

# Appling School Board Operating Protocol

For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the board and between the board and the administration, we, the members of the Appling County School Board of Education do hereby publicly commit ourselves collectively and individually to the following operating protocol:

1. **We will NOT spring surprises** on other board members or the superintendent. There should be no surprises at a board meeting. We agree to ask the board chair or the superintendent to place an item on the agenda instead of bringing it up unexpectedly at the meeting. Additional information regarding agenda items will be requested prior to the Board meeting via the Superintendent.
2. **Communication** between staff and the board are encouraged. Board requests of staff are to be directed to the Superintendent.
3. **Follow the chain of command.** The last stop, not the first, will be the board. We agree to follow the chain of command and insist that others do so. Each inquiry is to be referred to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issue. Board requests that will likely require considerable time or have political implications are to be directed to the superintendent. All personnel complaints and criticisms received by the board or its individual members will be directed to the superintendent.
4. **Board acts only as a body.** Only the board as a whole has decision making authority. Individual members do not have this authority. The board and administration will support decisions made by the board.
5. **Exemplify the governance role.** The Board and Superintendent will support and annually review district policies. The Board will engage stakeholders in development and deletion of policies.
6. **Annually conduct a self-assessment/evaluation.** The board commits to continuous improvement through a yearly self-assessment process and board retreats.
7. **Clearly state goals.** The board will set clear goals for themselves and the superintendent. The board and superintendent will set clear goals for the District.
8. **We will utilize CEO's input with board decision-making.** The Superintendent is the chief executive officer and should recommend, or provide proposals on most matters before the Board.
9. **Meeting protocol.** Conduct at a board meeting is very important. We desire to have a legacy of a well-functioning, effective board. We agree to abide by Robert's Rules of Order and to avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the board or the district. We will be open minded and willing to "deeply listen" to all speakers/presenters. We agree that we can disagree and will do so using common courtesy and respect for others. We will not react to impromptu complaints on the spot, but will assure any individual(s) that the school district will follow-up.

10. **Avoid marathon board meetings.** To be efficient and effective, long board meetings must be avoided. Points are to be made in as few words as possible; speeches at board meetings will be minimal. If a board member believes s/he doesn't have enough information or has questions, either the superintendent or board chair is to be called before the meeting.
11. **Practice efficient decision-making.** Board meetings are for decision-making, action and votes, not endless discussion. We agree to move to the question when discussion is repetitive.
12. **Speak to agenda issues.** The board will not play to the audience. We agree to speak to the issues on the agenda and attend to our fellow board members. Facts and information needed from the administration will be referred to the superintendent. Additional information will be requested prior to Board meeting via the Superintendent.
13. **Executive/closed sessions** will be held only for appropriate subjects. Executive sessions **will** be held only when specific needs arise. Board members will be extremely sensitive to the legal ramifications of their meetings and comments. Members will honor the confidentiality of the discussion.
14. **We as the board agree** to contact the **Principal** prior to visiting a school in a board member capacity. We will follow the procedures required for visitors in the schools. Visiting in a parental capacity does not require Superintendent notification.
15. **We as a board will not communicate** board of education business on social media in a negative manner. As conflicts arise from social media platforms, the Superintendent will be notified by the board member.
16. **Children's interests come first.** The board will represent the needs and interests of ALL the children in our district.

Approval Date by BOE: 04/03/2023ar