

Scarsdale Union Free School District
Scarsdale, New York

The Compact for Learning: District Plan

*Initially Adopted by the
Scarsdale Board of Education
on January 24, 1994*

Acknowledgements

District Compact Committee Members

Thomas Hagerman, Superintendent of Schools
Edgar McIntosh, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
David Wixted, STA President
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Edgewood, Bevin Pagel, Teacher
Edgewood, Jeannette Magnani, Teacher
Edgewood, Michele Tyrell, Teacher
Fox Meadow, Dan Brodsky, Teacher
Fox Meadow, Debra Tannor, Teacher
Greenacres, Nick Miller, Teacher
Heathcote, Jen Turetzky, Psychologist
Heathcote, Jen Conklin, Teacher
Heathcote, Vivian Robert, Teacher
Quaker Ridge, Susan Hendler, Teacher
Middle School, Sima Cass, Counselor
High School, Oren Iosepovici, Counselor
PTC President, Joey Silberfein
High School, Deb Morel, PTA President
Middle School, Meredith Kent, PTA President Elect
Edgewood, Dee Coffey, PTA Co-President
Edgewood, Prem Itharat, PTA Co-President
Fox Meadow, Kelly Halyard, PTA President
Greenacres, Maddy Landauer, PTA President
Heathcote, Alexa Froomberg, PTA President
Quaker Ridge, Beth Lazarus, PTA President
Building Compact Committees
Scarsdale Board of Education

History of Amendments & Recertifications

Amended by the Board of Education on January 22, 2002

Re-certified by the Board of Education on January 24, 2004

Re-certified by the Board of Education March 20, 2006

Amended by the Board of Education on February 11, 2008

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Re-certified by the Board of Education on September 1, 2020

The Compact for Learning Scarsdale School District Plan

I. Introduction

In March 1991, under the direction of Thomas Sobol, the New York State Board of Regents officially adopted *A New Compact for Learning: Improving Public Elementary, Middle, and Secondary Education Results*. As a comprehensive strategy for improving public education, it set forth a series of principles and mandated a process by which each district in the State would develop a plan for site-based management.

Historically, Scarsdale has provided a myriad of opportunities for constituent groups to participate in nearly all aspects of decision-making in its schools and across the District. The Compact extends to staff, parents, and the community an increased role in the educational decision-making by focusing on shared goals and practices and resource sharing with a shared goal of healthy, happy, and engaged students.

Scarsdale's Compact Planning Committee endorses the principles set forth in the Compact:

- Recognize that all children can learn;
- Attend to the needs of the whole child;
- Promote non sibi in word and deed;
- Expect local, national, and global citizenship;
- Be good stewards and caretakers of our schools, community, and planet;
- Share best ideas and practices with one another;
- Provide the means and resources to achieve these goals;
- Encourage love of life long learning; and
- Recognize the connection between social and emotional health and learning.

II. Philosophy

The Scarsdale District's mission is consistent with the principles of the Compact. This mission, found in Board of Education Policy and included below, forms the framework for decision-making at the District and school level and should be consulted regularly when District and school level decisions are made.

***The Mission of the Scarsdale Schools** is to sponsor each student's full development, enabling our youth to be effective and independent contributors in a democratic society and an interdependent world. To this end, we endeavor to help them to think and express themselves clearly, critically, and creatively; to understand themselves and others within the broad fabric of human experience and the natural universe; to appreciate their rights and responsibilities as citizens; and to become people of integrity, maturity, and generous spirit. A measure of our success is the degree to which they fulfill their potential for the common good non sibi—not for themselves alone. Valuing our individuality, we unite to keep the flame of learning.*

Our Beliefs

Families, religious and other social institutions, and the community as a whole, as well as the schools and each student, share responsibility for achieving the Mission. We believe success is most likely when all dedicate their fullest individual energies to this enterprise, understanding one another, communicating well, and cooperating. In recognition of its part, the Board of Education specifically commits itself and the Scarsdale Schools, within available resources, to the following ideals:

- *High standards of scholarship in a reasoned and humane atmosphere. An education where adults know each student's mind and person.*
- *Teaching, advising, and counseling which are caring, reflective, respectful of, and responsive to individual aptitudes and needs, while mindful of the greater good.*
- *A school environment structured to help students develop a growing sense of responsibility and self-discipline, involving them in the development and direction of their own education.*
- *Integrated, continuous and progressively broadening opportunity in and beyond the classroom for students to grow intellectually and in leadership, self expression, talent and interest.*
- *An education which reflects awareness of promising and effective new development in theory and methods.*

To help students reach these goals, the Board desires to:

