

MARK OLIPHANT COLLEGE



Mark Oliphant College Decision Policy 2026



Policy Author	Principal in collaboration with the Decision-Making Team
Policy Created	November 2024
Policy Ratified	February 2026
Policy Start Date	February 2026
Policy Review Date	2 years (Term 2 2027)
Policy History Record	This document has replaced: 2024 Decision Making Policy Operational Guideline: Strategic improvement teams Operational Guidelines: Decision Making
Relevant Legislation Reference	Department for Education Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027 Education and Children's Services Act 2019 Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector Governing Council Code of Practice
File path	Decision Making Policy AR Decision making record

Mark Oliphant College Decision-Making Policy

At Mark Oliphant College, we believe that successful decision-making relies on effective management and consultation processes where individuals and groups within the school community are represented in relevant and informed decision-making.

As a school community, we are committed to developing and maintaining a positive and productive workplace culture that is supported by effective communication, engagement and consultation with staff, students, and parents/carers, and where relevant, the wider community.

In addition to our commitment, we ensure that our actions are in line with the Education & Children's Services Act 2019, Department for Education Enterprise Agreement 2024-2027, Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector, Governing Council Code of Practice, Mark Oliphant College Site Learning Plan and any other relevant regulations or legislation, which detail clear expectations for Principals and School Governing Councils with regard to school-based change management and decision-making, including engaging and consulting with the relevant parts of the school community affected by change.

The following Decision-Making Policy is designed to ensure that the Mark Oliphant College community has a framework to manage improvement and change across our site through:

- applying a **collaborative approach** which upholds agency for all impacted by the decision,
- processes to ensure widespread levels of participation and agreement of stakeholders,
- using the **Four Tiers of Decision-Making** (see page 6) for the scoping, implementation and review of the change process,
- using and ensuring the **Decision-Making Flowchart is actively used in all Tier 3 and Tier 4 decision making processes** (see Appendix A).

Responsibilities in Decision-Making

Principal / Senior Leadership Team

- To approve decisions regarding school operations, resources, curriculum, National Quality Framework, and National Laws & Regulations.
- To ensure decisions are in line with DfE policies, procedures and guidelines.
- To reference Knoster's Model for Managing Complex Change (Appendix B).
- To undertake appropriate risk assessments and to manage identified risks appropriately.
- To actively encourage consultation and participation by all relevant staff in decision-making processes.
- To ensure all policies are implemented and adhered to, regularly reviewed, updated and accessible.
- To ensure staff, students and governing council are familiar with this policy via formal induction.
- To review the decision made to ensure the desired outcome has been reached in consultation with affected groups.

Decision-Making Group (anyone making decisions across the college)

- To provide timely information to relevant stakeholders.
- To actively consult on matters affecting relevant stakeholders. To reference Knoster's Model for Managing Complex Change (Appendix B).
- To encourage issues to be raised and to seek feedback from respective stakeholders through the appropriate leaders.
- To encourage individuals to provide constructive feedback and advice within the Code of Ethics for South Australian Public Sector Employees.

- To lead the implementation, monitoring and review of decisions made when working with all levels of the school.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and manage identified risks appropriately according to relevant legislation and DfE policies.
- To review the decision made to ensure the most appropriate outcome has been reached in consultation with affected groups.

Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC)

Any decisions that are being made in regard to personnel and workload matters need to ensure staff are consulted through their elective PAC representative. These decisions could include;

- deployment of appointed staff
- developing leadership structures
- staffing configurations
- identifying vacancies and vacancy descriptions
- strategies to manage work organisation (e.g. class sizes, ECTs, face to face teaching load, part time arrangements, etc.)
- strategies to manage staff workload.

The Principal will consult with the school PAC on all matters, except when it is impractical due to the nature or urgency of the issue. A full list of issues for discussion can be viewed on [EDi](#).

