

## School Board

### School Board Committees

#### I. Purpose

This policy provides for the structure and operation of committees and subcommittees of the school board.

#### II. General Statement of Policy

- A. The school board will designate board committees or subcommittees to advise the administration when it is determined that a committee process furthers the school district's mission.
- B. The board has determined that certain permanent standing committees, named in this policy, facilitate the operation of the board and the district mission, by the committee advising the administration on relevant educational topics and policies.
- C. A board committee or subcommittee will be formed by board resolution that outlines the duties and purpose of the committee or subcommittee.
- D. A committee or subcommittee is advisory in nature and has only the authority specified by the board. The board retains the right and has the duty to make all final decisions related to reports or recommendations which have had committee involvement.
- E. The board or board chair may also establish ad hoc committees for specific purposes as it deems appropriate, to be appointed by the board chair.
- F. The board reserves the right to limit, create or abolish any standing or ad hoc committee as it deems appropriate.
- G. A committee of the board will not appoint a subcommittee of that committee without approval of the board.

#### III. Appointment of Committees

- A. The school board appoints the following standing committees:
  - 1. Finance
  - 2. Policy
  - 3. Teaching and Learning
  - 4. Governance
- B. The board will establish, by resolution, for each standing or ad hoc committee,

the number of members, the term and the charge or mission of each committee.

- C. The board chair will appoint the members of each standing or ad hoc committee and designate the committee chair.

#### IV. Procedures for School Board Committees

- A. A committee or subcommittee will act only within the guidelines and mission established for that committee or subcommittee by the school board. Individual board members, or any three board members appointed to any committee, have no authority to bind the board on any matter unless such authority is expressly granted by the entire board.
- B. The committee or subcommittee will designate a secretary who will record the meeting highlights of the board committee.
- C. The power of a committee or subcommittee of the board is advisory only.
- D. Committee members who are also board members will not seek to hold a meeting of a committee outside the presence of administration or other non-board members who are members of the committee, and no committee meeting may be held without providing prior notice to administration.
- E. Committees will not stray into management work, and do not oversee or direct any school district staff, and do not have the authority to direct school district staff to take any specific actions or duties. Only the administration or the full school board may direct school district staff.
- F. A committee or subcommittee of the board will, when appropriate, clarify in any dealings with the public, that its powers are only advisory to the administration.

#### V. Expectations for and Operational Procedures of School Board Standing Committees

##### Finance and Facilities Committee

##### A. General Statement of Role

The school board, in its practice of prudent management of public resources, has created the finance and facilities committee to collaborate with the district's business services director and superintendent in reviewing and providing feedback to the district on financial issues. This committee deals with matters pertaining the school system's budget development and related recommendations to the board. It also:

1. Monitors the financial affairs of the district.

2. Reviews and maintains a long-term financial forecast.
3. Recommends to the board any budget modifications based on financial analyses and the needs of the system, while adhering to district policy.
4. Reviews contracting practices.
5. Ensures that budget allocations and expenditures reflect district priorities as informed by its strategic operating plans.
6. Reviews the school system audit, making the board aware of key risks facing the district, as well as strategies for dealing with any such risks.
7. Reviews financial analyses provided by the business services director, or other entity at their discretion, and makes related recommendations to the board.
8. At the direction of the superintendent and board, conducts periodic, more detailed, financial analyses.
9. Performs other such duties as assigned by the board.

#### B. Committee Composition

The finance and facilities committee consists of the board treasurer, two additional board members, the director of business services, the superintendent, any additional staff members assigned by the superintendent, and three to four community members with talent and experience in management and financial affairs.

1. The committee chair is the board treasurer.
2. Board members are appointed annually in January.
3. Community members are appointed effective July 1, in accordance with the board committee selection process.

#### C. Communications Expectations

1. Provides periodic reports to the board as necessary, regarding committee discussions and deliberations.
2. Provides reports to the board regarding requested analyses of specific topics.
3. Along with the business director, provides information to the district regarding finance issues, both in sharing information with the public, and listening to citizen concerns.

#### D. Meetings

Meetings are held monthly, unless more frequent meetings are required.

## Governance Committee

### A. General Statement of Role

The school board, to ensure sound governance and oversight of the district, has created the governance committee to collaborate with the district superintendent in making recommendations to the board on subjects that have districtwide implications, and which are more readily addressed in governance versus other established committees. Its areas of purview include:

1. Previews all human resources issues, including contracts.
2. Previews all legal issues.
3. Builds and monitors the working relationship of the board and superintendent, addressing relationship issues as they occur, including:
  - a. routine matters related to the superintendent's contract and employment; and
  - b. issues or concerns regarding the superintendent's conditions of employment, and communication with the board regarding same.
4. Develops procedures and an evaluation instrument for the superintendent's evaluation.
5. Develops and presents to the board annual goals for the superintendent and board.
6. Orients new board members, and identifies training and educational opportunities for board members to become better informed about school board governance issues.
7. Coordinates board self-evaluation procedures, instruments and training.
8. Develops guidelines for effective communication of board committee work to the board, district administration and public.
9. Assists with strategic and long-term plans and goals that are consistent with the district mission.
10. Performs other duties assigned to the committee by the board.

