Mission Statement

The mission of Hillsdale High School is to enable all students to reach their academic and personal potential.

As an educational community of students, parents, and staff, we are committed to sharing the responsibility for the mission by achieving the following cornerstones:

Equity through
- Core curriculum and high standards
- Differentiated Learning
- Collaboration and Professional Development
- Understanding, respect, and tolerance of diversity

Personalization through
- Community/Parent Connections
- Sense of Community
- Integrity, honesty, responsibility
- Advisory

Rigor through
- State Standards
- Hillsdale ESLRS (critical thinking, information gathering, informed decision making, active and collaborative community membership)
- Authentic Learning (e.g. project-based learning, exhibitions, portfolios, demonstrations of mastery)

Shared Decision-Making through
- Democratic Structures
- Distributed Leadership
- Consensus Building
- Autonomy

The Mission Statement gives us the ability to see Hillsdale not only as it is, but as we would like it to become.

The purpose of governance will be to support the mission statement, realize the cornerstones it contains, and both promote and embody the values it represents. These cornerstones and values will also shape the process as well as the purpose of governance. In that spirit, we will hear, protect, and respect all voices, ensure equity among houses, assume positive intent, and collectively own and solve our problems. Ultimately we will strive to ensure that all decisions are made in the best interests of students.
**Article I: SLC Council**

SLC Council will consist of the three principals, five house leaders, two teachers chosen at large by the faculty, one classified staff representative, five students (one per house) and five parents (one per house). For teacher representation, both for house leaders and at-large representatives, the faculty association will take nominations in early April and voting will be part of the annual association elections in late April. The classified association will choose its representative. Student government will select the student representatives. The Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) will select the parent representative. Each representative will serve a one-year term and may run for re-election. Each house may send a substitute to a meeting if the house leader is unavailable. The at large teacher representatives will receive supervision points. The classified representative will receive compensation and will not vote on issues legally reserved for School Site Councils.

The SLC Council will meet publicly on the last Monday of each month during the school year, and more frequently if necessary, at times mutually convenient to representatives. A quorum will consist of one half of voting representatives.

The SLC Council will make decisions on:
- Scheduling/calendars
- Equity issues
- Schoolwide Policy
- Professional development
- Schoolwide Budget
- Schoolwide curriculum and assessment
- Issues that have a long-term impact on SLCs
- Any other issue referred to the Council by houses, Student Government, the PTSO, Leadership, site administration, or district office.

*SLC Council fulfills the legal requirement of a site-based governance body by meeting as both Site Council and SLC Council.* For voting purposes, the SLC Council as a whole will vote on budget items and the Single Plan for Schoolwide Achievement (pursuant to California Ed Code 64001 (a), (f), (g)—see Appendix). For all other items the staff representatives on the council will vote while student and parent representatives play an advisory role. Each representative will have one vote per item.

The SLC Council will strive to make its decisions by consensus based on the principles outlined above in the mission statement. When the council cannot reach a consensus, the final decision on an item will be made by secret ballot, with each eligible representative casting one vote, and the vote determined by majority rule. In order to ensure democratic deliberation and facilitate productive meetings, the Leadership Team (see below) will publish agenda items and produce all necessary materials in advance so that all constituent groups (administration, house, classified, student government, and PTSO) will have the opportunity to discuss items with their representatives prior to each SLC Council meeting. Each decision will be listed first in the meeting agenda as an action item and then afterward in the minutes with a clear indication of who will implement the action item and by what date. The Council will annually review the implementation of action items and make a report at the first meeting of the following year.

The principals will serve as facilitator and secretary of the council, rotating the responsibilities annually. The secretary is responsible for communicating with the council, staff, and administration and documenting all decisions chronologically. At the first meeting each year, the council will determine what other roles, if any, will be necessary for efficient operation of the council. Both the agendas before meetings and the minutes following meetings will be communicated to the entire Hillsdale community in a timely manner.
Article II: Administration

Each administrator will be the lead principal for one lower division House, and one upper division House or Special Education, and will be responsible for administrative decisions and duties in the House that are independent of the other houses, or that involve the students and staff of the house.

