



## *Board of Education Column*

*By Dr. Tracie Newman, Fargo Board of Education President*

### **FPS Board of Education Governance Committee**

All members of the Fargo Board of Education serve on Board committees. Each year, the Board president assigns members to 2-3 of the following committees: Governmental Affairs, Planning, Negotiations, Communications, Engagement, and Advocacy and/or Governance. These committees meet regularly and allow for more detailed coordination, discussion, and planning to support the work of the entire School Board.

Any Board member is welcome to attend a committee meeting, even if not assigned to that committee, and can request an item be added to a committee agenda by contacting the committee chair. The Fargo Public Schools Superintendent and various members of District administration are present at committee meetings to assist with committee work. Committee meetings are open to the public and more detailed information can be found within Board Policy [GP-6](#).

The Governance Committee helps guide and support the School Board by ensuring it adheres to healthy and productive governance practices. The absence of good governance can lead to conflict, allowing challenges to arise in leadership, shifting the focus from student achievement and the betterment of the District to internal struggles.

This committee is comprised of the Board President and the chairs of the other committees. The Board President serves as Governance Committee chair. FPS administration contributes to Governance and the superintendent, along with his entire cabinet (board secretary and parliamentarian, assistant superintendents, human capital officer, FPS legal counsel, and business manager) all attend committee meetings. The Governance Committee meets monthly, and members are assigned annually.

A primary objective of the Board of Education is to accomplish goals that promote District and student achievement. A primary objective of the Governance Committee is monitoring, refining, and sometimes creating new Board policy or governance procedures to do this better.

The Governance Committee often brings policy recommendations forward to the entire Board. This sometimes means reviewing and recommending changes to the Board's policies to promote better governance. This committee also assists the Board President and Superintendent in School



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Board meeting agenda planning and offers structure and organization by regularly reviewing the Agenda Planning Calendar ([per GP-8E](#)).

This committee cannot take official Board action and outside of the traditional agenda planning process, there are avenues for Board members to have items placed on a meeting agenda. Governance also recommends activities for Board development (i.e. new member orientation, Board work sessions, and others) and assists the President in completing the Superintendent annual review, which is then brought to the full Board for approval. Also, each year, non-officer Governance committee members canvass Board members about their interest in serving as President or Vice President of the Board for the upcoming year.

Governance is a vital component of a well-functioning School Board working toward achieving district goals. This committee continually works to support governance practices that are informed, knowledgeable, and fair. This ultimately sets up the FPS Board of Education for success and clears the way for prioritizing the success of the students, families, teachers and staff that comprise the Fargo Public School district. More specific information regarding the governance process and the role of specific committees can be found in Board Policy [GP-7](#).

