



## **Board of Education Handbook**

### **Introduction**

The Board of Education holds the School District in trust for the people of the State of Michigan. In this role, members of the Board are expected to conduct themselves ethically, honestly, and in a manner that strengthens the public's trust and confidence; to exercise their powers and duties in the interest of the public, the District, and the Board; and to preserve and enhance the assets and reputation of the District for the education and betterment of current and future generations.

The roles of the Board of Education and the Superintendent are set forth in Policies 0002 and 0003 and the Bylaws are in 1000 through 1003.

The Board of Education (Board) Handbook is intended to provide supplemental information to that which is contained in the Board Bylaws and Policies. Board officers and trustees (Members) are encouraged to refer to the handbook for guidance in routine matters which may come before the Board. The Handbook shall be reviewed as part of the Board's annual Organizational Meeting and may be revised at any time as changes to Board practices that are not governed by the Revised School Code and other applicable law may occur. Revisions shall be made in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, and shall require a motion, public discussion, and approval through a vote of the majority of elected or appointed seated Members. Members are required to comply with all provisions in the Board Handbook.

***The Board's Code of Ethics*** Each Board member will be asked to acknowledge and sign the following Code of Ethics:

As a member of the Board, I will promote the best interest of the School District as a whole and will adhere to the following ethical standards and principles:

1. I will represent all School District constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender my responsibilities to any partisan principle, group, or interest.
2. I will avoid any conflict of interest prohibited by law or appearance of such that could result from my position, and will not use my membership on the Board for personal gain, where contrary to the interests of the School District.
3. I will recognize that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a public meeting of the Board.
4. I will take no private action that might compromise the Board or administration and will not share any document or information that has not already been shared by the District, including but not limited to confidential or privileged information.
5. I will abide by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.
6. I will encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow Board members and will participate in Board discussions in an open, honest, and respectful manner, honoring differences of opinion or perspective.
7. I will prepare for, attend, and actively participate in School Board meetings.
8. I will become sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the Board.
9. I will respectfully listen to those who communicate with the Board, seeking to understand their views, while recognizing my responsibility to represent the interests of the entire school community.
10. I will strive for a positive working relationship with the Superintendent, respecting the Superintendent's authority to advise the Board, implement Board policy, and administer the School District.
11. I will model continuous learning and work to ensure good governance by taking advantage of Board member development opportunities, including those sponsored by state and national school board associations, and encourage my fellow Board members to do the same.
12. I will strive to keep the Board focused on its primary work of clarifying the School District purpose, direction and goals, and monitoring District performance.
13. I will work through administrative channels and understand that the Board, not individual Board members, will direct the Superintendent and/or their representatives or other district employees.

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## 1. BOARD MEMBER DUTIES, TERMS, AND EXPECTATIONS

1.1. General: The general authority and duties of Board Members are set out in Rochester Community Schools Board Bylaws 1001 available on the website.

1.1.1. The District Annual Organizational meeting is held in June. At the June District Annual Organizational meeting the Board will:

1. Establish regular public Board of Education meetings;
2. Establish depository accounts and check signatories;
3. Authorize persons to invest on behalf of the Rochester Community Schools;
4. Authorize persons to enter into agreements with financial institutions for commercial card agreements, custodial agreements, and other transactions;
5. Establish authorized persons to sign in the name of Rochester Community Schools;
6. Authorize persons to enter District's Safety Deposit Box;
7. Designate official newspaper for official publications;
8. Designate District legal counsel representation;
9. Authorize tax collection for each municipality;
10. Designate a person responsible for implementing public notice requirements of the Open Meetings Act;
11. Designate an insurance carrier;
12. Designate persons to serve as Director and alternate Director to the MAISL Management Trust.

1.1.2. There are seven Board seats (6-year terms), which are elected on rotating terms in even year November elections as set forth in the Michigan Revised School Code and election law.

- As set forth in Board Bylaw 1001, all Member terms are six years, unless someone is seeking to be elected to fill a partial term.
- To allow for staggered terms, two members will be elected in 2026 (and every six years thereafter), two in 2028 (and every six years thereafter) and three in 2030 (and every six years thereafter).

1.1.3. Board Members are expected to attend each regularly scheduled Board meeting and participate in all committee assignments. In the event a Member is not able to attend, they will notify the President and the Committee Chair, if applicable, as early as possible.

1.1.4. The Board encourages the participation of all its Members at conferences, workshops, and conventions which provide a measure of in-service training and development. Members will notify the President and the Superintendent's administrator for approval and registration assistance.

