

Greene County Board of Education Protocol

For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the Board and between the Board and the Administration, we, the members of the Greene County Senior Leadership (Board and Superintendent) do hereby publicly commit ourselves collectively and individually to the following operating protocol:

- 1. Don't spring surprises** on other Board Members or the Superintendent. Surprises to the Board or Superintendent will be the exception, not the rule. There should be no surprises at the Board Meeting. We agree to ask the Chairman or the Superintendent to place an item on the agenda in advance instead of bringing it up unexpectedly at the meeting.
- 2. Communication** between Staff and the Board is encouraged as long as it follows Board Policy. The Senior Leadership Team recognizes good, timely, open and constant communication regarding school district issues is extremely important. We will strive to anticipate issues that may become important or are sensitive to our school district and district stakeholders.
- 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. While the Board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, each inquiry is to be referred to the Superintendent or a person he/she so designates. All personnel complaints and criticisms received by the Board or its individual members will be directed to the Superintendent.
- 4. Own the collective decision making process.** The Senior Leadership Team will support decisions made by the Board and/or the Administrative Team once a decision is made. We will support the majority decision(s).
- 5. Communication with the news media.** The Board Chairman is the official spokesman for the Board of Education. The official spokesman for the District is the Superintendent. Individual board members responding to media questions should avoid the appearance of debating an issue through the media and should avoid criticism of prior action taken by the Board. It should be helpful to the district, not harmful.
- 6. Exemplify the governance rule.** The Leadership Team (Board and Superintendent) will support the policies our District has in place. We will continue to annually study and review policies for effectiveness and appropriately engage key stakeholders in the development or deletion of policies and policy revisions. We will maintain and apply district policies

consistently while being cognizant of and recognizing the potential uniqueness of any given situation.

- 7. Annually conduct a self-assessment/evaluation.** The Board will address its behavior by yearly self-evaluation and by addressing itself to any individual problems, such as poor meeting attendance, leaks of confidential information, disrespectful conduct toward fellow board members, or conduct that does not reflect well on the District. Performance will be judged against these Protocols and our Code of Ethics.
- 8. 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. These goals will be set forth in the District's Strategic Plan. The Board understands that it is our responsibility to monitor achievement of these plans.
- 9. Utilize CEO input.** The Superintendent is the chief executive officer of the Senior Leadership Team and should make recommendations, proposals, or suggestions on most matters that come to the Board.
- 10. Board Responsibility for the Superintendent.** The Board understands it is directly responsible for only one employee—the Superintendent. It is our responsibility to agree on his/her objectives, monitor his/her performance to those objectives, and oversee his/her replacement as appropriate.
- 11. Board acts only as a body.** Individual board members do not have authority. Only the Board as a whole has authority. We agree that an individual board member will not take unilateral action. The Board Chairman will communicate the position(s) of the Board on controversial issues. When board members serve on various school committees their role shall be defined by the Board as silent observer or active participant.
- 12. Meeting protocol.** Conduct at a board meeting is very important. We desire to have a legacy of a well-functioning, effective board that serves as an example for the District. We agree 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 District will follow-up.

- 13. 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 she/he doesn't have enough information or has questions, either the Superintendent or Board Chairman is to be called before the meeting.
- 14. School/District Visits.** All school and district visits should be conducted for a specific purpose. Board members may visit a school or the district office when specifically invited by the school principal or assistant principal or the district staff—preferably with at least 24-hour notice. Board members are encouraged to visit campuses for special events.
- 15. 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. Board meetings will be conducted using Robert's Rules of Order.
- 16. 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.
- 17. Executive/closed sessions** will be held only for appropriate subjects. Executive sessions will be held only when specific needs arise. Board members will be sensitive to the legal ramifications of their meetings and comments.
- 18. Children's interests come first.** The Board understands that each member's constituency are all the children of Greene County—that school board members have a different constituency than other elected representatives of a district. Accordingly, the Board will represent the needs and interests of all the children in the county.