

Lodi Unified School District Governance Handbook

January 10, 2015

Board of Trustees

Mr. Joe Nava, *President*

Mr. George Neely, *Vice President*

Mr. Ron Freitas, *Clerk*

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Mr. Ralph Womack, *Trustee*

Superintendent

Dr. Catherine Nichols-Washer

Date Approved by Board: March 17, 2015

<p>EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE Unity of Purpose, Roles, Responsibilities, Norms and Protocols</p>
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<p><i>These workshop notes reflect the governance team's work on the creation of a framework for effective governance. This process involves ongoing discussions and agreements about unity of purpose, roles, responsibilities, norms and protocols that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits all children.</i></p>

On January 10, 2015, Lodi Unified School District Board of Trustees and Superintendent participated in a workshop on Effective Governance with the California School Boards Association. These workshop notes reflect the governance team’s discussion about developing and sustaining a framework for effective governance. The notes reflect highlights of their conversation about unity of purpose, roles, norms and protocols that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best serves all students.

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UNITY OF PURPOSE

What We Are Most Proud of About this District:

- Regardless of everything that has happened, we continue to focus on student achievement.
- We are implementing interventions and programs and are therefore doing a much better job of meeting the needs of our students.
- Throughout the financial turmoil, we continued to move forward.
- We are fiscally sound.
- We strive to be the best.
- We have good quality, caring people at all levels of our organization who make things happen for our students.
- We have restored most of the programs that we had to cut.

UNITY OF PURPOSE

What We Want to Accomplish:

- We need to always strive to work as a strong, cohesive team because that is what serves our students best.
- Agree on how the Board decides to move forward and establish the direction of the district.
- A unified voice on what we want to achieve.
- Making an impact on students in poverty and low-performing students
- A continued focus on excellence
- To understand the population that we serve.
- Strive to involve all parents in their children's education.
- Helping students develop a positive image of their future and a plan on how to get there.
- Provide hope and support.

Mission Statement

Lodi Unified School District will ensure the best education for students to be successful in life.

Value Statement

We Value:

Every student

High student achievement and accomplishment

Parents as partners

Diversity

Contributions and commitments of teachers and all staff as educators

Vision Statement

In Lodi Unified School District:

1. Each student realizes his/her maximum potential.
2. There is no achievement gap between groups of students.
3. We have a diverse staff that is highly qualified and enjoys its work.
4. Schools are inviting and responsive to parents, engaging them as partners in their children's education.
5. We provide resources to support quality education and safe, attractive learning environments in all of our schools.
6. We have a trusting, working relationship among the Board of Education, the school district, and the community.

Goals

- A. Meet Program Improvement requirements as all groups of students improve their performance, and make progress to eliminate the Achievement Gap.
- B. Improve the engagement of parents/guardians as partners in their children's education.
- C. Support an environment where diversity is valued.
- D. Maximize resources to improve the achievement of students in a safe and positive learning environment.
- E. Provide a comprehensive educational program that prepares students to be successful in higher education and the world of work.

*Adopted by the Board of Education: August 1, 2006
Goals revised: November 1, 2011*

GAINING CLARITY ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Role of the Board and Superintendent - CSBA:

School board “trustees” are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure the district schools educate the children in consideration of the interests of the local community. The role of the School Board is to govern the school district.

The superintendent is hired by the school board to provide the professional expertise in the day-to-day operations of the district. The role of the Superintendent is:

1. To work with the school board to develop an effective governance leadership team.
2. To serve as the chief administrative officer for the school district.

Performing Board Responsibilities - CSBA:

We Set the Direction for the Community’s Schools by:

- Focusing on student learning.
- Assessing district needs.
- Generating, reviewing and revising setting direction documents: (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- Ensuring an appropriate inclusive process is used to develop these documents.
- Ensuring that these documents are the driving force for all district efforts.

We establish an effective and efficient Structure for the school district by:

- Employing the superintendent.
- Setting policy for hiring of other personnel.
- Setting policies.
- Setting direction for and adopting the curriculum.
- Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget.
- Overseeing facilities issues.
- Providing direction for and voting to accept collective bargaining agreements.

We Provide Support through our behavior and actions by:

- Acting with a professional demeanor that models the district’s beliefs and vision.
- Making decisions and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals.
- Upholding board approved district policies.
- Ensuring a positive personnel climate exists.
- Being knowledgeable about district efforts and able to explain them to the public.

We Ensure Accountability to the Public by:

- Evaluating the superintendent
- Monitoring, reviewing and revising policies
- Serving as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated
- Monitoring and adjusting district finances
- Reviewing facilities issues
- Monitoring the collective bargaining process

We Act as Community Leaders by:

- Speaking with a common voice about district priorities, goals and issues.
- Engaging and involving the community in district schools and activities.
- Communicating clear information about policies, programs and fiscal conditions of the district.
- Educating the community and the media about issues facing the district and public education.
- Advocating for children, district programs and public education to the general public, community, and local, state and national leaders.