- 1.1.5. Board members are presumed to know and understand all Board Policies, Procedures, and this Handbook.
- 1.1.6. Self-Assessment: The Board of Education believes in continuous assessment and improvement. Accordingly, the Board commits itself to annually initiating a Board self-assessment using an assessment tool approved by the Board.
- 1.2. The Board's Annual Organizational Meeting: The Board of Education Annual Organizational Meeting is held in January, per Bylaw 1002. At the January Board of Education Annual Organizational Meeting the Board will:
  - 1.2.1. Administer the Oath of Office to newly elected/re-elected trustees;
  - 1.2.2. Elect officers;
  - 1.2.3. Review Board Handbook; and
  - 1.2.4. Read and Sign the Code of Ethics found in Bylaw 1001
- 1.3. Election of Officers: Board officers will serve for approximately one year and until qualified successors are elected. The Election of Board Officers is held in accordance with Bylaw 1001. The procedure for electing officers will be as follows:
  - 1.3.1. When selecting officers for an upcoming year the elected and seated ranking officer of the preceding Board will preside until the election of a president.
  - 1.3.2. For a Member to stand for election, he or she must be nominated by a sitting Member. Multiple nominations and self-nominations may be accepted for each position.
  - 1.3.3. When more than one person is nominated for the same office, the Board will vote in the order of the person(s) nominated. The first person to get four votes is elected. If there are three or fewer votes for an individual, then the vote moves to the next individual on the list. If there is no one with a majority vote after the first round of voting, there will be additional discussion and a second round of voting.
  - 1.3.4. An officer may resign their officer position while remaining on the Board. If the President resigns, the office of President will be filled by the Vice President, for the remainder of the term. The Vice President may decline to fill this role. If the Vice President accepts, a new Vice President will then be elected by the Board within 30 days. If the Vice President does not accept the role of President, a new President will be elected by the Board of Education within 30 days of the sitting President's resignation. If any other officer resigns, the Board will elect a new officer within 30 days.

1.4. Board/District Communication:

- 1.4.1. Per Bylaw 1001, the Board of Education seeks to maintain open communication between itself and school district staff. Board Members seeking clarification regarding an agenda item for an upcoming Board meeting may contact the Superintendent and/or the Board president.
- 1.4.2. All questions or requests should be sent to the Superintendent. A Board member may copy a Cabinet member on an email if the item pertains to them.
- 1.4.3. In accord with Policy 1001, the President has the primary responsibility for all communications on behalf of the Board. This includes the responsibility to contact authorized legal counsel and to request opinions and legal services of counsel prior to an issue that may come before the full Board. Trustees desiring legal services for the Board should contact the President. In the event the Board President denies the request, the request may be brought to the Board for review. No trustee, including the President, is permitted to request services of the Board's legal counsel for their own personal matters. The Superintendent is authorized to contact legal counsel as needed in the conduct of the District's business.

1.5. Documents and Document Requests: Unless prohibited by law, Board Members are entitled to receive copies of existing documents. Requests for existing reports or documents will be made to the Superintendent and Board President.

- 1.5.1. In the event Board Members are requesting the creation of new reports or documents, the Board Member should first contact the President and Superintendent to ascertain how much time would be required to generate the new document. If the Superintendent determines that the request would create an undue burden on the District, the President may survey individual Board Members to identify their interest in said report. If the survey reveals that a majority of Members is not interested, the interested Board Member may request an addition to the next agenda that would instruct the Superintendent to create said document. The Superintendent shall be given a reasonable amount of time to direct staff to generate said documents.
- 1.5.2. Board meeting agendas, presentation slides, and accompanying materials will be made available to Board Members by 7pm three business days before upcoming Board meetings and work sessions. If circumstances prevent material from being submitted by the deadline, or if unforeseen, pertinent, time sensitive material is discovered in between the deadline and the Board meeting, the Board packet should be amended to include that material as soon as possible before the upcoming meeting.

1.6. Committees and Memberships: In addition to the requirements set forth in Board Bylaw 1001, Members are expected to regularly participate in Committees as follows:

- 1.6.1. The Board President shall be a standing member of the Superintendent's Steering Committee and may attend the Superintendent's Business Operations Committee (SBOC) or the Superintendent's Policy and Curriculum Committee (SPCC) if a member of the committee is unable to attend.
- 1.6.2. The Board Vice President shall be a standing member of the Superintendent's Steering Committee and the SPCC.
- 1.6.3. The Board Treasurer shall be a standing member of the Superintendent's Steering Committee and the SBOSC.
- 1.6.4. The Board President, in conjunction with the Superintendent, will appoint two additional Board Members to each of the Superintendent's committees following the January Board of Education Annual Organizational Meeting.
- 1.6.5. Board Members will be assigned as representatives to PTA Council, Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (PAC), Diversity Equity and Inclusion Parent Network (DEIPN), Rochester Area Youth Assistance (RAYA), Oakland County School Board Association (OCSBA), Oakland County School Board Association Government Affairs Committee, Michigan Association of School Boards (MASB), RCS Foundation, the District Critical Incidence Team (DCIT), the Sex Education Advisory Board (SEAB), Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee (DEI), the Career and Technical Advisory Committee, The District Wellness Committee, and as a Board liaison to schools as determined by the President.
  - If a Board Member is not able to attend a meeting of the committee they are assigned to, they will notify the President who will identify another Board Member to attend in their place.
  - Being a liaison to a school usually involves meeting with the principal one to two times per school year as well as potentially sitting in on a class, attending a PTA meeting and/or other special school activities. All activities at a liaison school are coordinated with the principal. Once attendance is scheduled, the Board Member will inform the Superintendent of their upcoming visit.
- 1.6.6. The Superintendent and the Board President, or their designees, may establish additional ad hoc committees as set forth in Board Bylaw 1001. Membership on said committees will be evaluated by the President immediately following the January Board Organizational Meeting.

