**Notes:**

This agenda can be used to discuss and solve many kinds of problems, including problems with class meeting or Buddies implementation, students’ problems in the lunchroom or on the playground, and problems with communication processes in the school. Remember that Problem Solving Meetings are appropriate only for issues that concern the whole staff and that can be discussed without naming names. Individual problems or personality conflicts should be dealt with one-on-one.

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**Estimated time:**

30–45 minutes

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**Purposes**

- Discuss a problem.
- Generate and agree on solutions.
- Experience a problem-solving process that teachers implement with students.

**Materials**

- “Class Meeting Rules” and “Our Staff Norms” charts from the CSC Launch Meeting
- Transparencies of “A Process for Deciding on Solutions” (see blackline masters, pages 39–40)
- Chart paper and markers
- Materials relevant to the topic

**Before the Meeting**

1. Prepare the materials.

2. Review the “Discussion Facilitation Techniques” on pages 42–44 of this guide. Think about the techniques you will use to facilitate each section of the meeting and how you will help your staff be comfortable stating honest opinions.

3. Decide whether you will conduct the meeting in a circle (to model a Problem Solving Class Meeting as experienced by students) and plan space for this.
AGENDA

1. Introduce the topic by briefly describing the problem and how it has come to your attention. Explain that the staff is meeting today to generate possible solutions to this problem.

2. Review the “Class Meeting Rules” and “Our Staff Norms” charts.

3. Discuss the problem by asking questions such as:
   
   Q What has been your experience with this problem?
   Q How has this problem affected the classroom or school community?
   Q Why is it important to us, as a staff, to solve this problem?

4. Remind the staff that we want to generate solutions that are fair and respectful to everyone concerned, are reasonable to implement, and that build community rather than break it down. Use “Think, Pair, Share” to have pairs think about and discuss possible solutions to the problem. After a few minutes, have pairs share their solutions with the group as you chart them.

5. Show and read the “A Process for Deciding on Solutions” transparencies. Lead the staff through these guidelines to arrive at one or more solutions with which everyone can live. Facilitate interaction during the discussion by asking questions such as:

   Q Do you agree or disagree with what [Kevin] said? Why?
   Q What questions would you like to ask [Phyllis]?
   Q Does anyone want to advocate for another point of view? Explain.

6. Summarize the solutions arrived at by the staff. Discuss what the next steps will be and who will take responsibility for implementing them. Schedule a time for the staff to check in on how well each solution is working and to make modifications if necessary.

7. End the meeting by briefly reflecting on the discussion. Ask questions such as:

   Q How did this meeting work as a problem-solving process? What would help us the next time?
   Q How well did we follow our norms during this meeting?
   Q How do you use Problem Solving Class Meetings in your classroom?
A PROCESS FOR DECIDING ON SOLUTIONS

As a group:

1. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each solution. Ask yourselves the following questions and delete any solutions that do not meet these criteria:

   Q *Is this solution fair and respectful to all concerned?*
   
   Q *Does it teach the students to take responsibility?*
   
   Q *Can it be implemented with a reasonable amount of effort?*
   
   Q *Does it build, rather than break down, the community?*

(continues)
2. Work toward consensus, choosing one or more solutions with which everyone can live, even if a given solution is not their first choice. Reaching agreement may mean deleting, combining, or modifying solutions on the list. Discuss:

Q *Is there any solution suggested with which you can’t live? If so, what and why? How can we modify that solution so that everyone can agree?*

3. Develop a plan to implement the chosen solutions.

4. Schedule a Check-in Meeting in a few weeks to see how well the solutions are working and to make modifications if necessary.