



SPASD Board of Education Legislative Advocacy Plan

Governance Model Background

The Sun Prairie Area School Board has adopted the “Coherent Governance” model as a framework to clarify their roles and responsibilities, empowering and enabling them to govern well. The model includes Operational Expectations, Results Policies, Governance Culture Policies and Board/Superintendent Relationship Policies to guide them in their role as Board members.

The Board’s job is to represent, lead and serve the citizens and to govern the district by establishing expectations for student achievement results, expectations for quality operational performance and monitoring actual performance against those expectations.

The part of the Board’s job description related to this Legislative Advocacy Plan Plan is for Board members to:

- Advocate for the district and the students it serves.

The Sun Prairie Area Board of Education operates within the bounds of state and federal laws that affect public education. To meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of the community, the School Board shall be kept informed of pending legislation and shall actively communicate its concerns and make its positions known to elected representatives at both the state and federal level.

By advocating for the passage of laws that advance the cause of student learning and achievement, of adequate school funding and efficient and effective school operations, the School Board shall work with its legislative representatives (federal, state and local) in developing an active and non-partisan legislative advocacy program. The School Board will also consider and act on state and federal legislative issues at its regular meetings while actively communicating with state and federal legislators.

The Superintendent of Schools, the Board President, or designee shall regularly communicate information on Sun Prairie Area School District goals and needs to federal, state and local legislators and other government officials.

[Current Sun Prairie Area School District Legislators](#)

Annual Calendar

January - Review and approve WASB resolutions for delegate assembly at WASB State Convention.

January - November (odd numbered years) - Legislature in session - Monitor proposed and draft legislation being circulated, encourage legislators to co-sign bills advantageous to the school district. Testify for/against bills in committee. Attend City Council meetings as needed

January - April (even numbered years) - Legislature in session - Monitor proposed and draft legislation being circulated, encourage legislators to co-sign bills advantageous to the school district. Invite legislators to schools or School Board meetings. Attend City Council meetings as needed

March - April (odd number years) - Monitor Budget Hearings. Testify at Joint Finance Committee based on the SPASD Board Advocacy Priorities. Advocate for legislation the district endorses. Attend WASB Day at the Capitol to advance the SPASD Board Advocacy Priorities and our associations priorities where appropriate. Attend City Council meetings as needed

April - Advocate for/against budget (odd numbered years), advocate for/against bills being brought from committee, set WASB delegate for delegate assembly. Attend City Council meetings as needed

May - Invite legislators to board meetings. Attend City Council meetings as needed

June (odd numbered years) - Approval of biennial budget. Communicate with legislators about budget approval. Attend City Council meetings as needed

July - At the annual Board Retreat, set legislative priorities for the year. Share the SPASD Advocacy Priorities with local legislators and seek areas of mutual concern and benefit. Include Dane County Board Supervisors and Madison City Council members. Attend Wisconsin Public Education Network Summer Summit. Attend City Council meetings as needed

August (even numbered year) - Invite legislators to candidate forums, discussions on the school district and what goals we have for the upcoming year. Attend City Council meetings as needed

September - Invite legislators to Back to School events. Attend City Council meetings as needed

October - Legislator site visits - Discuss specific legislative priorities, especially during re-election time. Attend City Council meetings as needed

November - Any final resolutions based on funding once the budget is final and state aid is known. Resolutions must be submitted to WASB by mid-November. Attend legislative advocacy training provided by WASB. Attend City Council meetings as needed

December - Monitor proposed and draft legislation being circulated, encourage legislators to co-sign bills advantageous to the school district. WASB Delegate reviews resolutions to be presented in early January to the Board. Attend City Council meetings as needed

Process for Board Approval on Legislation

In terms of legislative and public policy issues, the School Board seeks to both proactively and reactively engage and advocate on behalf of the District and its students with lawmakers, agency personnel, and other government officials.

The Board shall set legislative priorities and goals during their annual governance workshop in July.

Provided that a Board member is willing to accept the responsibilities, the Board may also appoint a Board member to serve as a legislative liaison. (see job description)

The Legislative Liaison will bring legislation to the full board as possible to discuss and agree on a position to take. Approval by the Board will be part of the communication with legislators so they will be aware that the whole board is working through the Legislative Liaison. When there is not time to bring a bill to the whole board, the Legislative Liaison is authorized to act as outlined in this plan.

Resolution Process (board work to send resolutions to media and legislators):

Board members can bring resolutions before the whole board at any time. The Legislative Liaison will be drafting resolutions about specific legislative issues. Resolutions will be approved by the board. If resolutions are approved by the board, the resolution will be forwarded to WASB and also to our legislators and the media by the Legislative Liaison. Resolutions will also be posted on the Board's page on the SPASD website.

Partnerships with Associations: [SAA](#) (School Administrator Alliance), [WASB](#) (Wisconsin Association of School Boards) and [WPEN](#) (Wisconsin Public Education Network). The Board and Legislative Liaison will work together with our various associations to further the best interests of our district and public education.

Authorized Spokespersons Engaging in Legislative and Public Policy Advocacy

The Superintendent of Schools, the Board President, and any Board member appointed to serve as a legislative liaison are authorized to act as spokespersons for the Board and District on legislative/public policy advocacy communications that are intended to inform and influence lawmakers, agency personnel, and other government officials. The Superintendent may also designate other District employees to communicate specific messages on behalf of the Board or District or to attend particular meetings or advocacy functions if such designees are given clear direction regarding their role and the relevant Board/District positions.

To the extent reasonable and practical, the Board's authorized spokespersons are expected to seek direction from the Board regarding positions taken and communicated on behalf of the Board and District. Further, such advocacy-related communications in their official capacity shall be consistent with any specific or general direction that the Board has provided through official action taken at a Board meeting.

Where the Board has not provided any such direction, or where circumstances have materially changed since the Board provided such direction, the spokespersons are expected to use their best judgment to determine if it would be reasonable and practical to seek further direction from the Board prior to communicating a District position on a particular issue. If impractical, the spokespersons may consider communicating (1) specific data and reasonable projections as to how a given issue would be likely to affect the District, and (2) if believed to be necessary, a position that they determine is consistent with the Board's policies and any applicable Board-approved goals and that otherwise reflects the best interests of the District, while also expressly clarifying that the Board itself has not yet been able to meet to consider the adoption of a specific position. Further, such spokespersons shall keep the full Board informed of issue-based positions that they

communicate in their official capacity to legislators, government agencies, and other government officials. At its discretion, the Board may direct the submission of clarifying communications.