

EUFSD SCHOOL BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

I. OPERATING RULES

A. Overview

The Board's responsibility is to define the district's policies and goals that shall reflect the district's advocacy for all students. Board members serve as advocates for all students by providing leadership at the local, state and national levels. The policies set by the Board will insure that the mission and goals are achieved. It is the Board's responsibility to hire a Superintendent, who then implements the policies and goals adopted by the Board. The Board shall evaluate the Superintendent's job performance based upon these policies and goals. This operating procedure will be reviewed annually by the Board. These procedures should reflect the Continuous Improvement Model which reflects organizational best practices such as:

1. Visionary Leadership
2. Learning-Centered Education
3. Organizational and Personal Learning
4. Valuing Faculty, Staff, and Students
5. Agility
6. Focus on the Future
7. Managing for Innovation
8. Management by Fact
9. Social Responsibility
10. Focus on Results and creating value
11. Systems Perspective
12. Fiscal Responsibility

B. Effective Working Relationships

A district is only as strong as the Superintendent/Board relationship. The Superintendent is the CEO of the organization and the Board is a governing body, much like a Board of Directors in a business setting. The Board must give the Superintendent leeway to accomplish the directives provided by the Board, without getting involved in the day-to-day minutiae.

An effective Board member communicates with the Superintendent about a concern. It is the Superintendent's job to take action and resolve situations. Board members should not violate the Chain of Command, causing disrespect and unclear expectations between staff, the Superintendent and the Board. The Board reviews the appropriateness, adequacy, and usefulness of departmental/systems reports annually with the superintendent.

C. Superintendent and Board Member Communication

1. Board to Superintendent
 - a. Board members will keep the Superintendent informed of concerns in a timely manner.
 - b. Board will communicate with its community through public hearings, regular Board meetings, Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) meetings and regular publications.
 - c. Individual Board members cannot speak in an official capacity outside the boardroom (unless authorized by the Board).
2. Superintendent to Board
 - a. Superintendent will communicate information to all Board members in a timely manner
 - b. Superintendent will distribute requests from the Board President to all Board members in a timely manner.
 - c. Information shared by Superintendent to Board in executive session will be kept confidential until Superintendent notifies the Board that information is public.
3. Board to Staff
 - a. Board members are encouraged to get to know staff members but are never to give staff members orders.
4. Social Media
 - a. Board members who participate in social media such as - but not limited to - Facebook and Twitter should be careful to avoid online conversations that could be construed as speaking for the board or constituting an online board meeting.

D. Board Member and Community

1. To be most effective, board members should be present and active in the local community. To insure that at least one (1) board member is present at important school and local community functions, the board will maintain a board calendar on the Google Drive. At least twice a year (January and September) the board will review the calendar to coordinate at least one (1) board member is present at all events on the calendar.

E. Meetings

1. Establishing the Agenda
 - a. Superintendent will prepare the agenda.
 - b. Agenda and supporting materials will be available to all Board members 72 hours prior to a meeting.
 - c. The agenda will be posted for public information 72 hours prior to a meeting.
 - d. In accordance with NYS open meeting laws, no item can be placed on the agenda less than 72 hours in advance of the meeting, except in an emergency as per the NYS Education Code.
 - e. A request that a subject be included on the agenda for a meeting must come from a trustee and the Superintendent shall include on the agenda of any meeting all topics that have been timely submitted.
 - f. Each Board agenda will include an item under other business giving Board members the opportunity to request items to be placed on future Board agendas.
 - g. The deadline for submitting items for inclusion on the agenda is noon one week prior before a regular meeting and noon of the 3rd working day before a special meeting.
 - h. Agenda may be amended subject to Board of Education approval.
2. Items Restricted from the Agenda
 - a. All personnel issues must be conducted in an executive session
 - b. Any item that violates right to privacy laws
3. Meeting Requirements
 - a. The Board will observe Robert's Rules of Order.
 - b. Oral and written reports of Special Committees shall be presented at the regular Board meeting and filed with regular Board meeting minutes.
4. Voting
 - a. The Board President will vote on all action items.
 - b. In case of a tie vote, the item is tabled and returned on the next agenda as an action item.

