then the person(s) with the concern needs to speak with the person who made the decision.

Stages of Decision Making

The following effective decision making stages can be face to face or electronic or a combination:

- The improvement issue is identified and raised in person, in print, or electronically with the relevant person or group with the responsibility for the action.

- Consultation is undertaken to ascertain the extent of interest in the issue. If there is sufficient interest then further consultation is undertaken to canvas the range of views and advice re directions. Consultation can be in person, face to face, in print or electronically.
- A position is developed and then decided using a consensus-based model, which enables all relevant staff to have the opportunity to be involved.
- An appropriate risk assessment is undertaken and a management strategy is developed for any identified risk.
- The appropriate leader makes the decision based on the advice from the consensus building process.
- The decision and timeline for implementation and review are communicated electronically to everyone involved ie staff, students and families.
- The decision is implemented by the person or people with the appropriate responsibility who also keeps colleagues informed about implementation progress.
- The implementation is monitored, further consultation and fine tuning undertaken if necessary, and the decision is reviewed at the end of the implementation timeline.

Types of Decisions

School wide decisions usually relate to:

- Changes to existing policy or school directions.
- New policy or directions.

Other types of school level decisions are usually operational and are made as follows:

- Operational decisions relating to running of the school are made by members of the Leadership or Executive Leadership Team with the relevant portfolio responsibilities as defined in their job and person specifications.
- Management decisions are made by Leadership Team or Executive Leadership Team with the relevant portfolio responsibilities as defined in their job and person specifications.
- Human Resources decisions are made by the Principal in consultation with Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) and with advice from school leaders and affected individuals.
- Curriculum and resourcing decisions are made by the Principal in consultation with school leaders and affected individuals.
- OHSW decisions are made by the Principal with advice from and consultation with the OHSW representative/Committee.
- Governing Council has responsibility for decisions related to the school budget, school Values, Purpose and strategic directions, policy implementation (other than curriculum and HR) with advice from school leaders and in collaboration with the Principal.

Responsibilities

Governing Council

- To monitor the vibrancy and resonance of the school's Values and Purpose with the school community.
- To approve the school budget and to monitor the budget throughout the year.
- To approve the school's strategic directions in partnership with the Principal.

- To examine relevant proposals and seek clarification when needed.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and to manage identified risks appropriately.
- To endorse recommendations based on GIHS and ECD Strategic Directions.

Principal

- To approve decisions in regard to school operations, curriculum, and resources and to ensure decisions are in line with ECD regulations, guidelines and policies.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and to manage identified risks appropriately.
- To actively encourage consultation and participation by all relevant staff in the process.
- To ensure all policies are regularly reviewed, updated and accessible.
- To take decisions as required to enable the school to implement its improvement agenda.

Staff

- To actively participate in the decision making process through consultation opportunities and membership of groups and committees.
- To provide constructive advice within the framework of the organisation's ethical standards.
- To raise issues, provide feedback and to conduct online conversations in an appropriate professional manner.
- To keep informed of processes and decisions by regularly reading email, updates on the website, newsletters, circulars, Principal's Memos and bulletins.
- To take the opportunity to respond to requests for feedback.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and to manage identified risks appropriately.

Chair: Staff Meetings/Forums

- To work collaboratively with the Principal to develop the agenda, to create consultation opportunities and to distribute the agenda electronically to all staff prior to the meeting.
- To manage the meeting according to the agenda and time available.
- To organize a staff roster for taking Minutes. These are scanned and emailed to all staff with a hard copy kept in the folder in the staff room. Senior Leader: School Operations provides a list of those staff members absent on the day for the Minutes.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and to manage identified risks appropriately.

Sub School and Learning Area Leaders

- To actively consult with team members as requested by school level groups and to bring the results back to the relevant school level group.
- To actively encourage team members to raise issues proactively for discussion at team level and for taking to school level groups.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and to manage identified risks appropriately.
- To take decisions as required to achieve the outcomes articulated in their job and person specifications.

Executive Leadership Team

- To provide timely information to relevant individuals and groups.
- To actively consult wherever possible on matters affecting groups and the whole staff.
- To encourage issues to be raised and to seek feedback from Learning Area and Sub School Teams through the appropriate leaders.

- To encourage individuals to provide constructive advice within the framework of the organisation's ethical standards.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and to manage identified risks appropriately.
- To take decisions as required to achieve the outcomes articulated in their job and person specifications.