Staff

- To actively participate in decision-making processes through consultation within teams and groups across the site.
- To take the opportunity to respond to requests for feedback and provide constructive advice within the framework of the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector.
- To keep informed of processes and decisions by regularly reading Staff News, meeting minutes, emails, and other correspondence relating to decision-making.
- To undertake appropriate risk assessment and manage identified risks appropriately according to relevant legislation and DfE policies.
- To ensure all policies are implemented and adhered to, and to participate in policy reviews.

Students

- To actively participate in decision-making processes through consultation within teams and groups across the site.
- To take the opportunity to respond to requests for feedback.
- To provide constructive advice and feedback.

Governing Council

- To work with the Principal, staff, students and school community to determine the broad direction and vision for the site.
- To review, approve and monitor the site budget.
- To approve, monitor, and review the school's Strategic Learning Plan in partnership with the Principal and leadership team.
- To consult with the site's community to assist when relevant policies are created or reviewed.
- To approve relevant local policies.
- To endorse the Annual Report to the site's community and Minister, at least once per year.
- To take part in the merit selection process to employ the site's Principal.

Consensus

Consensus is achieved through consultation with the relevant groups and, where appropriate, the whole school community.

Consensus means that:

- Individuals have had their perspectives heard and considered.

- People agree to support the final decision because they have been given the opportunity to contribute feedback, even if they do not personally agree with the outcome.
- People feel confident that the process leading to the decision was fair and transparent.

Consensus does not mean that:

- Everyone must agree with the final decision; rather, it means all viewpoints have been acknowledged and taken into account during the decision-making process.

Decision-making by consensus:

- Requires time, commitment, and thoughtful engagement.
- Is the preferred approach for decisions that affect the whole school.
- Draws on the ideas and perspectives of all those impacted by the decision.
- Is a collaborative process that encourages initiative, creativity, and high-quality outcomes.
- Depends on the decision leader ensuring all voices are recognised, whether shared verbally or non-verbally.
- Respects and values the diverse views and opinions within the school community.

Types Of Decisions

The Four Tiers of Decision-Making are:

Tier 1: Emergency Decision – No consultation required *E.g., response to critical incidents, urgent decisions regarding new EA conditions, inclement weather decisions, etc.	• The Principal, or a delegated staff member, may exercise emergency decision-making powers. • These powers apply when an urgent decision is required. • They are used only when the situation prevents the usual decision-making process from being followed.
Tier 2: Individual Decisions – No consultation required *E.g., classroom-based decisions, managing own workload priorities, workstation set-up, etc.	• Individual staff may make these decisions without input from others or formal consultation. • They are typically pedagogical or administrative decisions that do not directly impact other staff. • Staff may seek input, feedback, or assistance if they choose. • Staff must ensure these decisions do not fall within Tier 3 or Tier 4.

Tier 3: Limited Impact – Less formal consultation required *E.g., decision to implement Stage 1 Nutrition, changing processes from paper-based to digital, venue selection for Year 12 Formal, etc.	• These decisions impact, or may impact, specific individuals or groups (e.g., sub-schools, faculties, year levels). • They are often reached by consensus. • Affected individuals or groups should be consulted, though the consultation does not need to be formal. • The consultation approach may vary depending on the nature and seriousness of the decision. • Staff making Tier 3 decisions must ensure the matter is not actually a Tier 4 decision requiring broader school community consultation. • We can pivot from a Tier 3 to a Tier 4 decision as required.
Tier 4: Significant Impact – Formal consultation required *E.g., policy work, change to school start/finish times, uniform change, etc.	These decisions have a significant impact on staff or the broader school community. They require a formal, orderly process of consultation to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to provide feedback. Such decisions are recorded in a formal policy document (excel spreadsheet – Appendix C)

*Please note: examples included are a reference for decision-makers to determine which tier their decision best aligns to but are not limited to these examples.