5. Community Members Addressing the Board at Meetings

- a. The Board is assembled to gather input only.
- b. The Board can only offer factual information, cite Board policy, or direct the administration to investigate items and report back to the Board but may not engage in a two-way dialogue with patrons.
- c. Board will limit response time to three minutes per speaker.
- d. The Board will determine total time allowed for community member input as per Board policy.

6. Called Meetings

Other than that permitted by NYS Law and for the purpose of superintendent's evaluation and Board Workshops, the board will observe the following steps for a called meeting of the board.

- a. If the Board is considering calling a meeting of the board while at a scheduled board meeting, the Board will determine if the subject for the called board meeting can be handled at the next regular scheduled meeting. If not, then a majority vote by the board is needed to select a date for the meeting in accordance with NYS law.
- b. The Board will determine the agenda for the meeting including asking for materials and data from appropriate staff to support the meeting. Staff opinion should be considered regarding the amount of material and data requested as well as the timing of receiving such materials.
- c. Should a situation arise where the Board is not seated at a meeting, then the superintendent's office can canvas by phone or email the Board's desire for a called meeting. A majority vote is still needed in this case to support a called meeting. Each board member can request needed material and data by phone or email.

F. Hiring the Superintendent

Effective Boards will work together as a team to hire a new Superintendent. This can be a very stressful process with many chances for personal agendas. It is a golden opportunity to work together to forge a new vision for the education of students in the district.

1. Process for Hiring a Superintendent

- a. Determine the method for identifying candidates. For example:
 - 1) Hire a consultant

- 2) Job postings within the district
- 3) Advertise
- 4) Other
- b. Review résumés
- c. Identify the list of candidates for interviews
- d. Interview the candidates / Determine the best candidates
 - 1) Establish a list of topics to discuss, including district mission, goals, current issues and Board Expectations
 - 2) Be consistent in the interview process
 - 3) Be fair to all candidates
- e. Evaluate the candidates after all have been interviewed
- f. Extend an offer to the candidate
 - 1) Agree upon compensation
 - 2) Agree upon terms of contract
 - 3) Consult with legal counsel regarding contract wording
 - 4) Publicly announce the decision

G. Evaluation of the Superintendent/Board

On a semi-annual basis, the Board of Education will conduct an evaluation on the Board's operation during the past six months. Based upon data collected during the past six months, the Board will review Board effectiveness. This data will include comparative practices of other Boards, as well as a review of the current operating procedures.

During this same time, the Board of Education will conduct a review of the Superintendent's performance. Data necessary to complete this review will be asked for at least one week prior to the review. While the Superintendent will be evaluated annually, any problematic areas identified prior to the evaluation should be made known to the Superintendent so time is allowed for corrective action.

H. Board Goals

1. The Board of Education will set annual Board goals. These Board goals will be written in a format similar to district goals and will include the following as appropriate:
 - a. Description of goal
 - b. Quality Indicator(s) with success measures, evaluation tools, and key strategies
 - c. Timeline
2. Board members are also expected to set annual individual board goals that support the work of the board. The format of these goals should be the same as the overall Board goals described above. These goals should be presented to the board at the same time as the annual review. Board members are expected to monitor their own progress and to report this progress to the board at the annual review.

II. TRANSITIONS IN THE BOARD

Vacancies on the Board may and do occur at other times than at term-end. Trustee vacancies may occur if a trustee moves out of the school district, resigns for personal reasons, encounters sudden death or illness, or some other valid reason to resign.

A. Board Member Replacement

1. Need to Know
 - a. The departing Board member should give notice of impending resignation as soon as possible.
2. Possible Courses of Action
 - a. Fill the vacancy via:
 - 1) Special election
 - 2) Regularly scheduled election
 - 3) Appointment until a regularly scheduled election

B. Board Member Officer Elections

1. At the district's reorganization meeting, any Board member can make a nomination of a dually elected Board member to serve as an officer. Another member of the Board must second any nomination. The nominated individual may accept the nomination. The District Clerk will ask for any additional nominations. If none are offered, then the slate of officers is put to a vote. If additional nominations are made, then the Board, according to Robert's Rules of Order, will vote on each office separately.
2. Removal from consideration: An individual Board member may, by simple announcement, remove himself or herself from consideration for any or all offices of the Board.
3. The Officers shall be a President and a Vice-President who shall be members of the Board. Board officers shall serve for a term of one year, or until a successor is elected. Officers may succeed themselves in office. Each officer shall perform any legal duties of the office and other duties, as required by the Board.
4. A vacancy among officers of the Board shall be filled by majority action of the Board.