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APPENDIX: Meeting Guidelines

Introduction

Our decision making processes need to reflect a 21st century approach that matches the changes we are making in our classrooms and that are happening in the wider world.

Often in our face to face meetings there is insufficient time to hear the discussions from all groups. School leaders have been very diligent about capturing the feedback and providing this information to staff. However some staff would like the additional opportunity to hear the whole range of the discussion. We want to give everyone the opportunity to contribute in an equitable, efficient and effective manner in a way that works for the individuals involved.

Technology provides a solution that would enable each staff member or group to have the opportunity to raise issues and post responses. This may generate an item for one of our formal groups, but it also would mean that we don't have to wait for the formal group's meeting to have these discussions. The issue would be picked up by the appropriate individual or group (eg staff meeting, Staff Forum, Curriculum Leaders, School Leaders, Sub School Leaders, or Executive Leadership) for actioning within an appropriate timeline. Everyone would be able to follow the progress.

To make this approach really successful every staff member will need to take individual responsibility for actively engaging and using appropriate professional online conversations to enrich our face to face discussions. We will need to develop our skills of online discussions and working interdependently. This is particularly important given the finite time available for meetings. Electronic communication effectively supplements or replaces face to face information sharing, but its success in terms of school wide consistency relies upon every staff member's professional commitment to checking his or her emails regularly and to provide feedback when invited. This feedback needs to be constructive, mindful of individuals and conducted within the framework of the organisation's ethical standards.

We all contribute to the effectiveness of meetings and forums. Our expectations are that all participants behave with positive professional courtesy to each other, observe the ethical standards of the organisation and the Values of the school, and are governed by the following protocols:

- The chairperson keeping the meeting running to timeline and agenda in an effective, efficient manner while allowing for humour.
- Participants attending on time, sitting so that eye contact is made with the chairperson/speaker, with phones switched to silent and laptops being used appropriately.
- Participants supporting the chairperson by speaking through the chairperson and not having 'side conversations'.
- People being listened to and able to hold differing points of view while still being professionally courteous to each other.

Monday Meeting Cycle

Everyone is required to attend one hour weekly meetings (usually Mondays) called by the Principal. These include staff meetings, staff forums, Sub School and Learning Area meetings. School leaders and some specialized teaching groups eg IB and Research Project also have a meeting cycle that runs usually on Wednesday nights.

Staff Meeting/Forum

These meetings occur three times a term with a pre-published agenda and provide the opportunity:

- To draw staff attention to key aspects of school improvement or events.
- To seek feedback, or advice or to consult in relation to key aspects of school improvement or events and to share the outcomes of consultations, decisions etc.
- For staff discussion on matters relating to whole school business.

Our organization requires everyone to attend these meetings as part of 'other duties'. Apologies need to be given to the Principal and Chair prior to the meeting. Appointments need not to be made at this time unless it is an emergency.

One of these meetings is designated as a Staff Forum. The difference between the Staff Meeting and Staff Forum is that the latter is specifically designed to provide time for discussion of key issues. Although the Forum is usually located in Week 5 of term, the meeting structure enables it to be placed anywhere in the cycle whenever the need arises for discussion. The Chair: Staff Meeting in consultation with the Principal and other affected leaders can make a change to the scheduling.

Location for the meetings: staff meetings – PAC; staff forum – cabaret style in the canteen with tables and food. Alternative locations include the Resource Centre and Senior Study Centre.

Agenda items may be generated from the online discussion or raised directly with the Chair: Staff Meetings. Deadline for agenda items needs to be Thursday 4 pm prior to staff meeting with the agenda published on Friday by email to all staff with an A3 copy in the staff room. An agenda committee consisting of the Chair and Principal will confirm agenda items or redirect to other more appropriate groups. The Chair and Deputy Chair share the responsibility and are elected by staff for the year on a similar cycle to PAC ie starting in Term 2.

If a proposal is required it needs to be tabled with the Chair: Staff Meetings in writing by the Thursday deadline. The Chair will table the proposal and invite discussion at the meeting. If voting is required people have time to consider their options before being asked to vote electronically following the meeting or at the next meeting. A vote is carried by consensus.

Curriculum/Learning Area Teams

Everyone is required to attend these meetings as part of 'other duties'. Apologies need to be given to the Learning Area Leader prior to the meeting. Appointments need not to be made at this time unless it is an emergency.

