

# VisionTree™ Professional Improves Efficiency and Effectiveness of District Level Decision Making

## Background

Escondido Union High School District is located in Southern California with a student body of over 7,000 students in grades 9-12. With a staff of over 800 teachers and professionals, Escondido continues to make huge strides in using cutting-edge professional development techniques and tools to ensure that all standards are aligned, rigorous curriculum is provided for all students and to increase overall organizational effectiveness.

## District Aim

Escondido regularly brings together teachers, professionals, school administrators and district representatives to gather group consensus on a wide variety of decisions ranging from the implementation of reading programs, text book decisions, credit assignment, curriculum changes and many other district wide decisions. With a diverse student population across more than 25 schools, it is often difficult and challenging to maintain meeting structure and productivity while creating system wide standards. VisionTree guided Escondido to keep their meetings organized and on track to deliver results based on group consensus. With VisionTree, Escondido was also led through the brainstorming process of identifying obstacles and generating creative ideas that were efficiently and effectively prioritized into action items for implementation and task assignment.



Pictured Above: Teachers and Administrators use VisionTree for strategic decision making and tactical planning.

## VisionTree Applied – Credit Assignment

VisionTree Professional was used in the case of credit assignment for high school English classes that involved over 15 representatives of the school district including several teachers and school administrators. Each team member had various backgrounds, beliefs and responsibilities that played an important role in their input to the decision making process. VisionTree allowed the team to gather group consensus and keep the team on the same page using the step-by-step approach delivered in the software. The team discussed all the options and factors they were facing and then rated them using sliding scales, which processed a decision results scorecard of their options in order of statistical preference.

Team members commented after the meeting that the structure of VisionTree allowed them to stay focused on each part of the decision making process and add a thorough level of understanding and confidence to their decision outcome. A decision based on group consensus was achieved in just one meeting, which had been attempted over the course of several prior meetings.

With a decision made, the team needed to create an Action Plan to reach their objective. VisionTree guided the group to enter all obstacles they were facing, along with developing creative ideas to overcome them. Using sliding scales, the team rated how difficult the obstacles and ideas were, and how willing they were to implement them. The action plan gave the team a complete summary of the meeting with specific start and end dates clearly defining the project timeline (Gantt chart) for deliverables, along with each team member's responsibilities.

## Conclusion

VisionTree Professional gave the Escondido team a highly efficient and effective way to have more productive meetings resulting in strategic decisions and tactical plans based on group consensus. Within two meetings the team reached both a conclusive strategic decision and a plan of action to present with confidence to upper management five months ahead of their target date. The district has already applied the program to decide on reading and English placement and is excited to continue using it for many other important decisions.