Decision-Making Consultation

It has been agreed that at Mark Oliphant College Tier 3 and 4 decisions will be made with consultation of appropriate teams / groups or the broader school community.

Tier 3 Consultation will include, but is not limited to:

- clear explanation of the proposed decision including the purpose and desired outcome with potential impact
- discussion with relevant groups / committees / teams (e.g. RISE, SRC, faculties, year level, sub-school)
- reasonable and adequate time to discuss the decision and provide feedback.
- opportunities to ask questions and discuss within the group.
- reasonable and adequate time to make an informed decision.
- appropriate timing of communication of the outcome and justification of decision to impacted stakeholders (endeavour to ensure reflection on the decision being made, and who will be impacted).
- Reflection on whether this is a Tier 3 or Tier 4 decision (who is this decision impacting).

Tier 4 Consultation will include:

- whole of college consultation processes, requiring adequate time for deliberation and reflection to accommodate all preferred modes of feedback, e.g., surveys, small group discussion, staff meeting, etc.
- clear explanation of the proposed decision including the purpose and desired outcome with potential impact.
- discussion with relevant groups / committees / teams (e.g. RISE, SRC, faculties, year level, sub-school).
- time to debrief and discuss with colleagues.
- opportunities to ask questions.
- reasonable and adequate time to make informed decision.
- opportunity to provide feedback through small groups / teams/ surveys / emails.
- appropriate timing of communication of the outcome and justification of decision to impacted stakeholders (endeavour to ensure reflection on the decision being made, and who will be impacted).
- Reflection on whether this is a Tier 3 or Tier 4 decision (who is this decision impacting).

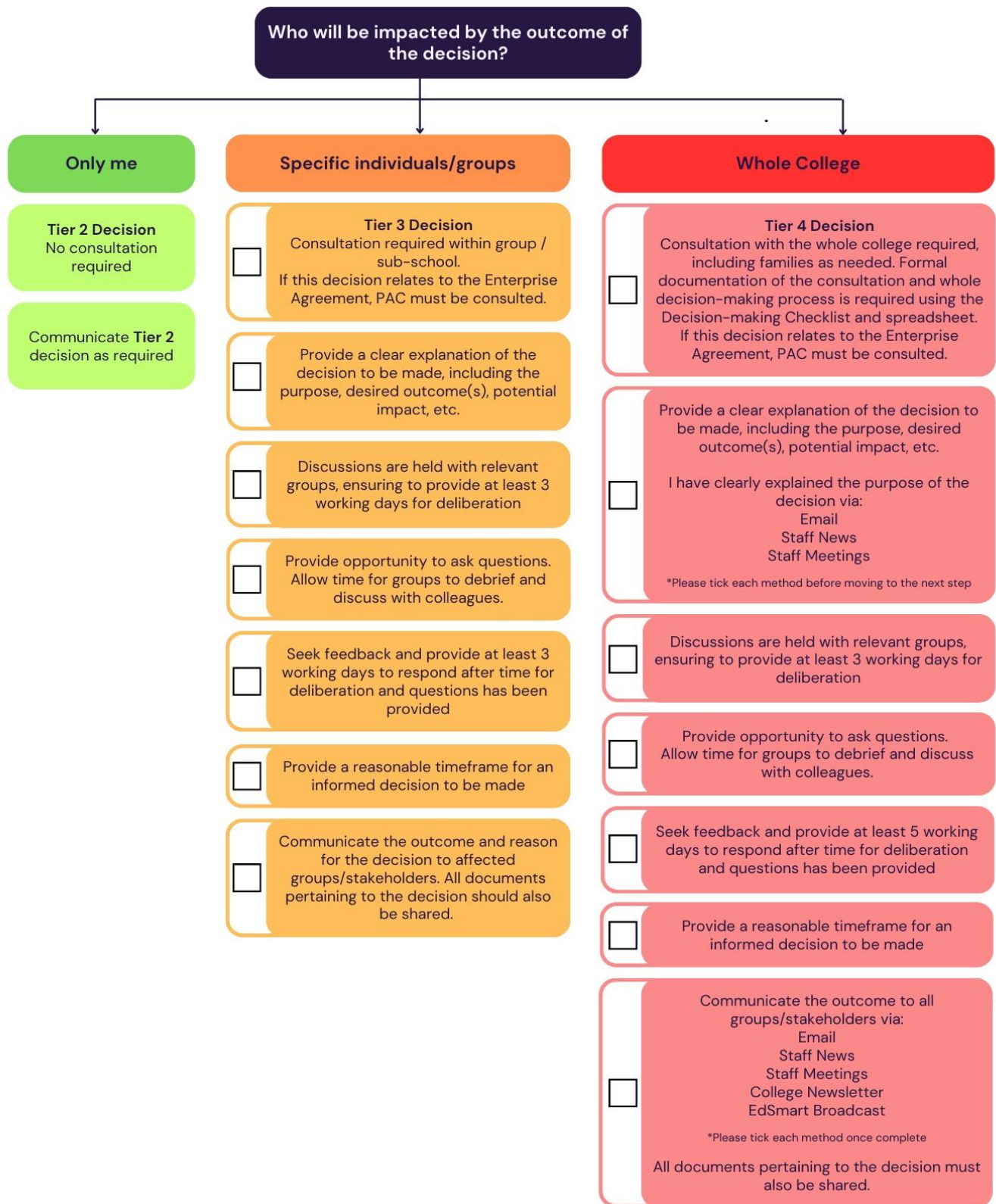
Decision-Making Outcome for Tier 3 and 4