Learning Area meetings are important two way communication conduits. Leaders raise issues with their team members and provide feedback to school level groups. Learning Area Teams also proactively raise issues with, and actively contribute to the agendas of, school level groups.

These meetings - focussed on improved teaching and learning, effective 21st century curriculum delivery and improved student learning outcomes - occur three or four times a term with a pre-published agenda and provide the opportunity:

- To develop the culture of collaboration to improve student outcomes across the Learning Area.
- To deal with operational matters pertaining to the quality of teaching and learning and student outcomes.
- To share information and directions from school level meetings, to provide opportunities for discussion and to develop agenda items to raise at school level.
- To develop, implement, monitor, evaluate and improve the delivery of subjects in the Learning Area within the required curriculum frameworks.
- To provide and seek feedback, advice or consultation in relation to whole school change and to share the outcomes of consultations, decisions etc.
- To share best practice, stimulate professional discussion, keep up to date with professional readings and research, analyse data and agree to improvement actions.

Sub School Teams

Everyone is required to attend these meetings as part of 'other duties'. Apologies need to be given to the Sub School Leader prior to the meeting. Appointments need not to be made at this time unless it is an emergency.
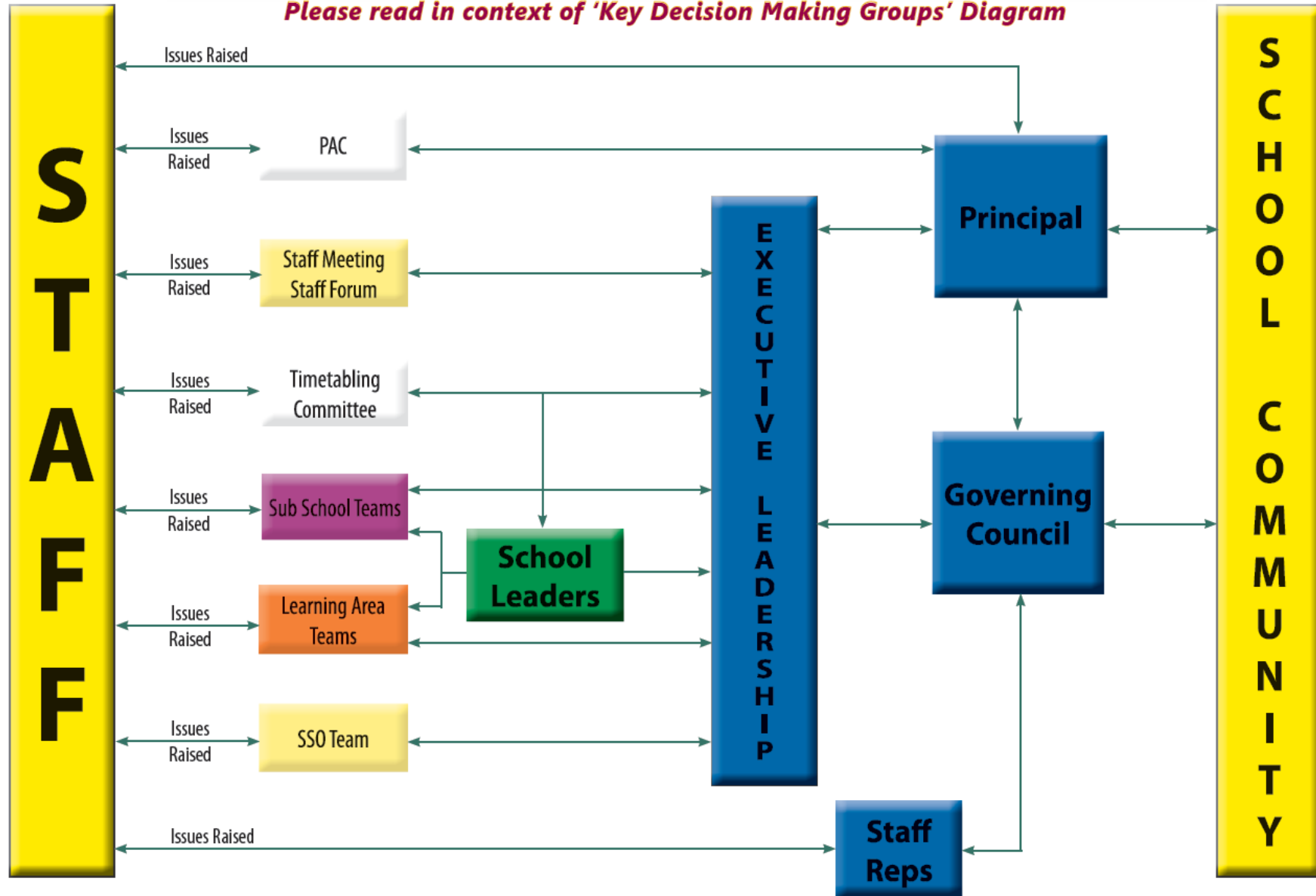
These meetings occur usually three or four times a term with a pre-published agenda and provide the opportunity:

- To develop the culture of collaboration to improve student learning and wellbeing outcomes across the Sub School and across the whole school.
- To deal with operational matters in relation to student wellbeing, achievement, attendance and behaviour.
- To develop, implement, monitor, evaluate and improve the delivery of Program X (Year 8 – 11), the Student Advisory Program (Year 12) and the Personal Learning Plan (Year 10).
- To share information and directions from school level meetings, to provide opportunities for discussion and to develop agenda items to raise at school level.
- To seek feedback, advice or consultation in relation to whole school change and to share the outcomes of consultations, decisions etc.
- To share best practice, stimulate professional discussion, keep up to date with professional readings and research, analyse data and agree to improvement actions.

SUMMARY OF COMMUNICATION FLOW
# BETWEEN KEY DECISION MAKING GROUPS

Please read in context of 'Key Decision Making Groups' Diagram

STAFF

Issues Raised

Issues Raised — PAC

Issues Raised — Staff Meeting / Staff Forum

Issues Raised — Timetabling Committee

Issues Raised — Sub School Teams

School Leaders

Issues Raised — Learning Area Teams

Issues Raised — SSO Team

Issues Raised

EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Principal

Governing Council

Staff Reps

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

KEY DECISION MAKING GROUPS

Please read in context of
'Summary of Communication Flow Between Key Decision Making Groups' Diagram
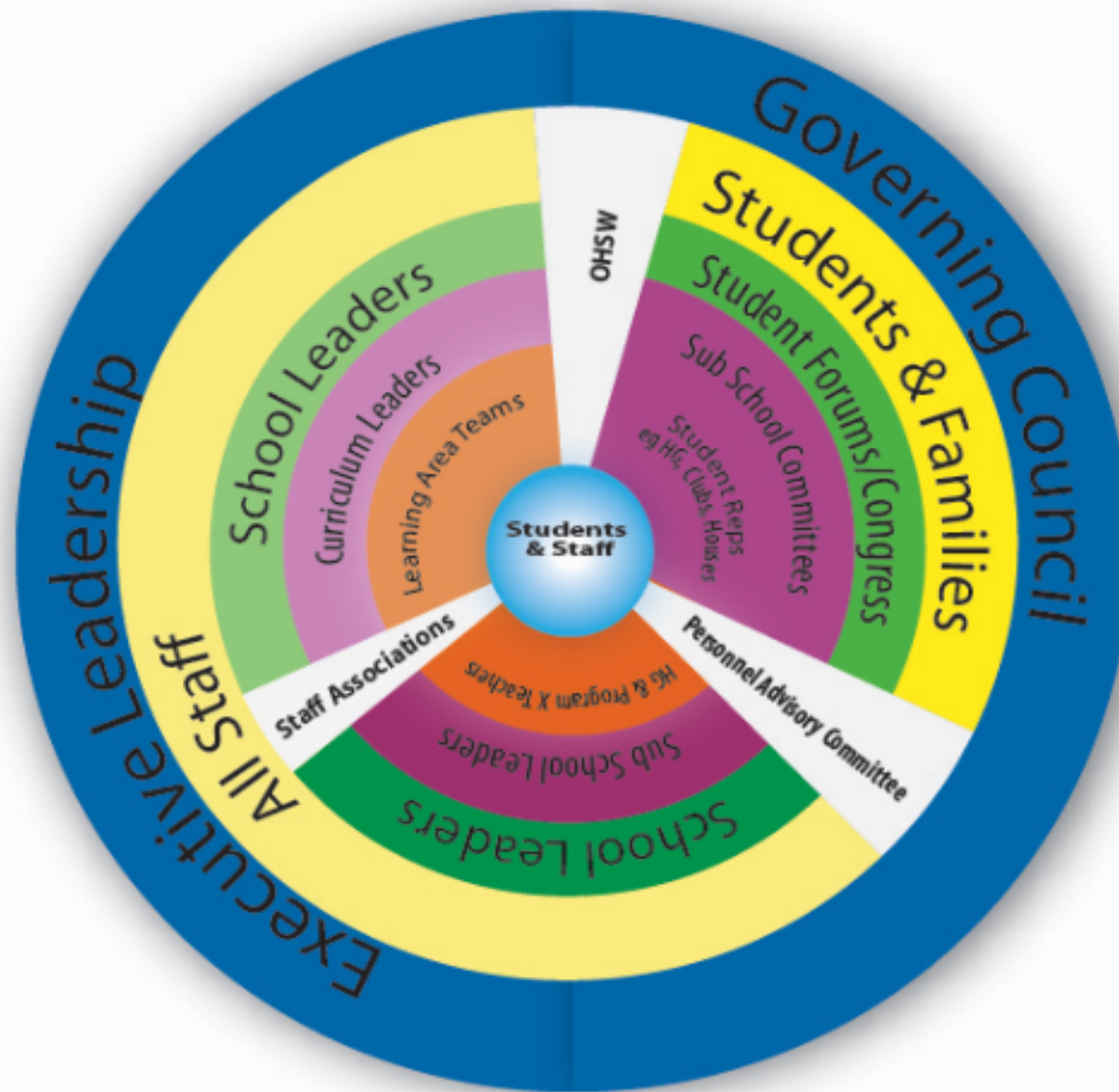
GLENUNGA INTERNATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL KEY GROUPS

