Colorado School Board Governance Guide:

Statutory Responsibilities & Annual Calendar

This resource provides an overview of the core responsibilities of Colorado school boards, aligned to Colorado Revised Statutes (Title 22 and related sections). As locally elected governing bodies, boards of education are responsible for establishing the vision, policies, and conditions necessary to ensure effective district leadership and improved student outcomes. The responsibilities and calendar outlined in this document reflect the legal requirements of local boards of education within Colorado's public education system. This brief resource is intended to serve as a practical reference for board members, superintendents, and district support staff as they carry out their work according to state law and best practice.



Annual Board of Education Calendar per State Statute

Timeframe*	Key Board Responsibilities	Related Statute
Jan – Mar	Board organization (e.g., officer selection), annual policy review, superintendent evaluation, mid-year financial review	C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(a-b); 22-32-103; 22-44-103
Apr – June	Adopt annual budget, approve staffing and contracts, update policies, prepare for end-of-year reporting	C.R.S. 22-44-103; 22-32-109.7
July – Aug	Ensure operational readiness for school year, review and update safety plans, confirm staffing and enrollment projections	C.R.S. 22-32-109.1
Sep – Oct	Review and adopt Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), monitor performance frameworks, respond to accreditation status	C.R.S. 22-11-303; 22-11-208
Nov – Dec	Certify mill levy, review audit results, conduct elections and seating of new members, year-end governance review	C.R.S. 22-32-108; 22-54-106; 603

Note. *: The reflected timeframes may vary slightly depending on statutory requirement and/or local context.

Foundational Governance Responsibilities

School boards in Colorado serve as the governing body of the local education agency and are responsible for establishing the structural and procedural foundation for district operations. This includes adopting formal policy, setting governance norms, and ensuring that board actions are transparent and accessible to the public. Boards must operate in compliance with open meeting laws, maintain accurate records, and ensure that policies guiding district operations are publicly available and consistently applied. These responsibilities form the basis for lawful and effective governance. ***Statutory Reference(s):*** conduct public meetings (C.R.S. 22-32-108); Adopt bylaws (C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(a)); Adopt policies and rules (C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(b)); Ensure public access to bylaws and policies (C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(c)); and file board member information with the Colorado Department of Education (C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(d).

Personnel & Superintendent Oversight

Boards are responsible for ensuring that the district is effectively staffed and led, beginning with the hiring and oversight of the superintendent as the chief executive officer of the district. This includes establishing expectations, conducting regular evaluations, and maintaining accountability for district leadership. Additionally, boards must ensure that personnel policies and evaluation systems comply with state law, support educator effectiveness, and align with district goals. ***Statutory Reference(s):*** Employ personnel and determine their compensation (C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(f)); Employ a chief executive officer (C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(g)) and evaluate the performance of the superintendent (C.R.S. 22-9-106(4)(b)).

Financial Governance

School boards are stewards of public funds and must ensure fiscal responsibility, transparency, and alignment of financial decisions with district priorities. This includes adopting an annual budget, appropriating expenditures, and certifying local revenues such as the mill levy. Boards are responsible for ensuring that financial practices are independently reviewed through annual audits and that fiscal decisions comply with state law and support long-term sustainability. ***Statutory Reference(s):*** Adopt budget (C.R.S. 22-44-103); Appropriate funds (C.R.S. 22-44-107); Annual audit (C.R.S. 29-1-603); and Certify mill levy (C.R.S. 22-40-102)

Accountability & Improvement Planning

Boards play a central role in setting direction and monitoring performance through Colorado's accountability system. They are responsible for adopting and overseeing the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), which outlines strategies for improving student outcomes. Boards must also respond to state accreditation determinations and ensure that district performance data is transparent and accessible to stakeholders. Colorado statute requires local boards to form and support both school and district accountability committees, ensure their membership composition aligns with statute, and provide for their advisory roles in budgeting, planning, and monitoring performance and improvement efforts. Boards retain ultimate authority and are required to consider the committee's recommendations in fulfilling their governance responsibilities. These responsibilities ensure continuous improvement and alignment with statewide expectations. ***Statutory Reference(s):*** Adopt Unified Improvement Plan (C.R.S. 22-11-303 to 306); Respond to accreditation (C.R.S. 22-11-208); Ensure data transparency (C.R.S. 22-11-504); and appoint and establish a process for accountability committees (C.R.S. 22-11-301).

Student Policy & Safety

Boards are responsible for establishing policies that ensure safe, supportive, and equitable learning environments for all students. This includes adopting discipline policies, maintaining comprehensive school safety plans, and ensuring proper management of student records in accordance with privacy laws. Boards must also oversee assessment policies to ensure compliance with state requirements and alignment with instructional goals. ***Statutory References:*** Discipline policies (C.R.S. 22-32-109.1); Safe school plan (C.R.S. 22-32-109.1); and student records (C.R.S. 22-32-109.3).

Background Information related to CDE Board Resources and Supports: CDE support, grounded in C.R.S. 22-11-208, is non-directive and non-partisan, focusing on best practices and resources. Boards should consult their legal counsel for guidance on specific matters. Related CDE Resources are available at: https://ed.cde.state.co.us/cdeedserv/board-of-education-supports