

PROTOCOLS for BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In an effort to maintain a high degree of respect and trust among the Board, the administrative staff, the teaching staff, and the community, we hereby agree to the following protocols to govern our conduct.

BOARD MEMBER ROLES/AUTHORITY

1. The Board is responsible for overseeing the finances of the district, evaluating the Superintendent and setting policy. The Board delegates the administration of the schools to the Superintendent and his/her staff.
2. The Board annually sets and evaluates goals for the district.
3. Board members have authority as members of the corporate board, only at a duly convened meeting. A board member does not have authority to take or authorize individual action.
4. Board decisions are binding on all board members. Board members are entitled to disagree on an issue, but once an issue is decided, all board members will work to support these decisions.
5. The Board strives to reach decisions through consensus.
6. Regular attendance by Board members at Board meetings is important to a well-functioning Board. When a Board member cannot attend a meeting, that Board member is responsible for determining what happened at the meeting, preferably by watching the video of the meeting that is posted to the district website. The member should also seek updates from other members as to subjects discussed in executive session, if any.
7. The Board annually evaluates the performance of the Superintendent.
8. The Board annually evaluates itself, reviews its protocols, and holds itself to standards of best practice.
9. Each year the Board will establish board committees, with each member serving on at least one committee. Board members will also serve as liaisons to other school-related organizations.

SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE/AUTHORITY

1. The Superintendent is responsible for the administration of the school district, and serves as the chief executive officer.
2. The Superintendent shall have the authority to organize, reorganize and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff, including instruction and business affairs, in the manner that best serves the school district, subject to the approval of the Board of Education.
3. The responsibility for selection of personnel shall be vested in the Superintendent of Schools, subject to the approval of the Board of Education.
4. The Superintendent shall suggest regulations, rules, policies and procedures for the operation and management of the school district.
5. It is the Superintendent's primary responsibility to provide visionary and inspirational leadership that enables the district to continually improve the educational experiences of the children.

6. The Superintendent is a visible presence in the schools to underscore that the most important interactions that occur are in the classrooms.
7. The Superintendent provides the board with the information and analysis it needs to formulate policy and take other appropriate actions.
8. The Superintendent creates and sustains a climate of respect and cooperation among members of the staff, parents and students.
9. The Superintendent acts as the educational leader of the community.

BOARD PRESIDENT’S ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

1. The Board President has no greater authority than any other board member.
2. The Board President serves as liaison between the Board and the Superintendent.
3. The Board President is responsible for sharing information pertaining to Board business with all members on a timely basis.
4. The Board President meets regularly with the Superintendent and Vice President to set meeting agendas. Leadership notes that summarize these meetings will be distributed to the full Board.
5. The Board President runs meetings in an orderly manner, utilizing parliamentary procedure. He/she encourages open discussion and deliberation, and guides the Board to reach decisions.
6. With the Superintendent, the Board President is the primary media contact and spokesperson for the Board.
7. The Board President makes committee and liaison assignments in consultation with Board members.
8. The Board President responds to written communications to the Board of Education from community members and notifies the Board of the original correspondence as well as the response.
9. The Board President oversees and coordinates the orientation and mentoring of new Board members.

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT’S ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

1. The Board Vice President has no greater authority than any other board member.
2. The Board Vice President stands in for the President when he/she is not available.
3. The Board Vice President works with the President in providing guidance and mentoring to incoming board members.
4. The Board Vice President serves as a sounding board for the President.
5. The Board Vice President meets regularly with the Superintendent and President to set meeting agendas. Leadership notes that summarize these meetings will be distributed by the Vice President to the full Board.

AGENDA SETTING FOR BOARD MEETINGS

1. The Superintendent and Board leadership (the Board President and Vice President) share the responsibility for setting agendas for Board meetings.
2. Board members can contact the Board President, and notify the full Board, to suggest items they would like to see on the agenda.

