

BOARD'S AND SUPERINTENDENT'S WORKING AGREEMENTS

Purpose:

The Board of Directors is the educational policy making body for (school district). To effectively meet the District's challenges the School Board and Superintendent must function together as a leadership team. To ensure unity among team members, effective group agreements must be in place. The following are the group agreements for the Board and Superintendent.

The Board Job Description:

1. Members of the Board and the Superintendent shall work together as a team.
2. Focus on policy making, planning and evaluation, rather than day-to-day operations.
3. Make decisions as a whole board only at properly called meetings. Board members recognize that individual members have no authority to take individual action in policy or district and school administrative matters.
4. Support decisions of the majority after honoring the right of individual members to express opposing viewpoints and vote their convictions.
5. Recognize and respect the Superintendent's responsibility to manage the school district and to direct employees in district and school matters.
6. Give careful consideration to all issues brought to you by individuals and special interests. Actively solicit input and listen to all perspectives. We will operate as representatives and make decisions in the best interest of the whole district.
7. Value the role we play in the community and represent the district, when possible, by attending school and community functions.
8. Be an advocate for public education in the district, region and state level by speaking up for, and on behalf of public education whenever required.

Meeting Operational Agreements:

1. Acknowledge that two board members must agree before an item is placed on a meeting agenda.
2. Uphold the legal requirement for confidentiality on all matters arising from the board meeting in Executive Session.
3. Start and end meetings on time.
4. Attend regularly scheduled board meetings and work sessions unless a situation occurs that makes attendance impossible.

5. Cooperate in scheduling special meetings and/or work sessions for planning and training purposes.
6. Cast a vote on all matters except when a conflict of interest arises.

Communication Agreements:

1. Communicate directly with the Superintendent when a question arises, or a concern is voiced by a staff member, student, parent or community member.
2. Communicate directly with the Superintendent or Board Chair prior to meetings of the board to address questions and/or concerns about agenda items.
3. Communicate one-on-one, when an individual concern arises, with the Superintendent or other board members as appropriate.
4. Give the Superintendent a courtesy call or e-mail before visiting a school.
5. No individual board member, regardless of his or her position, has the authority to speak for the board.
6. From time-to-time the board may be required to make findings of fact that are appealable to another agency. In these situations, no board member will have personal contact with parties who have a personal interest in the findings and in the board's decision prior to the time the decision is made.

The purpose of this agreement is to help ensure that no board member will receive any information regarding a pending matter that is not available to all board members prior to the time the decision is made. Examples of such decisions include personnel matters, official land use decisions and charter school applications.

Annual Planning and Evaluation:

1. Set priorities as a board for board professional development annually.
2. Participate in annual self-assessment of the board's performance.
3. Participate in establishing annual expectations and goals for the Superintendent.
4. Objectively evaluate the Superintendent's performance and provide appropriate feedback.

Orientation of New Board Members

1. Assure timely orientation of new board members.

Role of the Chair:

1. Recognize the role of the Chair to speak for, and about the board and to describe the board's process and positions. Recognize the role of the Chair to convene meetings, develop the agenda with the Superintendent and execute documents as appropriate.

Board's Expectations of the Superintendent

1. Work toward becoming a team with board members.
2. Respect and acknowledge the board's role in setting policy and overseeing the performance of the Superintendent.
3. Work with the board to establish a clear vision for the school district.
4. Prepare preliminary goals annually for the board's considerations.
5. Provide data to the board members so that data driven decisions can be made.
6. Possess a working knowledge of all legal and local policies.
7. Inform the board of all critical information including relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage or critical external or internal change.
8. Distribute appropriate information to all board members.
9. Communicate with board members promptly and effectively.
10. Distribute the board agenda by _____ (time, day) prior to the regularly scheduled board meetings on _____ (day) of the following week, except when major holidays fall on Friday.
11. Respect the confidentiality requirement of board meeting Executive Sessions.
12. Treat all board members professionally.
13. Communicate to individual board members if a problem or issue is observed developing with an individual board member.
14. Conduct a self-assessment prior to the board's evaluation of the Superintendent's job performance.
15. Represent the school district by being visible in the community.
16. Provide follow-up information to board members on concerns and issues they have referred to the Superintendent - close the communication loop.

Superintendent's Expectations of the Board

1. Recognition of the superintendent as the educational leader of the school district.
2. Willingness to share the success and failures of the school system with the superintendent.
3. Assistance in gaining acceptance and support in the community.
4. Willingness to abide by its own rules, policies and code of ethical conduct.
5. Willingness, within budget constraints, to provide the superintendent with adequate staff and clerical assistance.
6. Willingness to acknowledge and follow the chain of command of the school district.
7. Respect the confidentiality requirement of board meeting executive sessions.
8. Avoidance of seeking personal privilege.
9. A willingness to participate in professional development activities at the local, state and national level.
10. An effort to foster unity, harmony and open communications within the board.
11. An understanding of the relative or complimentary role of the superintendent and board in policy making.
12. Careful consideration of each recommendation made by the superintendent.
13. Insistence on all available facts and data before making a decision.
14. Willingness to study and evaluate educational issues affecting the school district.
15. Practice of avoiding surprise items at board meetings.
16. Integrity of the highest order.