- 1.6.7. The Board recognizes the importance of maintaining memberships in professional organizations.

Board Members who wish to attend conferences, conventions and/or workshops should notify the Board President in advance as early as possible.

Board members shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in discharging their official duties and in performing functions authorized by the Board in accordance with Bylaw 1001 and Regulation 5014.

- 1.7. Superintendent Evaluation: The Superintendent Evaluation provides an opportunity for open communication about performance expectations and feedback between the Superintendent and the Board. Responsibilities include:

- 1.7.1 Jointly establishing evaluation criteria by February of each year.
- 1.7.2 Establishing a timeline for a mid-year and optional quarterly reviews to track the Superintendent's progress and establish a similar timeline for a formal evaluation in November or December of each year.
- 1.7.3 The Board will work with the Superintendent to identify a mutually agreed upon evaluation tool. However, if an agreement cannot be reached, then the Board has the ultimate authority to identify the evaluation tool.

- 1.8. Board Member Involvement in Student Discipline:

Subject to Board Policy 2006, the Board will only be involved in student discipline matters as members of an Expulsion Appeal Panel. As members of an Expulsion Appeal Panel, Board Members' decisions should be based solely upon information from the district and the affected students or parents that is provided by the Administration. Board Members shall only discuss or deliberate the substance of a student discipline case during the relevant Board hearing or other specified time and such discussions will be subject to FERPA protections relating to the identities and other student information. All communication from community members regarding student discipline must be redirected to the Principal or Superintendent.

- 1.9. Board Member Involvement in Building Level or Operational Issues:

Board Members who receive information/communication from community members about a teacher or building issue should direct the individual to the lowest level of the "chain of command" that applies to that issue. See **Appendix A**.



- 1.9.1 If a community member informs a Board Member that there has been no response from someone in the “chain of command”, then the Board Member will direct the community member to the next level in the applicable “chain of command”. If, after the first referral, there is no response, the Board Member must notify the Superintendent, copying the President.

The Superintendent will contact the appropriate member in the “chain of command” and report back to the Board Member, copying the President, as to the method for following up with the community member.

1.10. Conflicts of Interest:

Board Members are subject to the Conflict of Interest Provisions of [MCL 380.1203](#). Board of Education Members shall, at all times, act in a manner consistent with their responsibilities to the School District and shall exercise particular care that no detriment to the District results from conflicts between their interests and those of the District. Should any such conflict exist, Board Members shall disclose those conflicts and work with the rest of the Board and/or the Superintendent to manage them, which may include recusal. Conflicts may arise in situations such as outside commitments, giving or receiving gifts, participating in the contracting process, participating in the purchasing process, or others. Having a child who is a pupil of the District alone, does not constitute a Conflict of Interest.

1.11. New Board Member Orientation

The Board and the Superintendent’s staff will assist each new member to understand the Board’s functions, policies and procedures before taking office or as soon as possible thereafter. The following methods will be employed:

- 1.11.1 The electee will be given selected material on the job of being a member of the Board
- 1.11.2 Upon certification of the election, the electee will be invited to attend Board meetings and to participate in its discussions.
- 1.11.3 The electee will be invited to meet with the Superintendent and other Administrative personnel to discuss the structure and functioning of central administration and the district as a whole.
- 1.11.4 The electee will be supplied with the same materials to prepare for meetings as the Board receives with the exception of Closed Meeting and confidential information.
- 1.11.5 See **Appendix B** for a list of items new board members should receive

## 2. BOARD MEETINGS

2.1. The Board generally holds one Regular Meeting and one Work Session each month. The purpose of a regular meeting is to approve items necessary for district operation. The purpose of a Work Session is for the Board, and community, to hear about a topic in more depth to gain a deeper understanding. There may be a work session on a topic that will lead to an action item at a future regular meeting. In addition, the Board may hold Special Meetings, which are meetings that were not originally scheduled at the district annual organizational meeting. This would also include a Closed Session meeting that is scheduled separate from a Regularly scheduled meeting. While work session tend not to have action items, action items may be added to an agenda by the President or by a vote of a majority of the board.

### 2.2. Agendas

#### 2.2.1 Developing Board Meeting Agendas

- Per Bylaw 1002, the agenda for each meeting will be developed by the President of the Board in consultation with the Superintendent
- Any three Board members may make a request in writing or verbally to the Board President an item they desire to have placed on the agenda.

#### 2.2.2 Use of Consent Agenda:

A. The consent agenda includes items of a routine and/or recurring nature grouped under one action item. For each item listed as part of a consent agenda, the Board shall be furnished with background material. All items shall be acted upon by one motion without separate discussion, unless a Board member requests that an item be withdrawn for individual consideration. The remaining items shall be adopted under a single motion and vote. Any item removed from the consent agenda will be considered immediately following the vote on the remaining consent agenda items.

#### 2.2.3 Typical Regular Board Meeting Agenda Outline (this may be altered as deemed necessary by the Board President in consultation with the Superintendent).

