

Establishing a UBC (Unit Building Committee)

Some basics for successful UBCs in the past have been:

- Elections are held at the site to name the UBC members. The UBC chooses a facilitator or “lead” for the UBC. The facilitator leads the UBC meetings. The UBC may choose to name the PFT rep as the facilitator even if they are not an elected UBC member.
- To ensure that all voices are heard and the widest viewpoint is represented, it is highly encouraged that there is a UBC member from each grade level or department.
- Agenda – An agenda is prepared by the UBC facilitator a few days ahead of time and the UBC facilitator and the principal meet to share what will be covered. The principal may choose to add items to the agenda. This avoids the “ambush” approach. The UBC is a place to resolve concerns before they impact the sites as major problems.
- A process exists by which credentialed staff gives agenda items to the UBC facilitator. This has been done by having a standard form available by the faculty mailboxes, which may be filled out and placed in the facilitator’s mailbox, and added to the agenda. Another way would be to have a box located in the lounge area in which to place concerns. Each form should have the name/grade level or department bringing the concern forward, a short description of the concern, and a list of possible solutions to the concern. Listing possible solutions to problems is essential to keep the UBC from becoming an ineffective complaint session. This process also ensures that only school-wide concerns are placed on the agenda. The facilitator contacts anyone who wants to place a “personal” concern or a personnel concern on the agenda and finds a more appropriate venue for the concern.
- UBC meetings should be held at scheduled times, once a month. The UBC should be a set time and day (i.e.: third Thursday of the month, 2:30 -3:30) and be calendared at the beginning of the school year.

- A whiteboard or a large sheet of butcher/tablet paper should be posted in the room at meeting time. It might have three sections. The agenda items could be written on the left side, the discussion points in the middle, and possible solutions on the right. These potential solutions could be brought back to the staff for discussion/endorsement.
- There should always be a person named to be in charge of an “action item” with a follow up to be scheduled before the end of the UBC meeting.
- The notes from the large sheet or whiteboard should be typed up and emailed to every teacher. This would include a “to do” list with the “doers” name.
- When making the next agenda, put “follow ups” to any items which need to be further addressed

When conducting a UBC meeting, there are “ground rules” which should be followed. These are the same basic norms of any meeting. At the first UBC, these can be established, written down and then displayed at each subsequent meeting. This makes it easy to refer to if needed during the meeting.