

CREATING A STAFF WORKING AGREEMENT

Minimum Time Required: 120 minutes, BUT most staff groups will require more time to complete the agreement fully – up to 8 hours is common. Often, the work is done in chunks, completed over the course of several meetings.

Slide #2: A Staff Working Agreement

A staff working agreement is an agreement about the values, rules, and standards for behavior created by consensus – Not vote

- ▶▶ Emphasize that it is critical that the agreement is created by consensus – EVERYONE must agree to support the working agreement in order for it to be effective
- ▶▶ A staff working agreement is for ALL adults in the school community – certified staff, non-certified staff, administrators, etc.
- ▶▶ An important aspect that does not have to do specifically with creating the Agreement, has to do with accountability – in other words, how will everyone hold each other accountable once the agreement is finalized. This may involve consequences or not, but it always comes up. It will be discussed later.

Slide #3: Questions to Ask

How do you want to be treated by colleagues?

How do you want to be treated by administrators?

How do you want to treat each other when there's conflict?

How do you want to interact with each other on a daily basis?

- ▶▶ These questions should be considered and addressed in a working agreement. We cannot assume that everyone has the same understanding of what it means to be “professional” or “respectful”

Slide #4: Some Guidelines

Begin the document with, “We agree to...”

Use complete sentences

Have between 6 and 12 agreements within your agreement

Be specific, avoid words that may be unclear or may not mean the same thing to everyone (i.e. respect)

- ▶▶ Avoid trying to “streamline the document” by merging several statements into one “catchy” slogan – you will lose the true meaning and create confusion
- ▶▶ The working agreement should highlight behaviors you want to see (i.e. Address issues directly with the person you have conflict with) as opposed to behaviors you don’t want to see (Don’t talk about others behind their back)

Slide #5: We Agree To

This is a SAMPLE of a working agreement created by a high school staff. The staff took 6 hours to create this working agreement, followed by conversation about accountability

Slide #6: Step One

In a small group, brainstorm agreements that your group would like to see included in a staff working agreement.

Write your draft agreements on a piece of flip chart paper.

Slide #7: Step Two

Partner with another group. Share your draft working agreement and from the two lists create one merged draft.

Write your new agreement on a piece of flip chart paper.

Slide #8: Step Three

Partner with another group. Share your draft working agreement and from the two lists create one merged draft.

Write your new agreement on a piece of flip chart paper.

Slide #9: Accountability

- ▶▶ *Once the working agreement has been created, discuss how you will hold each other accountable – plan for the difficult moments*
- ▶▶ *Keep the agreement visible (as a reminder)*
- ▶▶ *Revisit / update on a regular basis*