GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT OF GENERAL SERVICES

2000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

School Improvement Team (SIT)
Coordination and Process

Role of the SIT

A School Improvement Team (SIT) will be established at every school where a major capital project (to include modernization, school replacement, addition, renovation or remodeling) is scheduled for the next fiscal year. The SIT committee's main focus is to participate in the development of the education specification and schematic design. However, the committee is expected to continue through the end of construction and be available to receive updates, consult on issues that arise during construction, and disseminate information to their peers.

Composition of the SIT

The SIT is chaired by the school principal (or a designee). However, most meetings will be coordinated and facilitated by the Department of General Services (DGS) staff or consultants. The committee is selected by the principal and is expected to include the following:

- Teachers
- School staff
- Parents
- Neighborhood Organization Representatives
- Students
- Representative of the Chancellor's office

Committee size should be 10-15 people. Note: While the Principal chairs the SIT, DGS will assign a SIT Coordinator to provide ongoing administrative support between SIT, Chancellor's Office, DGS Project Managers as well as project architects and contractors.

Coordination and Continuity

It is the responsibility of the SIT Coordinator to:

1) Identify all schools where major projects are scheduled to begin the next fiscal year
2) Contact the principals of each school to explain the process
3) Provide an invitation letter
4) Schedule and conduct the first committee meeting
5) Support DGS staff and consultants throughout the process to include printing, mailings, tour coordination, refreshments, etc.

The SIT Coordinator may not attend every SIT meeting however either the Coordinator or DGS Program Manager will be available for all meetings.

Process

Step 1. SIT Coordinator meets with Principal to discuss project scope and process. A tentative date is set for a 'Get-To-Know' meeting.

Step 2. Principal identifies school-based SIT members and notifies SIT membership Coordinator prior to the first meeting.

Step 3. 'Get-To-Know' meeting

- Discuss project scope and planning process
- Outline SIT role and responsibilities
- Introduce DGS staff and consultants
- Disclose number of meetings to be held during the project life cycle (Establish next meeting date and time)
- Obtain mailing list including email addresses, contact phone numbers and faxes of SIT members

Step 4. Educational Specification Meetings

- An Educational Specification writer (DGS staff or consultant) usually begins the process with a guided discussion of the assets and problems in the existing building, the expectations for this project and how the educational program influences the outcome.
- A second meeting may include a draft educational specification based on the District's standards, the feedback from the first meeting, and an understanding of the scope/budget.
- For smaller projects and most elementary schools, a third meeting may be needed to discuss any revisions to the initial draft.
- For more complex projects and high school projects, multiple meetings with subcommittees may be needed before a final draft is finally presented to the SIT.
- The SIT does not 'approve' the educational specification but consensus is desirable.

Step 5. Design Meetings (Schematic)

- The SIT Coordinator and Project Manager manage the design meetings and typically have 2-3 meetings to show concept designs/drawings and get feedback.
- The SIT does not 'approve' the design but consensus is desirable.

Step 6. Design through Construction

- The SIT Coordinator/ Project Manager may convene SIT meetings on a scheduled basis or 'as needed'

Information dissemination for SIT meeting

1. DGS will develop flyers/letters for distribution to committee through school Principal, community organizations and Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners (ANC), etc.

2. Send out information emails and regular mailings to stakeholders and parents based on mailing list

3. Develop news bulletins to create awareness amongst senior management (Mayor's office, DGS), ANCs, Parents Teachers Association (PTA) leaders, school authorities and the communities.

4. Phone calls and follow-ups as necessary