Administrators will make decisions on:

1. Issues that are the legal or contractual responsibility of the administration
2. Issues that require immediate action to maintain the safety and mission of the school. Any decision or action of this kind that falls under SLC Council jurisdiction will be reported to the Leadership Team and SLC Council at the next scheduled meetings.
3. Implementation and enforcement of decisions made by SLC Council and District Office.
4. Issues authorized to administration by SLC Council.
5. Hiring, non-re-elects, and transfers.

Leadership Team

The principals and house leaders will comprise the Leadership Team which will serve as the administration's cabinet. The Leadership Team will implement policy as determined by SLC Council. The Leadership Team is responsible for maintaining and facilitating the vision of SLCs by:

1. Coordinating with all Hillsdale and outside resources to inform decision-making and collect and report data.
2. Facilitating contractual issues with the district and teachers’ association
3. Coordinating professional development
4. Facilitating budget process, including grant application and resource development and allocation
5. Organizing and conducting in consultation with the faculty association straw votes with the faculty at least every two years to determine support for elements of the Hillsdale model.

Article III: Houses

All staff members belong to a House. Each House will select one teacher to act as house leader for representation on the Leadership Team and Site Council; the house leaders will receive a stipend as compensation for his or her services.

The Houses will discuss in advance any major issue presented to SLC Council, or any issue that affects the long-term viability of the SLCs, with the purpose of informing SLC Council decisions.

Each house is free to make decisions autonomous of the other houses on items not under the jurisdiction of the SLC Council. House Leaders will report such decisions to SLC Council at its next meeting and SLC Council will adjudicate any questioning of autonomous House actions.

Houses will meet monthly, when convened by the SLC Council, and/or at times of their choosing. Houses will strive to make decisions by consensus, and are responsible for designing a process for resolving issues when consensus is not achieved. A quorum for a house meeting will consist of one half of the house, with at least one representative from the Leadership Team present. The House will disseminate meeting minutes and decisions to House members and SLC Council.
Article IV: Student Government

Note: This is the draft of an informal proposal to be discussed and determined by staff and student government.

Student Government will be a representative and legislative body consisting of advisory representatives and elected officials. Student government will make decisions in a manner consistent with this constitution. It will also have the authority to bring legislation to SLC Council on the following matters: integrity and honor code, physical and social environment of campus, tolerance, tardies and attendance, low level discipline, fundraising, school spirit, and activities. Advisory representatives may bring legislative proposals to student government and advisories will have the opportunity to discuss any proposed legislation before student government makes a decision.

Article V: Amendment Process

Houses will review and may suggest amendments to the Mission Statement and the Constitution annually or in matters of extreme concern. Amendments to the Mission Statement or Constitution will be enacted if approved by a 2/3 majority of the faculty. Proposals must be submitted to the SLC Council no later than March and the faculty will vote on proposals in April as part of an overall faculty election. Any amendments will be enacted the following school year.
Appendices to the Hillsdale High School Constitution

Overview of the Single Plan for Student Achievement

In 2001, the California legislature amended the planning requirements for schools that participate in state and federal categorical programs funded through the Consolidated Application process, creating the Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA). Its stated purpose is to "improve the academic performance of all students to the level of the performance goals, as established by the Academic Performance Index." The Academic Performance Index (API) is a rating of schools based on their performance on state academic assessments. The requirements for monitoring these categorical programs are part of the same legislation. The SPSA planning process and local compliance monitoring are directly related.

This legislation established the following eight requirements for school plans:

1. School districts must assure "that school site councils have developed and approved a plan, to be known as the Single Plan for Student Achievement for schools participating in programs funded through the consolidated application process, and any other school program they choose to include…"

2. School plans must be developed "with the review, certification, and advice of any applicable school advisory committees…"

3. Any plans required by programs funded through the Consolidated Application, the School and Library Improvement Block Grant, the Pupil Retention Block Grant, and NCLB Program Improvement must be consolidated into a single plan.

4. The content of the plan must be aligned with school goals for improving student achievement.

5. School goals must be based upon "an analysis of verifiable state data, including the Academic Performance Index…and the English Language Development test…and may include any data voluntarily developed by districts to measure student achievement…"

6. The plan must address how Consolidated Application funds will be used to "improve the academic performance of all students to the level of the performance goals, as established by the Academic Performance Index…"

7. The plan must be "reviewed annually and updated, including proposed expenditures of funds allocated to the school through the Consolidated Application, by the school site council…"

8. Plans must be reviewed and approved by the governing board of the local educational agency "whenever there are material changes that affect the academic programs for students covered by programs" funded through the Consolidated Application.

