

## NEW BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION

In order that newly elected School Board members may cast informed votes and function effectively as School Board members, the School Board and Superintendent will make every reasonable effort to assist newly elected School Board members in understanding the School Board's functions, policies, procedures and current issues.

- A. During the time between election or appointment and the assumption of office, the status of the future-member remains that of a private citizen and not that of an elected or appointed official.
- B. New members will be provided with direction on how to access appropriate materials, such as School Board policies, student handbook(s), collective bargaining agreements, and current budget documents.
- C. School Board members, whether they are new or returning to the Board for a subsequent term, are required to complete, not later than the 120<sup>th</sup> day after the date of taking the oath of office, training on the requirements of Maine's Freedom of Access Law. Each School Board member shall attest by means of a written or electronic record that they have completed the training and provide a copy of such record to the Superintendent's Office. The State's Certification of Completion of Freedom of Access Training form is attached as BIA-R.
- D. The School Board will encourage new members to attend appropriate in-district and out-of-district orientation and/or boardsmanship workshops. Reimbursement for such activities must be approved in advance by the School Board Chair, in consultation with the Superintendent, and is subject to the availability of funds.
- E. The Chair and Superintendent will schedule and arrange for an orientation session for new School Board members as soon as practicable after election or an appointment. A reasonable amount of time will be provided for discussion of:
  1. The roles and responsibilities of the Board and individual members;
  2. Basic operational procedures of the Board;
  3. Placement of items on the agenda;
  4. The role of committees, subcommittees and advisory committees;
  5. How and why executive sessions may be held;
  6. What is considered confidential or privileged information;
  7. Appropriate responses of an individual member when a request or complaint is made directly to him/her by a student, parent or member of the community;

8. How the Board responds to complaints involving personnel;
9. General information about the school system and its resources;
10. How Board members, in fulfilling their duties, may request information concerning schools and District operations, finances and personnel;
11. How to use social media appropriately as a member of the Board;
12. How Board members may make arrangements to visit schools and the protocol for such visits;
13. Protocol for dealing with the media; and
14. Other relevant topics.

All Board members will be invited to the orientation session and encouraged to attend. The orientation is intended to serve as a useful review of basic boardmanship concepts for experienced members, as well as an opportunity to provide information and counsel to new Board members.

Legal Reference: 1 M.R.S.A. § 412

Cross Reference: BIC – Board Member Freedom of Access Law Training  
BIA-R - Certification of Completion of Freedom of Access Training  
Form

Adopted: December 18, 1986

Revised: October 3, 2002  
May 2, 2024