Lodi Unified School District Governance Team

AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP

Governance Team Norms and Protocols:

The Board of Education for the Lodi Unified School District is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public's interest in the schools, and to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

To effectively meet district challenges, the Board and Superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. Agreed upon behaviors or norms, and operating procedures or protocols, support consistent behavior and actions among team members. The purpose of the Lodi Unified SD governance team agreements is to ensure that a positive and productive working relationship exists among board members, the superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. Norms and protocols are developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed.

To this end, we have adopted the following meeting guidelines:

Meeting Guidelines

- We will keep our focus on the best interest of our students.
- We will stay focused on our goals and avoid getting sidetracked.
- When we have a difference of opinion, we will debate the facts of the situation and avoid personalities. We will address process -- not personalities.
- We will all work to ensure that there are no hidden agendas and that all issues and concerns can be dealt with openly by all members.
- We will respect differences, show respect and never dismiss or devalue others.
- Each member will take responsibility for the work of the team. We will each be responsible for the success of the meeting, participate equally and address concerns.
- Everyone's opinions count; we will be open to the ideas of others.
- We will work toward the future – learning from the past.
- We will be supportive rather than judgmental.

Protocols

STRUCTURE AND PROCESS

Effective governance teams discuss and agree upon the formal structures and processes, or protocols, used by the board and superintendent in their functioning as a team. These structures and processes guide the operation of the governance team and determine how they do business. Protocols are the agreements that ensure that all members of the team are operating within their agreed upon roles.

The following protocols were developed at our Governance Workshop.

Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership:

TOPIC: PROTOCOL:

**Responding to
Staff or
Community
Concerns or
Complaints**

Rationale:

- We care about the concerns of our constituents,
- But we recognize that individual Board Members do not have the authority to resolve issues and complaints.
- Problems should be resolved at the appropriate level within the district.

Therefore, when a Board Member is approached by a community or staff member with an issue or concern, he/she will:

- **Receive** – Listen without interruption and without preparing a response to the person’s issues or concerns.
- **Repeat** – Paraphrase or ask a clarifying question to ensure understanding of what has been said.
- **Request** – Ask what the person sees as the solution to the problem or concern. Ask what they would have us do with the information they have given us.
- **Review** – The conversation (and next steps, if any).
- **Redirect** – Put the person back into the system at the appropriate place.
- **Report** - Notify the Superintendent of the conversation so that she has the full picture and can follow through as appropriate and/or necessary.

TOPIC:

**Giving
Direction to the
Superintendent
and Other Staff**

PROTOCOL:

Rationale:

- In order to best serve our students, we need to show consistency and clarity so that the Superintendent and all staff know what we expect of them.
- We need to focus on our Mission and goals
- Clear direction is important in order to have a fair evaluation process.
- We need to show fairness to other Board Members
- We need to follow the law.
- This speaks to being honorable.

Therefore, we agree that:

- Direction is given only at Board Meetings through a majority vote of the Board.
- That direction is given to the Superintendent. She will determine how the direction is carried out and by whom.
- We will all support majority decisions.
- One-on-One meetings are for asking questions and providing information, not for directing or influencing the Superintendent.
- Factual information will be shared with all.

TOPIC:

**Public
Comment**

PROTOCOL:

Rationale:

- We wish to have orderly, efficient meetings.
- We recognize that the purpose of public comment is to inform Board deliberations

Therefore, we agree that:

- The Board President will introduce the item.
- If there is a staff report, it will be given and Board Members may ask questions of the staff member (s).
- Then the Board President will open public comment.
- The public will be encouraged to use “Request to Be Heard Cards.”
- Once public comment is complete, the Board President will close public comment.
- Once public comment is closed, no additional public comments will be taken on that agenda item.
- Then the Board will deliberate.

TOPIC:

**Bringing-up
New Agenda
Items**

PROTOCOL:

Rationale:

- Consistency with the District’s Mission and goals and demands on staff time should be a consideration when entertaining new items.

Therefore, we agree that:

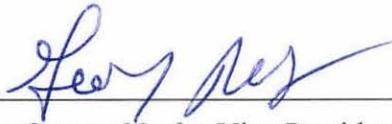
- At the designated time on the agenda, Board Members may suggest items for future agendas.
- Consistency with the District’s Mission and goals, and demands on staff time will be considered.
- The Superintendent and Board President will determine the proper placement of the item on a future agenda.
- Unless the requested item would require a decision due to a deadline, the item will appear as a Board Discussion Item.

We have reviewed and agree to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Lodi Unified School District Board of Education, Superintendent, staff, students and the community. We shall renew this agreement annually.

Affirmed on this 17th day of March, 2015



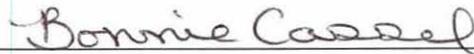
Mr. Joe Nava, Board President



Mr. George Neely, Vice President



Mr. Ron Freitas, Clerk



Ms. Bonnie Cassel, Trustee

Mr. Ron Heberle, Trustee



Dr. Daryl Talken Trustee



Mr. Ralph Womack., Trustee



Dr. Catherine Nichols-Washer, Superintendent