

BOARD MEMBER AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Background

The Mt. Lebanon Board of School Directors, representing the citizens of Mt. Lebanon, follows the Pennsylvania School Code of 1949, as amended, in all Board matters, including the election of all Board officers. Board officers are elected annually at the organization meeting, which is held the first week of December.

Objectives

The objective of this policy is to define and delineate the authority and responsibilities of individual Board members of the Mt. Lebanon School District Board of School Directors.

Policy

The Board has the authority to act only when a quorum is present at a duly called regular or special meeting. An individual Board member exercises the authority and responsibility of his or her position only when the Board is in legal session. The Board will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of any individual Board member except when such statement or action is in pursuance of special instructions (authorization) by the Board.

Within the capacity of Board membership, individual Board members shall represent the best interests of all the schools in the District. They will suggest issues for Board consideration, inform themselves on school matters, take part in Board deliberations, arrive at opinions independently and vote as they choose. Each Board member shall be committed to reaching and supporting group decisions that represent the best judgments of the Board as a whole. This does not preclude a Board member from voicing a minority viewpoint, but such should be indicated as personal, not Board, opinion.

Attendance at meetings is critical to effective Board governance. The School Code provides that where a director neglects or refuses to attend two consecutive regular board meetings, unless due to sickness or necessary absence from the district, then the remaining members of the board may declare his or her office vacant, and the office will be filled by the electors of the district.

It is the responsibility of each Board member to:

- Make it a top priority to attend all meetings, executive sessions, administrative briefings, workshops and committee functions of the Board;
- Cooperate with other Board members in defining what information is needed to appropriately address an issue;
- Prepare for all meetings and activities by reviewing background material made available to Board members.
- Contact the Superintendent when clarification or additional information may be needed;

- Direct media inquiries concerning an official District position to the Board President, Superintendent or official designee, provided, however, that this does not preclude Board members from providing their personal opinions so long as they are identified as personal views;
- Notify the Board president when a member will be unable to participate in a meeting or other Board activity;
- Assume responsibility for the following when unable to attend a meeting or other activity:
 - ◆ Advise the Board president of his/her position on significant issues to be discussed at a meeting or activity.
 - ◆ Assume responsibility to learn what transpired at the missed meeting or activity.
 - ◆ Accept all decisions of the Board that were made at the meeting or activity.
- Articulate his/her position and rationale on all major issues being deliberated by the Board.
- Advise those who may hold a majority position on an issue what modifications would be necessary relative to their position in order to receive one's support when one holds a minority position on an issue.
- Honor all decisions of the Board after due deliberation unless a decision is unlawful, immoral and/or unethical.

Individual Board members should refer all complaints or requests directly or indirectly relating to instruction, personnel or services to the Superintendent.

Individual Board members shall refrain from publishing, distributing, releasing or disclosing any documents, records or information containing or reflecting the predecisional deliberation of the Board relating to matters such as budget recommendations, legislative proposals or any contemplated or proposed policy or course of action. This preclusion includes any research, memorandums or other documents used by the Board in its predecisional deliberations.

No member, by virtue of the office, shall exercise any administrative responsibilities with respect to the schools or, as an individual, direct the services of any school employee.

Communication

This Policy shall be communicated to:

1. District Staff
2. The Mt. Lebanon Community

Adopted October 17, 2005
Revised June 21, 2010