Group Name	Responsibilities	Membership	Responsible To
Governing Council Chair: Elected from Council	• School community representation & communication • Strategic Directions • School finances • Policy Implementation • Fundraising • Advocacy and marketing	Parent and Staff Reps Student leaders Business Leader Principal	Minister through Regional Director School Community
Finance Advisory C/ee Chair: Treasurer	• School finances • Budget development, implementation and monitoring • Short and longer term financial planning	Treasurer Parent and Staff Reps Business Leader Principal	Governing Council
Fundraising C/ee Chair: Treasurer	• Fundraising initiatives	Volunteer Parents	Governing Council
Student Leaders & Student Forums Chair: Head Prefects Prefects with Relevant Portfolios	• Advice to school leaders • Represent student cohort • Seek feedback from and provide information to student cohort • Leadership of student related issues	School Prefects Student Leaders	Principal
Staff Meeting/Staff Forum Chair: Elected or Volunteer Staff Member	• Communication with staff about events, initiatives, improvements • Consultation re changes	Teaching staff (attendance required). SSOs welcome	Principal

Group Name	Responsibilities	Membership	Responsible To
SSO Team Chair: Director of Services/Business Leader	• Development and monitoring of high quality service • Communication with staff about events, initiatives, improvements • Consultation re changes	SSOs (Attendance required)	Principal through Business Manager
Sub School Teams Chair: Sub School Leader supported by Executive Leadership (EL)	• Implementation of school culture and values; Program X • Monitoring and analysis of student achievement, attendance, behavior, and well being • Coordination of year level initiatives • Student Voice	Mentor Group teachers Sub School Leaders Sub School Assistant Leader Executive Leader Connector	Executive Leadership through Sub School Leaders Group
Student Support Teams Chair: Sub School Leader	• Coordination and assessment of effectiveness of interventions for students at risk • Case management and referral to Regional and other services • Coordination of Sub School activities • Student Voice	Sub School Leader Executive Leader Connector Wellbeing Leader (Learner Support; Sub School Assistant Leader; The Pod Leader as required)	Executive Leadership through Sub School Leaders
Sub School Leaders Chair: Assistant Principal	• Implementation of school culture and values; Program X • Monitoring and analysis of whole school student data – achievement, attendance, behaviour, wellbeing • Student Voice	Sub School Leaders Director of Studies Deputy Principal Principal (Sub School Support welcome)	Principal
Student Wellbeing Team Chair: AP: Student Wellbeing/Holistic Education and Learner Support	• Coordination and assessment of effectiveness of interventions for students at risk • Proactive wellbeing programs • Liaison with Regional Services	AP: Student Wellbeing Wellbeing Leaders Psychologist The Pod Leader	Executive Leadership