### B. Committee Composition

The governance committee consists of the board chair, vice chair, one additional board member, the superintendent, and any other staff members assigned by the superintendent and agreed to by the board members.

1. The committee chair is the board chair
2. Board members are appointed annually in January

### C. Communications Expectations

Provide periodic reports to the board as necessary, regarding discussions and deliberations of the committee.

### D. Meetings

Meetings are held monthly, unless more frequent meetings are required.

## Teaching and Learning Committee

### A. General Statement of Role

The school board, in order to promote active participation in improving instruction and curriculum, has created the teaching and learning committee to collaborate with the district's teaching and learning director and superintendent to coordinate and advance district instructional programs. The committee will make recommendations to the board on matters relating to teaching and learning, including the instructional programs used in schools and programs and their relevance and alignment to local contexts. Specific responsibilities include:

1. Works cooperatively with the teaching and learning director, superintendent and appropriate staff to monitor and assess instructional programs and professional learning aligned with student needs and achievement, in order to ensure equity and excellence.
2. Reviews initiatives, progress, outcomes, and the effectiveness of the curriculum and teaching and learning practices in achieving board and system goals and objectives, as needed, and as articulated by the district's strategic plan.

### B. Committee Composition

The teaching and learning committee consists of three board members, the superintendent, the teaching and learning director, and any other staff members assigned by the superintendent or teaching and learning director.

1. The committee chair is appointed by the board chair.
2. Board members are appointed annually in January.

### C. Communications Expectations

1. Provides periodic reports to the board as necessary, regarding discussions and deliberations of the committee.
2. Provides recommendations to the board regarding teaching and learning subjects coming to the board.

### D. Meetings

Meetings are held monthly, unless more frequent meetings are required.

## Policy Committee

### A. General Statement of Role

The committee reviews existing policies and writes new policies to provide broad governance guidance and address changes in legislation, statutes, case law and legal decisions, as well as district social and educational issues. Board policies act as guidelines for the internal procedures of the district. The committee stays abreast of local, state and federal laws and regulations to determine and apply implications for district policy development and revisions. The committee works closely with the appropriate staff to draft new or refine current policies, processes and protocols, that are then brought to the board for formal action. All district policies should be reviewed over a 5-year period.

### B. Committee Composition

The policy committee consists of three board members, the superintendent, the assistant superintendent, and any other staff members assigned by the superintendent.

1. The committee chair is appointed by the board chair.
2. Board members are appointed annually in January.

### C. Communications Expectations

1. Policies that are ready for updating should be brought to the board monthly for consent, discussion or approval, depending on what phase they are in.
2. If policy changes will have a major community impact, the board and district should seek community input and have a communications plan for the public.

## D. Meetings

Meetings are held monthly, unless more frequent meetings are required.

### Committee Assignments

Unless otherwise specified, board members will be assigned or appointed to committees or boards by the board chair in consultation with the board. Board members will be assigned to committees or boards no later than the second regular board meeting in January. Each board member should be assigned to at least one (1) committee.

1. Appointment to a committee should take into consideration, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a. equitable distribution of committee assignments among board members;
  - b. expressed interests of board members;
  - c. a board member's training, education and/or experience with the purpose of the committee;
  - d. continuity of service and historical knowledge;
  - e. availability for meetings;
  - f. the need for diversity;
  - g. the needs of the board; and
  - h. the proven ability to work effectively in a committee environment.
2. Should one or more representatives of the board be needed to attend a committee meeting prior to the board's adoption of committee assignments, the chair is authorized to temporarily appoint board members to that committee.
3. Assignments to a committee are effective until either the following year's approval of committee members, or board removal or absence for another reason.
4. If an absence is created on any committee, the chair may assign another board member to represent the board at a committee meeting for any duration.

### Committee Chairs

The committee chair is chosen by the board chair unless otherwise specified.

#### A. Roles and Responsibilities of the Committee Chair

The committee chair has the following responsibilities:

1. Assists administration in preparing background materials for the committee's work, incorporates the board's plans into committee agendas, and reports results of the committee work to the board.
2. Assists administration with steering the work of the committee, while also tying that work back in with the rest of the board.
  - a) The committee chair and responsible administrator, in conjunction with the superintendent and board chair, will come up with an annual plan, to be reviewed by the board.
  - b) The committee chair and responsible administrator will work with the board chair and superintendent on a monthly basis to plan any agenda items for board meetings.
  - c) The committee chair, in conjunction with administration, will be responsible for facilitating work session discussions on issues brought by their committee.
  - d) The committee chair will work with the responsible administrator on:
    - i) The responsibility for presiding over the meetings
    - ii) Setting the direction for the committee, and establishing norms and protocols that allow for appropriate and efficient function of the committee
    - iii) Providing guidance and communicating expectations to other committee members
    - iv) Ensuring that relevant, timely and effective decisions are executed, and that all committee members are provided the opportunity to participate in the decision making process

Legal Reference:

Minn. Stat. Ch. 13D (Open Meeting Law)

Cross Reference:

Policy 201 (Legal Status of the School Board)

Policy 203 (Operation of the School Board)

Policy  
adopted: 4/16/07  
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