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Spotlight on Success
5. Communications
6. Public Comment (limited to a total of thirty minutes, if necessary the remainder will be prior to Additional Comments)
7. Consent Agenda

8. Reports or New Business
9. New Business or Reports
10. Remainder of Public Comment if needed (request for public comment must have been submitted at time of the original agenda item.)
11. Additional Comments by Board and Administration
12. Announcements
13. Adjournment

2.2.4 Typical Work Session Agenda Outline (this may be altered as deemed necessary by the Board President in consultation with the Superintendent)

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Public Comment (limited to a total of thirty minutes, if necessary the remainder will be prior to Additional Comments)
5. Communications
6. Work Session Topics
7. Remainder of Public Comment if needed (request for public comment must have been submitted at time of the original agenda item.)
8. Additional Comments by Board and Administration
9. Announcements
10. Adjournment

2.2.5 Annual Calendar of Board Reports and Agenda Items – See **Appendix C**

2.3. Board Member Preparation for Meetings

- 2.3.1 Board members will come to Board Meetings prepared to discuss and take action on agenda items by studying the information provided in the Board Packet, along with any additional information that has been provided. Whenever possible, board members will forward questions relevant to the agenda to the Superintendent and Board President prior to each Board meeting.

2.4. Board Member Conduct During Meetings

- 2.4.1 Board members will maintain professional and courteous behavior throughout each meeting
- 2.4.2 Board members will be respectful of fellow Board members, district staff and public participants.

2.5. Time Limits:

- 2.5.1. During discussion of any agenda action item, Board Members will be given up to two opportunities to speak for not more than three minutes each. This does not include questions that are asked. The Board as a whole may choose to increase the frequency or duration of the discussion with a majority vote of sitting Board Members.
- 2.5.2. During Board Member and administrator comments on agendas, comments will be limited to three minutes unless the Board approves an extension of the time by a majority vote of sitting Board Members.

2.6. Guidelines For Public Participation: The Board recognizes the value and importance of public comments on education issues and school district matters. Accordingly, as set forth in Board Policy 1002 and below, Members of the public will be permitted to publicly comment on matters relating to the school district. Members of the public may address the Board during Public Comment:

- 2.6.1. Permission to speak at any other time during the meeting will be solely at the discretion of the presiding officer of the Board.
- 2.6.2. Public Comment will be placed near the top of the agenda. The board will allow 30 minutes for public comment at the beginning of the meeting. If all those requesting to speak have not been able to speak during that time, Public comment will be suspended and then continued at the end of the meeting. Participants may only speak once during public comment.
- 2.6.3. Each speaker will complete a form requesting to speak and must then be recognized by the presiding officer in accordance with the latest version of Robert's Rules of Order. Each speaker will have three minutes to address the Board. During this time, each speaker will identify themselves by name and direct their remarks to the entire Board, and not to individual Board members, the Superintendent, other School District employees, or members of the audience. Speakers who are intemperate, abusive, use defamatory language or discourteous behavior when addressing the Board will be gavelled and reminded of the rules. Speaking time will not be extended due to not adhering to the board rules.
- 2.6.4. Per Robert's Rules of Order, Members are discouraged from answering questions during public comment; however, the Board President and/or Superintendent/designee may respond to public comments as appropriate. If comments or questions need further investigation or study, the Board may direct the Superintendent/designee to respond to the community Member later.

- 2.6.5. The presiding officer may terminate a speaker's privilege of address if an individual engages in conduct that constitutes a breach of the peace, which includes behavior that is intemperate, abusive, defamatory or discourteous or that otherwise interferes with the orderly conduct and timely completion of the Board meeting.
- 2.6.6. To provide for the orderly transaction of business during the meetings of the Board, any individual citizen or group of citizens requesting to address the Board, must follow these procedures:
- 2.6.7. Written statements may be given to the Secretary of the Board so that copies may be made available to Members of the Board. All written statements and documents presented by an individual or group to the Board of Education during the meeting are considered public documents.
- 2.6.8. The minutes of the board will reflect who spoke during each public comment section but will not attempt to summarize comments made.
- 2.6.9. The Board welcomes and encourages the public to share their thoughts and concerns with the board outside of Board Meetings, through "Talk to the Board" or through emails to the Board. Having an opportunity to follow up and reflect on the information shared prior to a meeting is beneficial to board members.

### **3. APPROVAL OF EXPENSES AND REIMBURSEMENT**

- 3.1 Board expense reimbursement process is identified in Bylaw 1001.
- 3.2 Superintendent approval and reimbursement of expenses:
  - 3.2.1 The Superintendent will be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses incurred in the discharge of their official duty, as well as for attending activities and functions that benefit the district. Actual and necessary expenses are those that relate to functions that have been directed by the Board or are necessary to the discharge of those duties. The Superintendent is expected to exercise good judgement and ensure that expenditures incurred are reasonable, necessary and in the best interest of the School District.
  - 3.2.2 The Board will approve all expenses. The superintendent will not be reimbursed for discretionary activities, entertainment expenses, purchasing alcoholic beverages, or expenses of a spouse, other family members or guests accompanying the superintendent in discharging their official duties or performing authorized functions. The Board may approve reimbursement of other activities upon request. The superintendent will be required to provide the same documentation as all other employees when attending events or submitting a request for reimbursement.