3. Board members, when possible, should let the Superintendent and Board leadership know in advance about questions or concerns that they intend to raise at the board meeting, and the Superintendent will do the same.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Rules for confidentiality are those consistent with the Open Meetings Law.
2. Board members shall not disclose confidential information acquired in the course of official duties.
3. Email and/or any electronic media communications should not be used for confidential matters.
4. Discussions in executive session must remain completely confidential. Board members shall not disclose any information regarding matters discussed in executive session. The only subjects that may be discussed in executive session are those that are enumerated under Section 105 of New York State Open Meetings Law:

§ 105. Conduct of executive sessions.

1. *Upon a majority vote of its total membership, taken in an open meeting pursuant to a motion identifying the general area or areas of the subject or subjects to be considered, a public body may conduct an executive session for the below enumerated purposes only, provided, however, that no action by formal vote shall be taken to appropriate public moneys:*
 - a. *matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed;*
 - b. *any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;*
 - c. *information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;*
 - d. *discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;*
 - e. *collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law;*
 - f. *the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;*
 - g. *the preparation, grading or administration of examinations; and*
 - h. *the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.*
2. *Attendance at an executive session shall be permitted to any member of the public body and any other persons authorized by the public body.*

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

1. Items for executive session will be limited to those subjects delineated in Section 1708(3) of New York Education Law and must be consistent with the Open Meetings Law.
2. The Board will meet in executive session only after entertaining a motion in public session, stating which subject matter(s) under Section 105 of New York State Open Meetings Law will be discussed.

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 - d. discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;*
 - e. collective negotiations pursuant to article fourteen of the civil service law;*
 - f. the medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;*
 - g. the preparation, grading or administration of examinations; and*
 - h. the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.*
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COMMUNITY INQUIRIES

1. As elected representatives of the community, board members may be contacted via their board email address.
2. Board members should direct parents who contact them with inquiries related to their child to work up through the hierarchy: talking to the teacher, the principal, and the superintendent before further involving board members.
3. Board members relay substantive criticisms, complaints or suggestions to the Board President and Superintendent, who in turn will assure circulation to the full Board when appropriate.

4. The Superintendent does the problem solving, with staff assistance as necessary. Board members do not attempt the problem solving.

MEDIA CONTACT

1. All official statements of board positions, as well as responses to questions, come from the Board President and/or the Superintendent or their designee.

MEETING DYNAMICS

1. Each board member has a right to be heard once on an issue prior to others having a second chance.
2. Board members agree to listen to one another and not interrupt.
3. Motions should be used to focus discussion on action items, and any member may "call the question" to test whether the board is ready to vote.
4. The Board President is authorized to focus discussion toward closure.
5. Board members should address the Board as a whole, rather than the public.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT BOARD MEETINGS

1. There will be an opportunity for public participation at business meetings, work sessions, and special meetings. Civility and mutual respect is expected during this discourse.
2. Public opportunity to comment or ask a question about a matter that is not on the agenda occurs once during each meeting. Questions and comments from the public concerning matters that are not on the agenda will be taken under consideration and referred to the Superintendent for appropriate action.
3. At the podium, each speaker should state his/her name. Each speaker is allowed one comment on an issue until all others have been heard, for a total speaking time of 3 minutes (to allow others the opportunity to speak). Comments should be directed to the entire Board, not individual members.
4. Interruption of board discussion is not permitted.

RELATIONSHIP TO STAFF

1. Contact with members of the staff occurs through the Superintendent. When contacting staff as a parent, a personal email account should be used, not a board email account.
2. Individual board members have no authority to direct District personnel.

INFORMATION SHARING

1. Agenda information should be shared carefully and consistently across the Board and with the Superintendent, in part to maintain a practice of "no surprises," particularly in public meetings.
2. The Board will be updated regularly through the distribution of leadership notes.
3. Email will be used for breaking news of a non-confidential nature
4. Keep e-mail brief and to the point, with sensitivity to overall volume.
5. Confidential news will come through executive session, Board Docs, or in an emergency, through telephone contact.

6. Information requests from Board members to the administration should be submitted to the Superintendent and copied to the Board President in order to maintain a reasonable balance of volume and content. Such information will be shared with the full board.
7. Inter-Board communication by telephone, e-mail or in person is essential, but should be consistent with guidelines for public and executive session decision-making.

Adoption Date: February 7, 2017