



## Regulations & Procedures No. 1620P Board By-Laws

### Board-Superintendent Operating Principles

Operating principles guide how the School Board works together, communicates, and makes decisions. They promote trust, accountability, and alignment with the district's mission and strategic goals. For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the Board and between the Board and the Superintendent, the following operating principles have been adopted by the Board in collaboration with the Superintendent:

1. **Student's interests come first.** The Board will represent the needs and interests of all the children in our District. The continuous improvement of student learning is our primary goal.
2. **The Board acts as a team:** The school board values teamwork, collaboration and transparency. Recognizing that no single member holds individual authority, we commit to openly communicating and working together to make decisions and provide guidance for the Superintendent. The board expects each member to refrain from pursuing individual initiatives. Additionally, when expressing personal views, it's important to clarify that they speak solely for themselves and not on behalf of the entire board.
3. **Strategic Vision and Goals.** This strategic plan will guide the work of both the Board and Superintendent, providing a framework for setting priorities, aligning resources, and evaluating progress. The plan will also inform the development of specific goals for the Board and Superintendent, ensuring coherence and accountability across the district's leadership.
4. **Follow the chain of command.** While the Board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, each inquiry is to be referred to the Superintendent who can properly and expeditiously address all the issues.
5. **Executive sessions or exempt meetings will be held only for appropriate subjects.** Executive sessions or exempt meetings will be held only when specific needs arise. Board members will be extremely sensitive to the legal ramifications of their meetings and comments and maintain the confidentiality of the information discussed. Executive sessions will remain focused on the topic for the executive session identified in the Board agenda. Exempt meetings will only be called by the Superintendent for subject matter exempt from the Open Public Meetings Act as determined by legal counsel.

Adopted: 2/2020

Revised 11/19/22, 3/20/24, 4/25



6. **Communication between staff and the Board is encouraged.** Board requests 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. When complaints or concerns about the Superintendent are received by individual Board members, they will be shared immediately with the entire Board in executive session. No individual Board member will investigate independently or break confidentiality. Should the Board determine it necessary, the Board will consult with legal counsel to identify an independent, third-party to investigate the concerns.
7. **Practice the governance role.** The Board will focus on policy making, holding the District and Superintendent accountable, and communication rather than becoming involved in the management of the District.
8. **School and other facility visits.** Official visits by Board members will be carried on only under Board authorization and with the full knowledge of the Superintendent, Principals and any other appropriate supervisors. The Superintendent will make arrangements for group Board visits during the school year, during normal operating hours, and on a regular rotating basis in accordance with the official school board calendar. For Board members unable to attend group visits, individual requests may be arranged through the Superintendent. Such visits will be regarded as expressions of interest in school or facility affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes.
9. **Requests for information.** Requests from individual Board members to the Superintendent should be sent in writing (email) and with copies to other Board members. Requests for information should be in keeping with the Board's governance role, be information that is readily available, and avoid becoming involved in the management of the District. If the request involves information not readily available as determined by the Superintendent, the request may be directed to the Board President for possible addition on the next Board meeting agenda.
10. **Practice efficient decision making.** Board meetings are for decision-making action and votes. We agree to move the question forward when discussion is repetitive.
11. **Utilize Superintendent input.** The Superintendent should make recommendations, proposals, or suggestion on most matters that come before the Board.
12. **Speak to agenda issues.** We agree to speak to the issues on the agenda and listen to fellow Board members. Additional facts and information needed from the administration will be referred to the Superintendent.



13. **Debate the issues and be concise.** To avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the Board, or the District. While we encourage debate, and differing points of view are encouraged, Board members we will do so with dignity, care, and respect. Board members should concisely keep their remarks to 3 minutes or less.
14. **Support of Board decisions:** Healthy disagreement is part of effective decision-making. Once a decision is made, all Board members commit to supporting it and will not take actions to undermine the collective decision of the Board.
15. **Do not spring surprises on other Board members or the Superintendent.** There should be no surprises at a Board meeting. Surprises to the Board or the Superintendent will be the exception, not the rule. Board members will ask the Board President and the Superintendent to consider placing an item on the agenda instead of bringing it up unexpectedly during the meeting or Board discussion segment. Any requests for an agenda item shall be made no later than 48 hours prior to the next Board meeting.
16. **Grounded in Facts.** Board members understand that the media is not a reliable source for context or policy-making. They understand that social media does not reflect the full context or complexity of district issues and agree that the district will not be governed by social media commentary or trends.
17. **Email Communication Principle:**  
Board members may respond to public emails respectfully and individually, avoiding group replies or extended discussions that could create an open public forum. To ensure compliance with open meetings laws, responses will be brief and may refer individuals to the superintendent for further dialogue.
18. **Annually conduct a Board evaluation.** The Board will conduct a self-evaluation and review this Operating Principles Relationship Procedure annually.