## **4. ATHLETIC AND COMPETITIVE CLUB RECOGNITION GUIDELINES**

The goal of these guidelines is to clearly identify who the board will recognize, the information those involved need to provide and timing for the recognition.

- 4.1 Coaches and Sponsors will submit a form for recognition.
- 4.2 The following information would be on the district website: The RCS Board of Education is proud of the accomplishments of our students and would like to recognize and celebrate school sponsored academic, athletic, and artistic teams and clubs, or the individuals on those teams or clubs that have won state or national championship awards or titles (i.e. came in first place and are equivalent to a Michigan High School Athletic Association championship). Coaches or sponsors must complete the following form to request recognition. The board will recognize students 2-3 times per year - likely in December, May, and June, if needed, of each year. The individual completing the form will receive an automated confirmation of receipt. Additional information, including the date and time of the recognition, will be provided by the board Vice President after submitting the form.
- 4.3 A form on the RCS website will include the following information:
  - Team/club name
  - School(s)
  - Coach/sponsor name
  - Coach/sponsor email
  - Coach/sponsor phone number
  - Name of competitive event
  - Date of event
  - Award/title earned
  - Number of students involved
  - Name and grade of student for individual awards, (provide multiple slots for adding students)
  - Provide any relevant details related to this award/title/competition
- 4.4 The link will be posted on the district website, where those inquiring about potential recognition will be directed.
- 4.5 During the board recognition, teams/clubs will have up to three minutes to provide information about the team/event/award/title. They will then have the opportunity to introduce each person on the team or the individual who received the award.

## 5. FILLING A BOARD VACANCY

5.1. Pursuant to Board Bylaw 1001, Board vacancies created when an elected Board member leaves, resigns, or is removed from the Board shall be filled using the following procedure:

- 5.1.1. The Board shall seek qualified and interested candidates from the community.
- 5.1.2. Candidates must possess the requirements as outlined by Michigan Election law. *See MCL 380.6(2); MCL 168.492.*
- 5.1.3. All applicants must submit a notice of their interest, in writing, to the President of the Board by the date stated in the announcement.
- 5.1.4. Each Board Member will be provided with copies of the completed applications for all candidates.
- 5.1.5 The Board shall consider all interested candidates.

### 5.2. INTERVIEW PROCESS:

- 5.2.1. If there are seven or fewer applicants, the Board will invite all applicants to interview at an open public meeting. If there are more than seven applicants, the Board will narrow the pool to its top six candidates and invite those six applicants to interview at an open public meeting.
- 5.2.2. To narrow the number of candidates, each Board Member will identify up to six candidates from the pool of applicants at an open public meeting they wish to interview.
- 5.2.3. Each Board Member's top candidate will receive six points, the second choice will receive five points, and so on.
- 5.2.4. The Board will total each candidate's points.
- 5.2.5. The Board will entertain a motion to invite the six candidates with the highest point total to interview for the position at an open public meeting.
- 5.2.6. In the event of a tie, the Board may either invite all candidates tied for 6<sup>th</sup> place or if they will only invite 5. This decision will be made by a majority vote of sitting Board Members.
- 5.2.7. The Board will identify three alternate candidates in the event that one of the top six candidates declines the interview process.

- 5.2.8. The Board President, with input from the Board, will draft questions for the interview round.
  - 5.2.9. After the interviews, the public may comment on the interviews and candidates.
  - 5.2.10. Each Board Member will identify the candidate(s) they are most interested in selecting to fill the Board vacancy and provide reasons for their preferences.
  - 5.2.11. All Board Members will be given a chance to speak.
- 5.3 SELECTION PROCESS:
- 5.3.1 For a candidate to be selected for appointment to the Board, he or she must be nominated by a Member of the Board.
  - 5.3.2 Multiple nominations may be accepted for a position
  - 5.3.3 Board discussion will take place after nominations are made and before voting occurs.
  - 5.3.4 When more than one candidate is nominated for the vacancy, the Board will vote in the order of the candidates nominated.
  - 5.3.5 The first candidate to receive four votes from sitting Board Members is appointed.
  - 5.3.6 If there are three or fewer votes for an individual, then the vote moves to the next individual on the list. If there is no one with a majority vote after the first round of voting, there will be additional discussion and a second round of voting.
  - 5.3.7 An appointed Member of the Board shall serve until the next annual School Board Trustee election, at which time the position shall be filled for the remainder of the unexpired term.
  - 5.3.8 See **Appendix D** for a sample application and **Appendix E** for sample questions to consider for candidate interviews.

## 6. PROCESS FOR COMPLAINTS AGAINST A BOARD MEMBER

- 6.1. Pursuant to Board Policy [1001], the Board has the authority to discipline or petition for the removal of a Board member against whom a complaint has been filed. These Procedures will govern that process.
  - 6.1.1. To promote objectivity and mitigate concerns of bias, when a complaint is made that the Board President (with advice of legal counsel if desired)-believes could



reasonably result in censure or disciplinary action against the Respondent Board Member, the Board may choose to select legal counsel to investigate and make written findings and recommendations to the Board.