Communication of Tier 3 and 4 Decisions will include the outcome to ensure a shared understanding of the decision:

- The process of decision-making is formally documented on the excel spreadsheet (Appendix C) and communicated with the outcome.
- The outcome is shared with all relevant stakeholders.
- The outcome of the decision including the reason for the outcome.
- The outcome is shared with all relevant timelines/documents, including relevant feedback.
- The outcome is shared via meetings (e.g. relevant team meetings, Governing Council), staff news and emails.

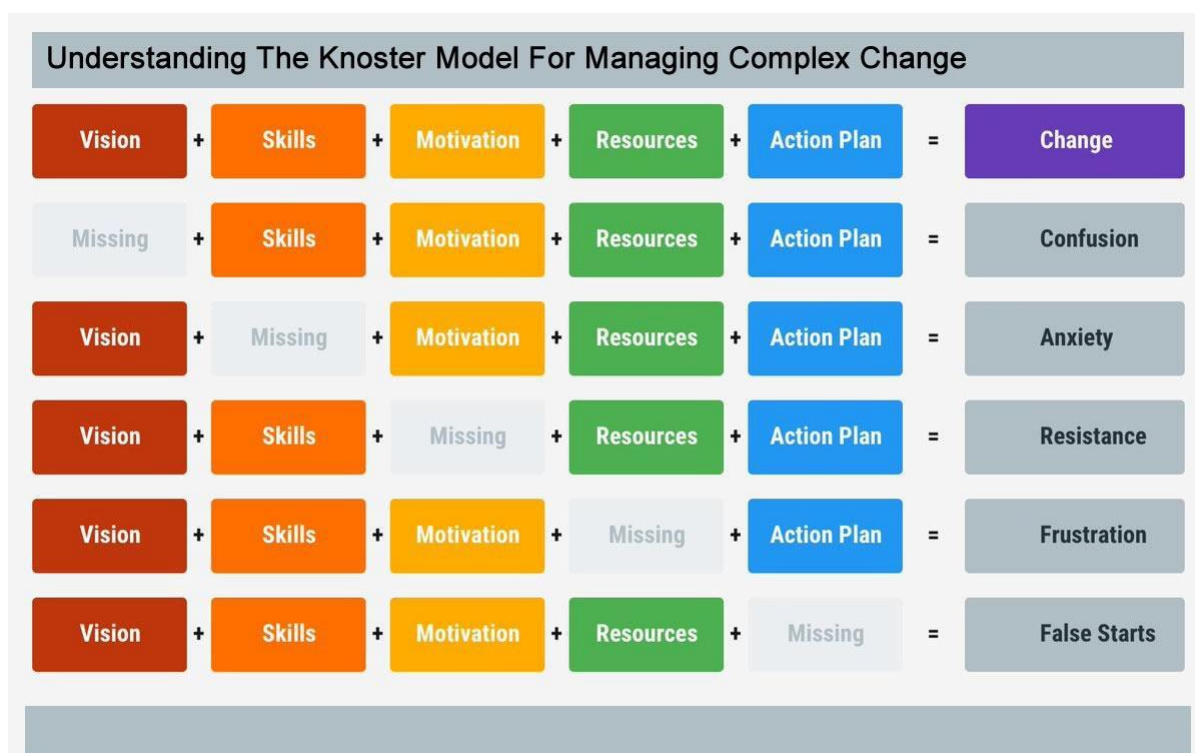
Appendix A

Decision Making Flowchart



Appendix B

Knoster's Model for Managing Complex Change



Appendix C

Decision Making Record

	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Date	Name	Topic	Communication method (email, meeting, staff news etc)	Summary	link to documentation
1	25/09/2023	Orio	Announced policy reporting review	Staff news	information regarding policy review and invited representatives to be directly involved	StaffNewsWeek1Term3.pdf
2	16/10/2024	Orio	Follow up information assessment & reporting policy	Staff news	Overall goal. Meeting cycle. 2nd Invitation to be directly involved	StaffNewsWeek1Term4.pdf
3	18/10/2023	Orio	Survey	Email	Purpose of survey including links. Proposed meeting frequency. 3rd invitation to be directly involved	Primary Years survey https://forms.gle/gDoLPBuNjPeb5yt6 Secondary Years Survey https://forms.gle/kCBJiqpPZcnfSmbCA