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1 California Education Code (EC) Section 64001(a)
2 Information on the API can be found at http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/ap/ on the Web site of the California Department of Education.
3 EC Section 64001(a)
4 Ibid
5 EC sections 41507, 41572, 64001(d)
6 EC Section 64001(f)
7 EC Section 64001(d)
8 Ibid
9 EC Section 64001(g)
10 EC Section 64001(d)
Organizing the School Site Council

School Site Council
The California Education Code\textsuperscript{11} requires the school site council to develop a Single Plan for Student Achievement for Consolidated Application programs operated at the school or in which the school participates. In addition, Pupil Retention\textsuperscript{12} and School and Library Improvement Block Grant programs\textsuperscript{13} operated at the school must be included in the SPSA. The school site council must approve the plan, recommend it to the local governing board for approval, monitor implementation of the plan, and evaluate the results. At least annually, the school site council must revise the plan, including proposed expenditures of funds allocated to the school through the Consolidated Application, and recommend it to the local governing board for approval.

Composition
Composition of the school site council is specified in the California Education Code as follows:

- The school site council shall be composed of the principal and representatives of: teachers selected by teachers at the school; other school personnel selected by other school personnel at the school;\textsuperscript{14} parents of students attending the school selected by such parents; and, in secondary schools, students selected by students attending the school.

- At the secondary level, the school site council shall be constituted to ensure parity between (a) the principal, classroom teachers, and other school personnel, and (b) equal numbers of parents or other community members selected by parents, and students.

\textsuperscript{11} EC Section 64001(a), (d)
\textsuperscript{12} EC Section 41507
\textsuperscript{13} EC Section 41572
\textsuperscript{14} For example, counselors, psychologists, social workers, nurses, instructional aides, library personnel, and clerks employed at the school
Hillsdale High School Policies

Hiring Process

Processes -

1. Paper screen: Administrator and one team member will screen all applicants.
2. All candidates who pass the paper screen will receive information on the school and an invitation to a 30 minute on-campus interview.
3. On campus interview. The interview team will consist of a content area teacher, an administrator or house leader, a student, at least one representative from the collaborative team, and a department member not on the team. The interview team and interview questions will be consistent for all candidates for the same position.
4. A small group of qualified candidates will be asked to return to teach a demo lesson that will be watched by the interview team. Candidates will also be expected to be on campus for several hours, observing classes and planning sessions, talking with teachers, etc. (This was under #3 but we have been doing this here when it happens).
5. Interview team will discuss the candidates and comes to consensus on the decision.
6. Administrator checks references and offers a position to desired applicant.

Deciding voices – The interview team will strive to reach consensus. In the event that consensus is not reached between the department, team, and/or house, the house administrator will have the final say.

Grade Changes

The Statute of Limitations for grade changes in any class will be one semester after the original grade was posted. For example, a grade change for Spring 2007 semester must be completed by the end of the Fall 2007 semester.

Any grade change after one semester must be teacher-initiated and approved by the House Administrator, using the appropriate form. Student or parent-initiated requests will not be considered after the one semester deadline.

Dropping Classes

The school policy is to not allow students to drop classes after the first six-week grades have been received. The Essentials Handbook reads: “Students and parents must meet with their counselor to make schedule changes. All class changes require teacher and counselor approval. Student must attend all of their assigned classes until an official change form has been issued. The deadline for dropping a class without penalty coincides with parental/guardian receipt of the 1st 6 week report card.”

Students may appeal to have a class dropped after the deadline, and their appeal will be decided on a case-by-case basis, with a presumption that the appeal will be denied. In order to consider the request, the student must present the counselor with:

• Letters from a parent or guardian, the advisor, and the course instructor, advocating for the class to be dropped.
• Evidence of substantial effort made in order to succeed in the class.