- 6.1.2. The Investigator must submit a written report with their factual findings. The Board may direct the Investigator to offer recommended findings regarding the complaint, which may be modified by the Board. The Investigator's report will be treated as private and confidential to the extent permitted by law.
- 6.1.3. After the investigator's report is submitted to the Board, the Board may, in its discretion, convene a hearing at an Open Meeting, during which the Complainant and Respondent are provided the opportunity to be heard and at which the Board may ask questions of the Parties.
- 6.1.4. The Board may have legal counsel participate in closed session to discuss the investigation, findings, and recommendations.
- 6.1.5. Alternatively, if the Board has additional questions after receiving the report or after hearing the complaint, the Board could direct legal counsel to supplement the initial investigation and report with a follow-up opinion.
- 6.1.6. The Board's decision regarding whether a Board Member has violated their duties to the School District, policy, or procedure, must be supported by a preponderance of the evidence. If the Board concludes that the preponderance of the evidence standard is not met, they may close the matter without further Board action. The Board decision must be made by a majority of sitting members.
- 6.1.7. Unless set forth in another policy, the Board may implement the following sanctions if it finds a member responsible for the action identified in the complaint:

Written Censure;

Removal or Suspension from Committee Activity;

Revocation of other Board assignments;

Refer the Trustee to the Governor for removal from office if the member is guilty of gross neglect of duty, corrupt conduct in office, or any other misfeasance or malfeasance in office.

6.2. Process:

- 6.2.1. Members of the school community may submit complaints against Board Members through "[Issue a Serious Complaint](#)" on the RCS website.
- 6.2.2. If a serious complaint is received by anyone other than the Board President, the

recipient shall direct complaints to the website for filing a complaint or forward the complaint to the President.

- 6.2.3. The President decides whether the complaint, if the allegations are assumed to be true, could reasonably result in disciplinary action and notifies the complainant and the full board of that determination. Advice of legal counsel is permitted.
- 6.2.4. Once the President determines that the complaint could result in disciplinary action, at the next meeting of the Board, the full Board will discuss and vote on whether to accept or dismiss the complaint and whether to engage legal counsel to investigate. This discussion will occur without the disclosure of any allegations contained in the complaint.
- 6.2.5. If the Board selects outside legal counsel to review, investigate and make written findings and recommendations to the Board regarding the Complaint, then:
  - Counsel will provide the investigation report prior to the meeting at which the Board will make decision as to responsibility.
  - The investigation report may be shared with the Complainant and Respondent. The Investigator is permitted to redact the report before sharing it with the Complainant and Respondent to the extent required by law or when, in the view of the Investigator, it serves the interests of the District.
  - After receiving the investigation report, the Board may decide to schedule a meeting to hear the complaint, which may be in closed session at the request of the Respondent.
- 6.2.6. Complainant(s) will be given three minutes to address all charges contained in their complaint and Respondent(s) will be given three minutes to respond to each Complainant. The Respondent may respond after each Complainant or use the accumulated time to speak after all Complainants have spoken.
- 6.2.7. Any Board Member who is the subject of a complaint will not be recognized by the Board President except for when responding to the complaint pursuant to Section 6.2.6 or when answering questions posed by Trustees. The Parties are not permitted to question each other.
- 6.2.8. The meeting to hear/consider the complaint is not an evidentiary hearing, as each side will have had the opportunity to participate in the investigation. A party may have a representative present at the meeting (e.g., a lawyer or union representative), and may delegate their presentation to their representative, but having a representative at the meeting will not broaden the party's rights or change the nature of the meeting.

- 6.2.9. After the presentations, the Board will have an opportunity to deliberate. At the conclusion of deliberations, the Board may vote to substantiate the complaint in full, in part, dismiss the complaint or direct further investigation. If the complaint is substantiated, the Board will deliberate on the appropriate disciplinary action.
- 6.2.10. In the event the Board President is named in the complaint, then the Board Vice President would fill the role of President in the above process. If both the President and Vice President are named then the Treasurer would fill the role of President in the above process, followed by the Secretary if the others have all been named.
- 6.2.11. In the event four or more trustees are named in the complaint, the complaint will be sent to legal counsel for direction since no discipline could be approved without 4 affirmative votes by sitting board members.
- 6.2.12. Any Board Member named in a complaint may not participate in any portion of the proceeding that will waive attorney-client privilege, including reviewing legal opinions and meeting with counsel in a closed session. Otherwise, the Board President will only recognize the Board Member when the Board deliberates on the complaint as outlined in this process.
- 6.2.13. The Board's decision on the complaint is final and may not be appealed.

## Appendix A - Chain of Command



### COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY WITH SCHOOL PARTNERS



Rochester Community Schools believes that effective communication is essential for maintaining healthy partnerships with all members of the school community. Understanding the preferred sequential order when connecting with district representatives can ensure questions and concerns are addressed in the most timely and effective manner.

