POLICY 1164

DECISION-MAKING:
AUTHORITY, RESPONSIBILITY and ACCOUNTABILITY

I Background and Rationale

A. In October, 1990, the Board of Trustees adopted a Strategic Plan to direct the District’s development. A belief statement, a mission statement and sixteen strategies defined the overall structure in which each student is to receive personalized attention in the learning process. Adherence to the mission statement requires the District’s development to focus on the processes and outcomes of learning.

B. In March, 1991, the Board of Trustees approved a proposal to reorganize the District’s operational and administrative structures in support of the Strategic Plan. This reorganization was based on two essential principles of operation to ensure that the processes and outcomes of learning are achieved. These principles are:

   i) the decentralization of decision-making required so that decisions about learning are made closest to the level of implementation;

   ii) responsibility and accountability for the decisions made on the part of each district employee.

C. From April, 1991 to March, 1992, definition was sought as to the type and extent of decentralized decision-making and as to how each employee would be held responsible and accountable for the quality and results of his/ her decisions. The results of extensive consultation concluded that a balance of decentralization and centralization in decision-making is required so that the responsibility and
II Policy Statements

The Board of Trustees believes that all decisions must support and further the implementation of the District’s Mission and Beliefs Statement. Such decisions must be made by those responsible and accountable for their implementation and results. To ensure responsibility and accountability for the implementation and result of such decisions, there must be a balance of centralization and decentralization in the decision-making process.

Centralized decisions are those that provide the direction and standard of operation for the District. They are made by the Board of Trustees, the Superintendent of Schools, the Secretary-Treasurer and the heads of district departments (including Assistant Superintendents, Directors of Business, Facilities, Human Resource Services, School Development). Other members of district departments involved in decision-making have been delegated such responsibility by their respective department head. The accountability for the results of the decisions in the operation of the department rests with the department head.

The District Leadership Team is comprised of the above-listed personnel. It is structured to make corporate administrative decisions as required. The Superintendent is accountable for the results of the decisions made by the District Leadership Team.

A. Board of Trustees

Responsible and accountable for those decisions that set the direction of the School District’s operation. Such decisions include: the establishment of policies for all aspects of operations; the adoption of a strategic plan (belief statement, mission statement, primary goal and strategic directions); the setting of the annual operating budget;
the establishment of position descriptions for the Superintendent of Schools, Secretary-Treasurer and members of the District Leadership Team, principals, vice-principals and teachers, evaluation criteria for these positions.

B. **Superintendent of Schools**  
Responsible and accountable for those decisions that operationalize Board policy through the preparation of regulations; the monitoring of annual department goals and professional work plans for each district leadership team member, and the implementation of evaluation criteria and practices to determine the quality and results of the decisions made by the Secretary-Treasurer, members of the District Leadership Team, school principals.

C. **Secretary-Treasurer**  
Responsible and accountable for those decisions that operationalize the financial, legal and general business activities of the Board at all levels of the system.

D. **Heads of District Departments**  
(As Assistant Superintendents, Directors of Business, Facilities, Human Resource Services, School Development, including Secretary-Treasurer);  
Responsible and accountable for those decisions that operationalize the district directions established for the specific operations inherent in his/her respective department’s mandate.

E. **District Leadership Team**  
Responsible for those decisions that operationalize the district directions as defined in the Strategic Plan.

**Decentralized decisions** are those that provide the functional direction for the learning environment and conditions in each school. Such decisions are made in accordance with Board Policy and regulations, the Board’s contractual obligations and the District’s standards of operation.

The primary decisions are made by the principal and the teacher within their respective mandates. In some situations, the teachers and the principal may make decisions collaboratively together with support staff, parents and students. The accountability for such decisions lies with the position having the legal authority to make the decisions. The major decision areas are:

The teacher is responsible and accountable for:
• those decisions that enable students to learn. Such decisions include those associated with the selection of materials and the implementation of teaching and learning strategies and assessment and evaluation strategies.

• the results of individual student achievement and must be able to explain the reasons for such from an educational perspective.

The principal is responsible and accountable for:

• those school policy and procedural decisions that enable the school’s instructional program to be carried out effectively.

• those school policy and procedural decisions that provide for the safe, effective and efficient operation of the school.

• those decisions associated with the development and preparation of an annual school improvement plan.

In accordance with Policy 1163, the principal is responsible for ensuring that thorough consultation with teachers, parents and students (as age permits) and support staff occurs prior to the making of decisions that affect the program, operation or direction of the school.

The Board of Trustees believes that a balance of centralization and decentralization in the making of decisions will enable schools to have the autonomy they require to develop strong learning environments responsive to the needs of their communities within the direction of the District’s beliefs and mission statements.

Greater Victoria School District
Adopted: April 27, 1992