- Maintain high standards of scholarship and encourage the best achievement of which each student is capable;
- Treat each student as an individual, tailoring instruction to individual needs where possible, and balancing the needs of individual students with the needs of the group;
- Provide guidance and counseling that encourages individual growth while developing consideration of the needs and desires of others;
- Establish rules of discipline that help students achieve an increasing sense of responsibility and self-control and allow them to participate in the formulation of policies affecting their own educational experiences;

- Provide a continuous, integrated, and progressively broadening experience in the educational program, in opportunities for leadership and self expression, and in opportunities for the pursuit of individual interests;
- Provide opportunities for study, work, and service both within and outside of the classroom.
- Keep abreast of changes in educational methods and philosophy and investigate and appraise promising options;
- Support through teaching and example of the generally acknowledged virtues of integrity, generosity, kindness, reliability, patience, resilience, self-reliance, empathy, and consideration of others;
- Provide students with experiences that help them understand themselves and their lives in relation to the society, culture, and history of which they are part; and
- Cultivate an understanding and appreciation of the rights and responsibilities of citizens to live in a diverse society.

The Board encourages the development of a school environment that is academically-challenging, psychologically-supportive, and socially-fulfilling for students. The objectives of an educational program are best realized when mutual understanding, cooperation, and effective communication exists among the home, school, and community.

To serve the best interests of the students, the Scarsdale School District is committed to:

- Enabling each school to articulate a vision which focuses on teaching and learning;
- Creating and maintaining an environment which supports questioning and appropriate risk taking consistent with the District's visions & goals and those expressed herein;
- Identifying desired outcomes that reflect the highest standards of student achievement and teaching practice; and
- Utilizing multiple measures for the assessment of students' progress.

III. Manner and Extent of Involvement of Parties

A. Principles of Representation and Team Member Responsibilities

To carry out the work of the Compact, Building Teams will be established in each school. All members of the Building Teams will act as representatives of their particular constituencies. Members will also be guided by their own beliefs and values. Members will have responsibility to:

- Put the needs and interests of the students’ education first;
- Focus decisions on educational outcomes;
- Involve and communicate with all participant groups;
- Monitor the implementation of decisions and evaluate the results;
- Attend and be prompt at all meetings;
- Participate in a meaningful and constructive manner; and
- Participate in any training provided by the District or the Team.

B. Team Decision Making

Decisions by the Building Teams will be made by consensus. The following principles will be used in the consensus model:

- Each Team member will have an equal opportunity to influence the decision.
- Each Team member will accept the decision even if that decision is not his or her first choice.
- Each Team member will support the decision as if it were the first choice of all Team members.

C. Building Team Membership

Building Teams will be optimally configured at or above the following:

	<u>Teachers</u>	<u>Parents</u>	<u>Administrator</u>	<u>Support Staff</u>	<u>Students</u>
Elementary	3	3	1	*	xx
Middle School	4	4	2	*	2
High School	4	5	2	1	2

*At the elementary, middle school, and high school levels additional staff will be consulted on an ad hoc basis pursuant to the nature of the issue.

The composition of the Teams will be reviewed at the end of each year.

D. Selection of Members

Teachers:

Teacher members will be elected in each school through a process determined in each building by the Scarsdale Teachers Association.

Parents:

Parent members will be elected in each school through a process determined by the Parent Teacher Association.

Administrators:

The principal will determine the administrators on each team.

Support Staff:

Support staff members will be elected by the appropriate constituent group.

Students:

Each school will develop a process to select student representatives.

E. Length of Term

Members will serve two-year terms running from July 1 – June 30. The length of terms of initial teams will be staggered to allow for gradual rotation of membership. New team members will be invited to attend June team meetings for the purpose of orientation.

F. Meetings

Each Building Team will establish its own organizational structure, operating procedures, and agenda items. These will include the decision whether to operate with a fixed or rotating chairperson, facilitator, group leader, or other system. The Building Team will develop and publish a calendar of monthly meetings.

Building Team and District Committee meetings will be held at times that do not disenfranchise any individual or group of Team members. Meeting times will be determined by consensus. Regular meetings will be held during non-instructional time. Building Teams are responsible for maintaining and disseminating minutes of their meetings, a copy of which will be provided to the Board of Education.

G. District Committee

A District Committee will meet on a regular basis to support the work and priorities at each school. It will assist in the addressing of common issues, sharing of resources and information, and monitoring of the balance between building and District programs and expectations. The District Committee will evaluate the Compact Plan biennially (or every two years). The District Committee will include at least one representative from the District administration, the Board of Education, PT Council, STA, and from each Building Team.

