

Governing Style

The board will govern first and foremost with an emphasis on positive outcomes for students:

1. Encourage diversity in viewpoints and create an environment which encourages the sharing of diverse viewpoints during board discussions.
2. Conduct the work of the board with care and respect.
3. Assume positive intent of both each other and district staff.
4. Foster an environment where matters before the board can be discussed openly and collaboratively.
5. Focus on strategic leadership rather than administrative detail.
6. Observe clear distinction between board and superintendent roles.
7. Make collective rather than individual decisions and respect the decision-making process by owning the collective decisions of the board.
8. Exhibit future orientation rather than past or present and govern proactively rather than reactively

Accordingly, the board will maintain the following practices:

1. The board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The board, not the superintendent or staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The board will use the expertise of individual board members to enhance the performance of the board as a body but will not substitute individual judgments and opinions for the board's collective values.
2. Board members will be professional and collaborative and will adhere to the following:
 - a. Focus on issues rather than personalities.
 - b. Strive to assume positive intent and actively cultivate an environment where matters before the board can be discussed openly and collaboratively addressed.
 - c. Meet informally with one another should a misunderstanding or problem arise and strive for ongoing communication with each other.
 - d. Respect decisions of the full board, even if casting a dissenting vote. Once decisions have been made, respect the decisions of the majority both in the boardroom and in the community.
 - e. Exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming each other.
 - f. Criticize privately, praise publicly.
 - g. Make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the district and one another.
 - h. Never embarrass each other or the district.
 - i. Use work sessions to allow board members to learn about and discuss important topics, including data from the Results policy.

- j. Be mindful that individual board members are viewed in the public eye as representing the board but that no individual board member has the authority to speak for the board, except for the chair.
 - k. Ask questions prior to meetings and come prepared to fully participate.
3. The board will hold itself accountable for governing with excellence. This self-discipline will apply to the following:
- a. Attendance
 - b. Preparation for meetings
 - c. Adherence to policymaking principles
 - d. Respect of roles
 - e. Ensuring effective governance capability into the future
4. To ensure the board’s business meetings are conducted with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, and to facilitate decision-making, board members will maintain the following practices:
- a. Follow *Robert’s Rules of Order for Small Meetings, Revised*
 - b. Speak only when recognized during meetings.
 - c. Not interrupt each other during meetings.
 - d. Not engage in side conversations during meetings.
 - e. Ask questions for clarification.
 - f. Listen for content and understanding.
 - g. Ensure all voices of board members and student advisors are heard.
 - h. During discussion adhere to no more than two minutes per person with two opportunities to speak.
 - i. Not repeat what has already been said during meetings.
 - j. Call the question when discussion is repetitive.
 - k. Support the board chair’s efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting.
 - l. Communicate questions and concerns to the chair and superintendent ahead of a meeting to avoid surprises.
 - m. Ensure that all board members’ voices are heard.
5. To ensure effective communication, the board will:
- a. Recognize the role of the chair to speak for and about the board to the press and public groups
 - b. Allow the chair to respond to email sent to the entire board.
 - c. Expect that board leadership will keep the board apprised of the logistical matters about meetings and upcoming topics.
 - d. Direct information requests that will take a significant amount of staff time to the chair. Concerns regarding students or an issue within the district should be forwarded to the superintendent so that the appropriate person may respond.
 - e. Retain their rights as individual board directors to speak and communicate in their individual capacity as elected board directors to their constituents and exercise their constitutional free speech and other rights, including the right to dissent and debate while voting. Though board members may respond individually to constituents, they may not speak on behalf of the board.



6. The board will direct, control, and inspire the district through the careful establishment of written policies reflecting the board’s values and perspectives. The board’s major policy focus will be on the intended long-term benefits for students, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those benefits. Accordingly, members will not engage in the following:
 - a. Assume responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints
 - b. Give personal direction to any part of the operational organization
7. To ensure continued improvement, continual board development will include orientation of new board members in July about the governance process, and periodic discussion and evaluation of the board’s processes.
8. The board will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling its commitments.
9. The board will monitor its processes and performance on an annual basis.
10. By majority vote of board members, the board may revise or amend its policies at any time. However, normally a proposed policy revision will be discussed at one session of a board meeting prior to being approved at a subsequent board meeting.

Monitoring Method: Board Self-assessment
Monitoring Frequency: Annually

Salem-Keizer Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, marital status, age or disability in its programs and activities.