



Governance Team

Norms & Protocols

The Board of Education and Superintendent form the Governance Team of the Social Circle School District and act in a manner consistent with our vision to inspire confident, curious learners who graduate ready to thrive in our community and the world. The following commitments, norms, and protocols will guide the governance team.

The Board will govern with a focus on student achievement; promote diversity in viewpoints; concentrate on policy development and strategic planning rather than administrative detail; maintain a clear separation between the roles of the Board and the Superintendent; make collective rather than individual decisions; show a future orientation rather than a past or present orientation; and govern proactively rather than reactively.

Accordingly:

1. The Board will promote a culture of group accountability. Excellence in governance will be the Board's responsibility, not the Superintendent or the staff. The Board will rely on individual members' experience to improve the Board's performance as a whole, but it will not replace the Board's shared values with individual judgments and opinions. The Board will collaborate with the Superintendent to consider and resolve issues or concerns presented by stakeholders, ensuring that each of these matters is communicated to the Superintendent for consideration and attention.
2. The Board will direct, control, and inspire the district through the careful establishment of written policies reflecting the Board's values and perspectives. The expected long-term advantages for students will be the Board's primary policy priority, not the programmatic means of achieving those benefits.
3. As part of ongoing board development, new board members and board candidates will be introduced to the board's governance process, and the board will periodically discuss and assess the procedure to ensure ongoing improvement.

Expanded Norms & Protocols

Governance Team's Roles & Responsibilities

- Together, the elected members of the Board of Education and the Superintendent should exercise strong teamwork and mutual trust in carrying out their respective tasks.
- Observe the Code of Ethics and be transparent about any conflicts of interest.
- Make sure there is financial responsibility, including oversight of the management and financial alignment with the strategic plan's requirements.
- Allow the Superintendent complete authority to oversee daily operations, provide educational leadership, and carry out all tasks prescribed by law. Also, hold the Superintendent responsible for ensuring that accepted policies are implemented consistently.

Chain of Command

Student's Teacher
Principal / Assistant Principal
Assistant Superintendent
Superintendent
District Board of Education Member

- Board members will follow the Chain of Command and advise the public to do the same in order to properly channel and resolve complaints involving instruction, discipline, transportation, or learning materials.
- Issues of a large and significant nature received by the Board or individual members will be referred to the Superintendent.

Communication Among Board Members/Superintendent

- Expect the Superintendent to regularly communicate with board members via the selected methods (including texts, emails, phone calls, and individual and group meetings).
- Direct stakeholders' questions, input, or discussions of a large/significant nature to the Superintendent, who will communicate them, as needed, to the collective Board.
- Provide the Board Chair and Superintendent with any information or data they share with other Board members or staff. The Superintendent will then distribute the information, as needed.
- The Superintendent shall guarantee that Board members are promptly updated on school-related issues, district positions, and position statements.

Communication with Staff

- Board members should make requests to the Superintendent rather than giving orders to anyone who reports to the Superintendent directly or indirectly. The Superintendent will respond to the collective Board.
- Board members should contact the Superintendent with any requests for information, questions, or concerns, or when they become aware of questions or concerns from staff members.

Communication with Media

- Individual Board members should refer all media inquiries to the Superintendent.
- When it pertains to matters of the Board, the Superintendent, Communications & Media Coordinator, and Board Chair, or person designated as the official spokesperson, will work collaboratively to address the request(s).
- Recognize the Superintendent, or the person they choose to represent them, as the district's authorized spokesperson.

Responding to Staff or Community Comments at Board Meetings

- Board Members will listen to the comments and/or complaints but will not respond.
- As outlined in Board Policy BCBI: Public Participation in Board Meetings, community members who wish to speak must submit a [Public Participation Request](#) to the Superintendent's office at least 24 hours before the regularly scheduled Board meeting.
- Community members will be reminded to avoid name-calling and personal attacks.

Personnel

- Superintendent will notify the Board when an employee is placed on administrative leave pending an investigation. Once an investigation is complete, the Superintendent will notify the Board. No additional information will be shared.
- Neither the Board nor individual Board members are expected to intervene directly in school situations involving personnel nor manage the interface between or among staff or provide managerial oversight for any personnel matter. Administrative and operational functions are the work of the Superintendent and his/her staff.

Professional Development

- Board members are required by Georgia law and the Georgia School Boards Association (GSBA) to complete all annual training.
- Board members will engage in professional learning centered on the creation, execution, and evaluation of the Strategic Plan on an annual basis.
- The Governance Team will complete an annual self-assessment in accordance with the domains listed in the *Standards for Effective Governance of Georgia School Systems*. In addition, the Board will utilize an Exemplary Committee to evaluate the Governance Team in accordance with GSBA's specifications when recognized as a Distinguished or Exemplary Board.
- To ensure continued improvement, the Board will include new members in its governance process, regular Board discussions, and process evaluation.

Social Media

- Board members are discouraged from doing official School Board business through their personal social media profiles.
- Board members should be mindful of how their conduct on social media affects the Board as a whole and the District.
- It is not appropriate for board members to respond to derogatory, insulting, or disrespectful comments on social media.
- Before reposting, rely on the district's social media platforms to deliver precise, critical information.
- Board members will notify the Superintendent of any social media content that could raise awareness of local concerns or controversies.

Board members must remember that acting outside the governance role may cause a member or the Board to lose immunity or other legal protections; and impact district accreditation, leading to removal and replacement by the Governor.