H. Resources

The Building Teams may request resources from the Central Administration.

I. Modifications of the Plan

A Building Team, upon reaching a decision to recommend a modification of the Plan, will bring such a proposal to the District Committee for review.

J. Waivers of the Bargaining Unit Contracts

In an effort to allow individual schools to modify a contract, the bargaining units and the Board of Education may be petitioned to consider waivers to allow for their individual needs. Copies of any petitions will be forwarded to the District Committee.

IV. Educational Issues Subject to Cooperative Planning and Shared Decision-Making

A. The Issues for Decision-Making

The issues discussed by the teams must relate to improved student learning and well-being and must be linked to the District's standards of excellence for all students. Each Building Team will deal with specific issues as they relate to the school's mission, vision, or goals. Each issue will be discussed in light of existing data, historical perspective, and educational research. The teams may discuss issues that include the following topics:

- Community
- Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment
- Fiscal Issues
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- Professional Development
- Public Relations
- Safety
- Service
- Strategic Planning Initiatives
- Stress
- Students
- Sustainability
- Time
- Wellness and Well-being

A. Guiding Principles for Decision-Making

Guided by the following principles, the teams will:

- Make decisions that are consistent with Board of Education policy;
- Make decisions that are in compliance with all State and federal laws;

- Develop a vision and goals for their schools that are consistent with the District's vision and goals;
- Coordinate their activities with existing decision-making structures;
- Confine their decisions to those issues that will improve student learning and well-being;
- Maintain confidentiality regarding students, teachers, and parents;
- Communicate information with participating groups;
- Make decisions that reflect the District's intent to promote consistency among the elementary schools and ensure curriculum/program articulation K-12;
- Make decisions that respect the uniqueness of each school;
- Obtain the resources, experience, expertise, and access to information necessary to make and implement an informed decision; and
- Evaluate the results of their decisions and determine next steps.

V. Means and Standards to Evaluate Improvement in Student Achievement

The means of assessing student achievement and well-being must be consistent with the vision, mission, and goals of the District. Assessment must be flexible enough to allow individual disciplines/schools to develop their own goals and standards consistent with the goals and standards established by the District.

A. Means of Assessment

The means of assessment should address students' different learning styles and provide the schools with the broadest range of information with which to continuously evaluate their programs, curriculum, and goals. The following list is representative of appropriate means of assessment and measures of student achievement:

- Art projects;
- Computer simulations/projects;
- Exhibitions;
- Faculty observations;
- Formative assessments;
- Group work;
- Hands-on projects;
- Musical performances;
- Portfolios;
- Research reports;
- Standardized tests;
- Self-evaluation;
- Service learning
- Surveys and questionnaires; and
- Teacher-developed assessment

B. Reporting Student Achievement to Parents

The following list is representative of appropriate means to report student achievement and well-being:

- Faculty-student conferences and other communications;
- Faculty-parent conferences and other communications;
- Report cards;
- Anecdotal records; and
- Aggregated and disaggregated standardized test data.

C. Reporting Student Achievement and Well-being to the Community:

- Board of Education Topical Presentations
- Formal documents highlighting student successes
- College admission reporting
- Participation in academic artistic, cultural and athletic events
- Other metrics as determined by school

VI. Accountability for Decisions

The Building Team will bear responsibility for its decisions. Building Teams should actively seek to involve those affected by their decisions. Every consensus decision made by the District or Building Team is the decision of the whole team. Every member of the team is expected to fully and unequivocally support the decisions of the team, even if that decision is not the first choice of the team member. Once a consensus decision is made by the team, an individual member is expected to explain the decision and its implications in a positive manner and exert every effort to implement the decision. While accountability for school and District based decisions must be equally shared by all representative groups, the Board of Education has the ultimate legal responsibility for District decisions.

VII. Dispute Resolution

A dispute will have occurred when a team cannot reach a decision in a timely manner by consensus. If a dispute arises, Building Teams may use one of the following options for the resolution of that dispute:

- The team may decide by consensus to have a decision made by a majority vote, recognizing the existence of dissenting views.
- The team may refer the matter to the District Committee for resolution.

VIII. Coordination of Regulations for Parent Involvement in Planning and Decision-Making

The District will comply with all the Federal and State requirements for parental involvement. The coordination of activities for parental involvement in decision-making and planning of programs with State and Federal funds will include those around both regular and Special Education.

The Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment will coordinate parental involvement in any State or Federal program (which requires parental involvement) that is implemented in the future.

The Director of Special Education and Student Services will coordinate parental involvement in Special Education through the Parent Teacher Council's Special Education Committee, CHILD, and the District's Committee on Special Education.