C. Role and Authority of Officers

1. No Board member or officer has authority to act outside the Board meeting.
2. No Board member can direct employees in regard to performance of their duties.
3. President
In addition to the duties required by law, the President of the Board shall:
 - a. Preside at all Board meetings unless unable to attend.
 - b. Follow the parliamentary guidelines in Robert's Rules of Order.
 - c. Organize all Board committees and request volunteers to serve as appropriate.
 - d. Provide mentoring for new Board members.
4. Vice-President
 - a. Act in the capacity and perform the duties of the President of the Board in the event of the absence or incapacity of the President.
 - b. Become President only upon being elected to the position.
 - c. Perform other duties as prescribed by the Board.

III. TRAVEL AND TRAINING

A. Training

1. Board members shall complete required education in accordance with state statutes.
2. No training shall take place during a Board meeting, unless the meeting is posted for training delivery.

B. Travel Planning

1. Consider seminars that are conducted across the state at various locations including BOCES, WPSBA, annual state and national conventions sponsored by NYSSBA and NSBA.
2. Follow the district guidelines and procedures for maintaining travel expenses.
3. Make prudent spending habits while traveling.
4. All Board members attending a conference or training session are encouraged to attend two-thirds or more of available continuing education opportunities. All “early bird” workshops paid extra by the district must be attended except in a case of emergency. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in the cost of the training not being covered by the district.
5. All personal costs (outside of travel, parking, lodging, and meals as allotted by law and District policy) will be borne by individual Board members. Spouse’s travel will not be a reimbursable expense.

C. Increasing Impact

1. Share new learning with other Board members
2. Record and report appropriate credits
3. Apply new learning in role as School Board member

IV. SCHOOL VISIT GUIDELINES

A. Overview

Board members are encouraged to visit campuses while at the same time Board members must ensure that the visits do not impede the delivery of instruction in the classroom.

1. Guidelines help staff discern between official (Board member) and unofficial (parent) visits.
2. Guidelines help guard against possible abuse of position by Trustees.
3. Guidelines help ensure effective, efficient, and comfortable visits.

B. Guidelines to follow for campus visits

1. Honor School Policies
 - a. Honor the campus rules regarding all visitors, such as; signing in at the office and wearing a District-issued badge.
 - b. These rules are primarily for safety and security of students.
2. Prior Notice of Official/Unofficial Visits
 - a. Notify the Superintendent in advance of the date and time of visit.
 - b. It is crucial, as a Board member, for you to pre-distinguish your visit as one of an official nature versus one of an official nature, i.e., as a parent.
3. Dealing with Staff on an Official Visit
 - a. Remember Chain of Command for complaints, concerns, and requests.
 - b. Do not attempt to solve problems or make promises.
 - c. Remember you are a public representative and actions and behavior should reflect this critical role.
 - d. Make positive observations about the school and express concerns privately to the Superintendent.

V. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Local Public Complaint Policy

1. If citizens bring concerns or complaints to an individual Board member, he or she shall refer them to the appropriate Chain of Command as defined.
 - a. The Chain of Command is the appropriate channel to take to get problems solved.
 - b. The person at the lowest level and closest to the problem should strive to solve an issue.

- c. Involving senior levels too early in the process strips lower levels of their ability and responsibility to solve problems.
- d. The Chain of Command moves up through the organization to the superintendent and ultimately to the Board of Education.

B. Media Communications

- 1. Board President as Official Spokesman
 - a. The Board President shall function as the official spokesman for the Board.
 - b. Only the Board President is entitled to speak for the Board.
 - c. This does not restrict other Board members from speaking at meetings, hearings, public functions, or to the media, but all remarks should be clarified that it is their personal opinion.
 - d. Once a majority opinion has been reached, individual Board members will publicly support that opinion.