The process to raise questions and address concerns should begin with the staff member closest to the situation, leading up through the numerical sequence (outlined below) if needed.

Families are encouraged to use email as the most efficient way to connect with the appropriate individual.

Using the ParentVUE app, an RCS parent or caregiver can click on the “school information” tab to access the entire contact list for staff members in their student’s school. Phone/voicemail may also be used. All community members may call the school or building directly, or use the [Talk to RCS](#) feature on the district website at [www.rochester.k12.mi.us](http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us).

<p>CURRICULUM, INSTRUCTION, STUDENT DISCIPLINE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Classroom teacher</li> <li>2. Principal or school administrator, then supervisor if appropriate</li> </ol>	<p>TECHNOLOGY</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For technology services support, visit the <a href="http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us">district website</a> (<a href="http://www.rochester.k12.mi.us">www.rochester.k12.mi.us</a>)</li> <li>2. Principal or school administrator</li> </ol>
<p>TRANSPORTATION</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Transportation supervisor</li> <li>2. Principal or school administrator</li> </ol>	<p>FOOD SERVICES</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Food services director</li> <li>2. Principal or school administrator</li> </ol>
<p>ATHLETICS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Coach, then athletic director</li> <li>2. Principal or school administrator</li> </ol>	<p>FACILITIES, GROUNDS, MAINTENANCE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Principal or school administrator</li> <li>2. Facilities manager</li> </ol>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Central office administrator           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistant superintendent of business operations (includes transportation, food services, and facilities, grounds and maintenance)</li> <li>• Assistant superintendent of special populations, diversity, equity and inclusion</li> <li>• Assistant superintendent of early childhood and elementary education</li> <li>• Executive director of secondary education</li> <li>• Executive director of technology and strategic initiatives</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Deputy superintendent</li> <li>5. Superintendent</li> <li>6. Board of education</li> </ol>	

9-25-2023

## **APPENDIX B – NEW BOARD TRUSTEE CHECKLIST**

- Set-up an @rochester.k12.mi.us Board email address, provide waiver
- Set-up rcs-k12.us account to access Google Drive
- Set-up Docuware account for invoice review
- Set-up Diligent access to review board packet
- Order Board name tag
- Set-up MASB account
- Provide links to or copies of:
  - Board Handbook, Bylaws, Policies and Administrative Regulations
  - Open Meetings Act
  - Organizational chart(s)
  - Financial Audit and Current Year Budget
- Meet with Board President for overview, current topics before the board and how communications work:
  - Contact the Board – who receives, who responds, who is cc'd and bcc'd on responses
  - How communications are reported at board meetings
  - Explain Board assignments: Superintendent committees and school/group liaisons
- Schedule meeting with the Superintendent and each cabinet member
- Arrange for district photo for the website and ID
- Meet with technology to receive laptop and set-up email on laptop and cell phone.
- Meet with VP and Treasurer to receive an update on Superintendent's Policy and Curriculum Committee and the Superintendent's Business and Operations Committee
- Update on active litigation and any foreseeable legal/financial risks
- HR/Staffing update for the district
- Strategic Plan Update
- Establish dates for attending Superintendent Evaluation Training and MASB class 101

### APPENDIX C - BOARD OF EDUCATION - ANNUAL CALENDAR

Purpose: The Calendar below reflects a planned schedule for reports, agenda items and/or other reminders to help the Board meet its responsibilities as outlined by Board Policy and best practice through MASB. This schedule should be used as a guideline but may require changes based on the needs of the Board, District or state requirements. The Board's responsibilities include:

	* Setting Policy
	* Evaluation of the Superintendent
	* Strategic Planning
	* Budget Review
	* Strategic Planning Updates Monthly
July	* Board Self-Evaluation * Superintendent mid-year evaluation * Attendance and Discipline Data Reports
July / August	* Review status of all contracts and plan for Bargaining Strategy if applicable * Legal update on any outstanding issues
August	* Enrollment Updates * Staffing Update
September	* Estimate of End of Year Financial Condition (pre-audit) * Enrollment Updates
October	* Enrollment Updates * Annual Education Report - Review of Student Achievement Data and Practices * Safety and Security EOP Review (bi-annually in even years)
November	* Annual Audit Report - Review of District Financial Condition * Compile Necessary Information to Complete Superintendent Evaluation and Review Superintendent Contract
November/ December	* Review 1st Budget Amendment for Current Year * Superintendent Evaluation and Merit Pay Consideration
December	* Begin discussions of Board Officers for Following Year * Board Athletic and Academic Recognition * Course adoption if needed
January	* Seat new Board Members (as needed) * Elect Officers (annually) * Review and sign the Code of Ethics as found in Bylaw 1001 * Review the Board Handbook and Revise as necessary * Identify Superintendent Goals and Objectives for the Year * Board/Superintendent Workshop (as needed) * Attendance and Discipline Data Reports
February	* Begin Budget Planning Discussions for Following Year * Infrastructure Assessment and Sinking/Bond Coverage of Needs * Update on any Upcoming Contract Negotiations if Needed
February/March	* Update on any Upcoming Contract Negotiations if Needed
March	* Update on any upcoming contract negotiations if needed * Enrollment Projections
March/April	* Review 2nd Budget Amendment for Current Year
April	* Superintendent Informal 3 month evaluation review * Review the Superintendent's Contract for salary or term changes
April/May	* Initial Budget Projections for the Following Year
May	* Review Curriculum Material Needs for the Following Year * Report from MiCIP TEAM on District Goals, Alignment with Strategic Plan and approval of following year's goals * Board Athletic and Academic Recognition
May/June	* Oakland Schools Budget Resolution, BOE Election (as needed) * Oakland County Parent Advisory Committee Representatives (as needed) * Review Final Budget Amendment for the Current Year
June	* District Organizational Meeting Items * Approve Budget for the Following Year * Truth in Budget and Taxation Public Hearing * Retiree Recognition * Approve Strategic Plan Projects for the Following Year * Central Office Contracts

