



NCSD SCHOOL BOARD CHAIR - POSITION DESCRIPTION

Duties and Authority of the Board Chair

Board policy designates most duties and obligations of the chair. It is important for any new Board Chair to review pertinent district policies to understand governing authorities and parameters. This will help clarify responsibilities from the moment the chair and other officers take their positions.

When the Board Chair speaks to an issue, the public and the media assume that the chair's statement is the opinion of the entire Board of Education. Consequently, Board Chairs must be careful, thoughtful and clear when commenting on any issue in public or to reporters; they must clarify whether they are speaking for the Board or expressing their own opinion.

The Board Chair should be aware discussions with union leadership might be interpreted as official action. Therefore caution should be utilized in all discussions until the full board has taken official action and thereafter.

Serving on a Board of Education is a volunteer effort that requires many hours of diligent work. Serving as Board Chair requires significantly more time and effort. Don't let the position of chairperson become overwhelming. Be willing to delegate work to other board members as appropriate. (For example, the NCSD Board Chair has typically assigned a sub-committee to develop the superintendent evaluation process.)

Typical Board Chair Responsibilities:

- Presiding at all meetings of the board and performing all duties imposed by Board Policy BCB, ORS 255.335, and ORS 332.040-057, as well as duties proscribed by board policies, rules and regulations;
- Working with the superintendent in planning the board's agendas;
- Representing the District and the Board at official functions, except when this responsibility is delegated to others;
- Being responsible for the orderly conduct of all board meetings;
- Calling special meetings when required;
- Appointing all committees and serving as an ex-officio member of those committees, unless otherwise ordered by the Board;
- Keeping the vice-chair informed on all pertinent matters;
- Acting as a resource to the Superintendent on decisions that may require further information between board meetings;
- Signing the minutes and other official documents that require the signature of the chair;
- Assuming other duties authorized by the Board.

The Board Chair's Authority and Responsibilities at Board Meetings

- Starting and ending the meeting on time.
- Setting a positive tone for the meeting.
- Preserving order.
- Moving the meeting along by adhering to the agenda.
- Keeping discussion centered on the agenda issue.
- Allowing all sides of an issue the opportunity to be heard.
- Treating all board members fairly and equally.
- Understanding basic parliamentary procedures.
- Bringing issues to a conclusion.

Parliamentary Skills of a Board Chair

- Recognize differences of opinion and ideas, identify areas of compromise, and conciliate differences.
- Ensure all board members have the opportunity to participate. Keep the discussion on the issue.
- Establish rules of conduct, model professional and ethical behavior. Be respectful of others.
- Ask for relevant facts and data, support fellow board member's requests if appropriate as a formal request to the Superintendent.
- Check to see if the Board is ready to take action.
- Recognize conflict may arise; help the Board navigate through it.
- Review the discussion, define its content. Bring out important points and identify needed actions.

Board Chair and Superintendent Relationship

The Board Chair and Vice Chair collaborate with the Superintendent on the meeting agendas and policy issues facing the Board.

Keeping the lines of communication open between the Board Chair and the Superintendent benefits the entire Board and school district. The Board Chair facilitates a trusting and collaborative working relationship with the Superintendent.

It is especially important for the Board Chair to have an open working relationship with the Superintendent. The Superintendent needs to be able to discuss matters with the Board Chair without fear of repercussions.