C. Member-to-Member Communications

- 1. Type of Communication
 - a. Board members may use any of the following methods to communicate with each other:
 - 1) by mail
 - 2) e-mail
 - 3) voice mail
 - 4) fax
 - 5) telephone
 - 6) special committee meetings
 - 7) personal contact
 - b. Board members shall never meet, talk, or e-mail in a group large enough to constitute an official meeting unless notice has been posted.
 - c. Board members who participate in social media such as - but not limited to - Facebook and Twitter should be careful to avoid online conversations that could be construed as speaking for the board or constituting an online board meeting.

VI. NEW MEMBER BOARD ORIENTATION

A. Understanding the Role of a Board Member

1. Each Board member is:
 - a. 1 of 5 Board members plus the superintendent
 - b. A trustee for the entire EUFSD
 - c. A leader for the entire EUFSD
 - d. An elected public official
 - e. Responsible for governance
 - f. Equal to all the other Board members
 - g. Responsible for personal preparation for all meetings
 - h. Expected to attend district wide functions as available
 - i. Expected to be familiar with current laws
 - j. Expected to attend further training
 - k. Expected to support Board decisions
 - l. Expected to support the Chain of Command in dealing with problems
 - m. Will not be a divisive or negative influence
 - n. Will not abuse inside information
 - o. Is not expected to be a legal expert on all aspects of public education
 - p. Expected to assist in educating the public where appropriate
 - q. Expected to set personal goals each year related to their Board work.

B. Induction into Board Culture

1. New Board members should be encouraged to attend as much training as possible during their first year of service.
2. At the discretion of the Board President, new Board members may be assigned an existing Board member who will serve as a mentor.
3. New Board members should feel free to ask questions of the superintendent, Board President, and other Board members.
4. Internal District Training
 - a. The Superintendent and a sitting Board member should meet with the new Board member to provide district overview. A “New Board Member Orientation” will be the guide for the district overview. (*Addendum A*)
 - b. The Superintendent may arrange for new Board members to visit with key staff members to familiarize themselves with such issues as finance, budgets, curriculum and instruction, safety and discipline issues, school management issues, and other issues of interest.

C. Board Sanctions

1. Private Censure of Behavior
 - a. In the event of inappropriate behavior by a Board member, the Board may choose to censure or sanction the Board member.
 - b. The Board may do this privately, in a closed session.
 - c. The censure will consist of a calmly worded statement of:
 - 1) The inappropriate behavior of the named Board member.
 - 2) The desired behavior.
 - 3) A statement of agreement by a majority of the Board members that the behavior is inappropriate.

2. Public Sanction of Behavior

- a. The Board may also choose to issue a public sanction, either:
 - 1) Concurrently with the private censure.
 - 2) After the Board member has still not modified the behavior, even following a private censure.
- b. The sanction would consist of a calmly worded statement of:
 - 1) The inappropriate behavior of the named Board member.
 - 2) The desired behavior.
 - 3) A statement of agreement by a majority of the Board members that the behavior is inappropriate.

3. Requests for Resignation

- a. Under extreme conditions, the Board may agree to ask the offending Board member to resign.

ADDENDUM A

Orientation of New Board Member Board of Education Elmsford Union Free School District

Review of Operating Procedures Manual

- Superintendent and Board Member Relationship
- Understanding the Role of a School Board Member
- Meetings of the Board (Workshop, Regular, and Special)
- Board Officer Elections
- Role and Authority of Officers
- Travel and Training
 - Allowable expenses
 - Hotel/travel arranged by superintendent's office
 - Review Calendar for Major Events and Dates (Board Retreat, Local & State Conventions, Graduation, New Teacher Orientation)
- School Visit Guidelines
- Communications/Local Complaint Policy/Dealing with Media
- Continuing Education Requirements and Expectations/Continuous Improvement in EUFSD
- Board Sanctions

Review of Open and Closed Meetings

Review of Electronic Board Meeting

Review of NYSSBA

- Membership in NYSSBA (benefits and uses)
- Networking state-wide and regionally

Review of Policy (Difference in Legal, Local, and Regulation, where to find)

Review of Personnel Structure of EUFSD

Review of Financial Components of the district

Personal Issues

- Name Badge
- Business Cards
- Home Computer, Fax (how to use)
- Internet Service
- Appropriate Dress for Events
- Liability Insurance
- Ethics Policy (gifts)

Handouts

- Superintendent's contract
- Superintendent's Evaluation Document / Board of Education Evaluation Document
- Statewide Standards of the Duties of a Board Member