Criteria that the counselors and administration will use to determine whether the class may be dropped:

• The course is not needed for graduation
• The student is on-track for graduation
• Student has shown significant effort to pass the class
• Student schedule reflects courses that will continue to challenge the student
• Student is at serious risk of failing the class
• Compelling mitigating circumstances

Passporting Out of Core Team Classes

Hillsdale students are assigned to core academic classes in their respective SLC house. Students will not be passported out of house classes except in extremely rare cases. Students will not be passported because of:
• Parent request
• Personality
• Teacher style or reputation
• Size of class, except where violations of the contract are involved

In order for a student to be passported, the following criteria must be met:
• The move is necessary to meet the student’s academic needs
• No other reasonable option is available
• Teachers, advisor, counselor, and core team must agree to the move
• Receiving teacher is to be notified before scheduling changes occur

Considerations for passporting Special Education students:
• Special Ed policy is to keep the RSP teacher and student in the same house
• Special Ed teacher will participate as part of the team in deciding scheduling issues
• Dual scheduled students might create extenuating circumstances where passporting is necessary

Distribution of Discretionary Funds

Hillsdale receives discretionary funds annually from the following sources:
• District Administration Account
• Grants
• Donations

Distribution of Funds:
• The Leadership Team will meet at the beginning of the school year with the school’s financial analyst to outline broad categories of discretionary spending, including department funds, SLC funds, professional development and grant-related expenditures.
• SLC Council will approve the discretionary budget, including categories reserved for special projects and teacher and team use.
• Staff and team requests for funds in excess of ____ must be completed on the approved form and given to SLC Council at least ____ before the funds are needed.
• Requests for funds that are tied to the Consolidated Application must be given to Schoolsite Council at least ______ before the funds are needed. Schoolsite Council will allocate funds at the beginning of the year and will notify SLC Council as to the amount of money left over.
• Administration may distribute funds from any account if SLC Council expressly grants the administration authority to do so.

Criteria for Awarding funds: Priority will be give to requests that
• Achieve the Mission Statement and reflect the values inherent in the Mission Statement and Cornerstones
• Affect the achievement of a broad section of the student body
• Balance funding across houses and content areas
• Cannot be funded in any other manner

Department head funds:
The staffing agreement between Hillsdale High School and the San Mateo Union High School District leaves a pool of money to reimburse teachers for attendance at curriculum council meetings and the completion of necessary department tasks such as cataloguing textbooks and cleaning stock rooms.

Controversial Topics/Events:

Hillsdale High School and the Board of Trustees of the San Mateo Union High School District believe that it is good educational practice to provide students with opportunities to learn about and discuss controversial topics. Hillsdale’s administration will work to facilitate these opportunities with the school staff, in accordance with the district regulations outlined in section 464.1-464.9 of the district Administrative regulations (posted in the main office). In order to ensure that all appropriate steps have been taken, and that responsibility for any event falls to the Administration, any staff member planning an event or presentation that would likely be considered controversial by a significant portion of the community must notify the administration at least two weeks in advance of the event. These events might include, but are not limited to:
• outside speakers
• resource materials
• classroom activities
• extra-classroom activities
• field trips
• election-related activities and/or
• student-sponsored events
Administration must be informed of the logistics, content, audience and people involved in the event.

Staff will use their best judgment to address controversial topics that arise spontaneously within the context of the classroom or specific school activity. Staff is encouraged to seek assistance in addressing any topic with which they are concerned or are questioning.
SLC Council Roles (Facilitator and Recorder required, others optional)

Facilitator
- Begins meeting on time
- Sends out agendas in advance as part of coordinated timetable of discussion topics and action items
- Checks that all essential roles are covered
- Sets priorities, manages time and process with Timekeeper and Coach

Recorder/Secretary
- Takes electronic notes at meeting
- Places notes in appropriate folder on the file server
- Sends notes to staff via email
- Tracks all action items and decisions made in chronological decision log

Timekeeper
- Checks total minutes on meeting agenda
- Assists Facilitator by monitoring time throughout the meeting

Coach – Process
- Debriefs staff on previous meeting process (through feedback forms)
- Ensures adherence to our group and individual norms
- Reminds staff of individual and group norms of the week.

Agenda Manager
- Keeps a running list of all items that need to be added to a future agenda
- Enters those items on the Next Agenda template