4	23/10/2023	Orio	reminder to complete survey	Staff news	reminder and link to survey	StaffNewsWeek2Term4.pdf
5	6/11/2023	Orio	Share survey results & draft policy	Staff news	links provided to survey results and draft policy	StaffNewsWeek4Term4.pdf
6	8/11/2023	Orio	staff consultation	Staff meeting	staff consultation at staff meetings	F-6 Sec Student Reports staff consultation.pptx Sec Student Reports staff consultation.pptx
7	13/11/2024	Orio	Draft policy	staff news	Request for feedback on Draft Policy	StaffNewsWeek5Term4.pdf
8	16/11/2024	Orio	Staff forum	face to face	Invitation to attend staff forum	
9	20/11/2024	Orio	update	Staff news	work with teaching staff to develop Draft assessment and reporting policy	
10	30/11/2023	Orio	Draft policy and procedure	Email	appreciated feedback and advised draft will be available asap	StaffNewsWeek6Term4.pdf
11	4/12/2023	Orio	Update re: Draft Policy and Procedure	Staff news	link to draft assessment and reporting policy and procedures including schedule	DRAFTS
12	11/12/2023	Orio	Update re: Draft Policy and Procedure	Staff news	information regarding consultation request to provide feedback on Draft Policy	StaffNewsWeek8Term4.pdf
13	12/02/2024	Orio	Evidence of Learning	staff news	Next steps: Governing Council approval in 2024	StaffNewsWeek9Term4.pdf
14	4/03/2024	Orio	Continuous assessment and reporting	staff news	Expectation to create task type and collect Evidence of learning. Offer of support.	StaffNewsWeek3Term1.pdf
15				Staff news	Explanation of evidence of learning	StaffNewsWeek6Term1.pdf
16						

File path [AR Decision making record](#)