**APPENDIX D – SAMPLE APPLICATION**

Rochester Community Schools Board of Education

Board Member Vacancy Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a U.S. Citizen?      YES ☐ NO ☐

Are you a registered voter in the Rochester Community Schools district?   YES ☐ NO ☐

Have you been convicted of a Felony? YES ☐ NO ☐

Are you aware of any personal or economic interests or business relationships that could restrict your ability to effectively serve in this non-partisan role? This may include participation in other groups, advocacy roles, etc? If yes, please explain.      YES ☐ NO ☐

**EACH RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS SHOULD BE 200 WORDS OR LESS.**

1.      An average month for a school Board Member includes approximately 3-4 scheduled meetings, often in addition to other school or community related activities. There is also daily email correspondence, required reading and district updates. How will you fit this into your schedule?
  
- 6.3.    If appointed to the Board, would you seek re-election when the appointment expires? Why or why not?
  
- 6.4.    Explain why you are interested in serving as a Member of the Rochester Community Schools Board of Education. (200 words or less)
  
- 6.5.    Provide biographical information and relevant qualities and skills you would bring to the position. (200 words or less)
  
- 6.6.    On a continuum of “detail-oriented doer” to “big picture thinker”, where do you tend to be most comfortable operating? Why? How do you see this approach fitting with the role of a Board Member?

6.7. What do you think should be the top priority for the district, and how would you, as a Board Member, support that priority?



## **APPENDIX E– Sample Questions for Board Candidate**

Provided are some sample questions to start with, but it is always recommended to customize questions to meet the specific and unique qualities and issues of the sitting Board, school, and community. Once the questions are selected, you may want to have a rating scale for each question so you can fairly evaluate responses.

1. Why are you interested in serving on the school Board?
2. What do you see as the role of a school Board Member?
3. What contributions can you make to this school district?
4. How do you feel the school district can improve the academic achievement of students and the professional development of the staff?
5. What are the challenges facing our school district?
6. What are the biggest challenges facing public education today?
7. What approach would you take to helping pass millage renewals, millage increases or Headlee override elections? (If applicable now or in the future)
8. What qualities, skills and experience would you bring to the Board?
9. If you were faced with a tough issue as a Board Member (raising taxes, cutting staff, programs), what kind of data would you need to help you make your decision?
10. What do you see as the roles and responsibilities of school Board Members?
11. At times you may be caught between legitimately opposing points of view. There may be a difference between your personal point of view and the policy or law that you are required to uphold as a Board Member. How will you handle this?
12. What do you think are the most important skills for students to have when they graduate?
13. Describe how you'll advocate openness and democratic processes in all Board activities with emphasis on team decision-making and consensus.
14. Are you willing to pursue the skills, the knowledge and the training necessary to become a fully functioning and effective Board Member? Provide examples of how you might accomplish this.
15. When voting on issues, are you always willing to put learning first and give primacy to what is best for children?
16. In the challenging times that we are facing this year, why have you decided to be a part of

- the decision-making process?
17. What would you like to see changed in the district and how do you envision your role in that change?
  18. An average month for a school Board Member includes three to four scheduled meetings and perhaps another five school or community related activities. In addition, there's daily email correspondence, required reading and district updates. How will you fit this into your schedule?
  19. As a Board Member you may be asked to make decisions where you must put what's best for the students and district above what's best for you, your family, your friends and your school. What does this mean to you?
  20. After review and discussion of significant issues, the Board operates by a majority vote of those elected or appointed. When the majority vote is different from your position how would you manage the situation?
  21. What are your beliefs about the use of technology in education?
  22. Working effectively with other school Board Members and the superintendent requires skills in communication and decision-making. How do you see yourself working with other Members of the leadership team? What is your vision for education in this community?
  23. How can a Board know if its goals are being accomplished and its policies carried out?
  24. How do you view the relationship between the Board of Education and the administration/staff?
  25. If appointed to the Board, would you seek re-election when the appointment expires?
  26. Describe your response if a parent cornered you in the grocery store and asked for your support on a particularly hot issue?
  27. What will you do to become more effective as a Board Member?
  28. Identify a recent Board decision that you felt strongly about and describe how you would balance community concerns, student needs, state and federal law, staff considerations and your personal value and beliefs to determine how to vote on the issue.