Group Name	Responsibilities	Membership	Responsible To
Student Wellbeing Team Chair: AP: : Student Wellbeing/Holistic Education and Learner Support	• Coordination and continuous improvement of Focus Room operations • Reporting and analysis of data	AP: Student Wellbeing The Pod Team members Wellbeing Leaders Psychologist	Executive Leadership
Learning Area Teams Chair: Learning Area Leader supported by other leaders	• Quality assurance and professional development • Continuous improvement of development, delivery including use of learning technologies and documentation of curriculum • Assessment and reporting • Analysis of data • OHSW	Learning Area Leader Subject teachers (Attendance required) Relevant Executive Leadership	Executive Leadership through Curriculum Leaders
Curriculum Leaders Chair: Deputy Principal	• High quality teaching and learning (Strategic Directions) • Trialling and implementation of curriculum initiatives • Assessment and reporting; Analysis of data • Staff professional development	Learning Area Leaders Executive Leadership	Principal
Timetable C/ee Chair: Director of Studies	• Curriculum vision translated into delivery • Continuous improvement of timetable structure • Best use of staffing and resources • Strategies for managing class sizes	Learning Area Leaders Staff volunteers	Executive Leadership through Director of Studies
Innovative Pedagogies Co-Chair: Deputy Principal & Senior Leader Innovative Pedagogies	•	Innovative Pedagogies Leader Director of Studies	Executive Leadership
Assessment & Reporting Co-Chair: Deputy Principal & Director of Studies	•	Senior Leader School Operation & Daily Management School Leadership representative IB Diploma Leader SACE Leader Staff Representatives	Executive Leadership

Group Name	Responsibilities	Membership	Responsible To
School Leadership Chair: Deputy Principal Director of Studies	• Whole school events and issues • Whole school policy development, changes, implementation • Education trends/innovation • Continuous improvement through data based decision making • Quality Assurance/CIS • Staff professional development • OHSW	All Leaders All Executive Leadership	Principal
Executive Leadership **Team** Chair: Rotates between EL Members	• Effective and efficient school operations • Development and implementation of school's strategic directions • Analysis and reporting of progress • Implementation of DECD policies • Staff performance management and Professional Development	Deputy Principal Director of Studies Assistant Principals Senior Leader Business Leader Director of Services Principal	Principal
Personnel Advisory C/ee Chair: Principal	• Implementation of Enterprise Bargaining (EB) and Human Resources (HR) policies • Advice to Principal re staffing, class sizes, staff wellbeing • Staff HR grievances	AEU Rep Staff Rep SSO Rep Principal	Staff Meeting AEU Subbranch Executive Leadership SSO Team
Work Health Safety C/ee Chair: Deputy Principal Director of Studies	• Implementation of OHSW policies and procedures • Risk management and safe practices • Staff health and wellbeing advice • Data analysis	Learning Area Leaders or nominees Staff volunteers OHSW Rep Deputy Principal	Staff Meeting Executive Leadership
Technology: Curriculum & Pedagogy Team Chair: Deputy Principal	• Advice re Learning Technologies to enrich learning • Staff Professional Development	Coordinator Innovative Technology and interested teachers Deputy Principal	Executive Leadership

Technology Services Group Chair: Deputy Principal	• Implementation of IT Plan and DECS IT policies • Management of resources and procedures • Infrastructure development and management	IT Leaders (teaching and technical) Business Leader Deputy Principal	Executive Leadership

Group Name	Responsibilities	Membership	Responsible To
International Mindedness C/ee Chair: AP: International	• Implementation of whole school events, policies and procedures related to international portfolio • Actioning and reporting on Strategic Direction	Relevant portfolio leaders Interested staff and students AP: International	Staff Meeting Student Leaders Executive Leadership
Literacy & Numeracy Strategy C/ee Chair: Deputy Principal	• Improvement of literacy and numeracy outcomes across the school • Intervention coordination • Data analysis	Deputy Principal Maths and English Leaders Director of Studies	Executive Leadership
Australian Education Union Chair: Subbranch Secretary	• Staff wellbeing and work conditions (including EB) • Advice on industrial issues	AEU members	AEU Branch Council
Council of International Schools (CIS) Steering Committee Co Chairs: DP & AP: International	• Preparation for the CIS Accreditation Process	Deputy Principal AP: International Deputy Principal – Director of Studies Staff Reps Principal's Personal Assistant	Executive Leadership School Leadership Curriculum Leaders Staff Meeting Governing Council Prefects/Student Forum