



# **WHITEFIELD COLLABORTIVE PROBLEM SOLVING**

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# What is Collaborative Problem Solving?

A problem-solving process conducted in a principled way that creates effective solutions while improving relationships and understanding.



# Project Members

- Five Whitefield Continuant Groups Identified:
  - District and School Administrators
  - Whitefield School Board Members
  - Whitefield Parents of (Students attending Whitefield School and parents of students home-schooled or educated else where.)
  - Whitefield School Staff Members
  - Whitefield Community Members



# Project Members (cont.)

- 3 Administrators
  - Superintendent, Sped Director, Interim Principal
- 3 Whitefield School Board Members.
- 7 Parents of Whitefield
  - Students who attend Whitefield School and Students placed outside of District
- 6 Whitefield Staff Members
- 5 Whitefield Community Members

*All participants are representatives of their respective constituency group and are responsible for obtaining information from their constituents. Any information obtain from constituents is then shared with the project members.*



# WHITEFIELD PROJECT OBJECTIVE FOR COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

*To secure agreements and understanding that effectively address the best interests of the students, the RSU, the employees and the entire Whitefield community - that also provides a foundation for respectful constructive relationships.*

# COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING PROCESS

*The collaborative problem solving process is a strategic process.*

- Success of the process is directly related to:
  - Participants being well-trained in the process
  - Each participant being present and well-prepared
  - Issues clearly defined and discussed
  - Willingness to recognize the other participant's interest
  - Each participants willingness to compromise

# Strategies Guiding Problem Solving

POSITIONAL	COLLABORATION
Attack individuals; discredit them to discredit their positions.	Attack the problem. Focus on the issue, not on people or the past.
Present <b>your</b> position and your information supporting it.	First explore all interests to define the issue clearly.
Insist on <b>your</b> position.	Be open to possibilities, opportunities.
Act in <b>your</b> own interest.	Help satisfy all interests.
Use power, pressure to get <b>your</b> desired “solution”.	Define a “good” solution mutually, with standards.

# Steps for Collaborative Problem-Solving

1. Develop and agree to problem-solving guidelines and standards.
2. Develop list of issues.
3. Determine order of issues.
4. Each participant lists interests of each issue.
5. Brainstorm issue.
6. Determine best resolution.
7. Reach consensus.
8. Draft and agree upon plan/agreement.



# Issue Discussion Process in Collaborative Problem- Solving

- Describe issues as questions for problem you are trying to solve.
- Share all information relevant to the issue.
- Discuss the participants' shared and separate interests on the issue. Brainstorm a variety of options for resolving the issue.
- Narrow options with jointly developed criteria or standards.
- Use consensus to agree on the options that best satisfy the parties' interests.

# Preparation

- Educate constituents about the process.
  - Seek support for the problem-solving process.
  - Educate constituents on the supporting principles, problem-solving steps and expected outcomes.
- Seek information from constituents.
  - Use surveys, interviews, information meetings, or informal discussions to help surface constituent interests around the issues.
- Compile a list of issues and interests.
  - Convert each issue to an interest by exploring the concern, need or problem the position is trying to resolve.