

NYACK SCHOOL DISTRICT PROTOCOLS FOR BOARD OF EDUCATION/SUPERINTENDENT ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

To foster transparency, trust, and effective governance, the Nyack Board of Education adopts protocols that reflect shared commitments and best practices. While protocols are not formal policy and do not carry the weight of law, they serve as important agreements that guide the conduct and communication of Board members in alignment with existing policy and law. These protocols are intended to support a respectful, informed, and efficient governance process.

BOARD OF EDUCATION MEMBER ROLES/AUTHORITY

Policy 2000 Board Operational Goals

1. The board is responsible for:
 - overseeing the finances of the district,
 - hiring the superintendent of schools,
 - evaluating the superintendent annually,
 - setting policy.
2. The board delegates the administration of the district to the superintendent and their staff. (*Policy 4320*)
3. The district's annual goals are presented to the Board.
4. Board members have authority as members of the corporate Board, only at a duly convened meeting. A Board member does not have authority to take or authorize individual action or speak on behalf of the Board.
5. The Board annually evaluates itself, reviews its protocols, and holds itself to standards of best practice. (POLICY 2349)
6. The Board strives to reach decisions through consensus. Board decisions are expected to be respected by all members of the Board.
7. Regular attendance by Board members at Board meetings is important to a well-functioning Board.
8. The Board can establish standing and/or ad hoc committees, intended to improve efficiency and effectiveness by helping the board gather information/research, make recommendations and provide a forum for community input.
9. The board will adhere to the district's code of ethics. (Policy 2160)

SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE/AUTHORITY

Policy 3120 Duties of the Superintendent

1. The Superintendent is responsible for the administration of the school district, for implementing the policies of the Board and serves as the chief executive officer for the District.
2. It is the Superintendent's primary responsibility to provide visionary and inspirational leadership that enables the district to continually improve the educational experiences of the children
3. The Superintendent shall have the authority to organize, reorganize and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff including without limitation, instructional and business affairs, which, in his/her judgment, best serves the school district, subject to the approval of the Board of Education when required (*Policy 4310; 4320*)
4. The responsibility for selection of personnel shall be vested in the Superintendent of Schools, subject to Board of Education approval.
5. The Superintendent shall suggest regulations, rules, policies and procedures for the operation and management of the school district. (*Policy 4310*)
6. The superintendent provides the board with the information and analysis it needs and/or requests to formulate policy and take appropriate actions.
7. The Superintendent creates and sustains a climate of respect and cooperation among members of the staff, parent body and other community stakeholders.
8. Recommendations to the Board of Education will be thoughtfully prepared and presented, based on data, research and experience, with input from appropriate constituent groups where possible.
9. The Superintendent is a visible presence in the schools to underscore that the most important interactions that occur are in the classrooms.

BOARD PRESIDENT'S ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

Policy 2220 Board Officers

1. The Board President has no greater authority than any other Board member
2. The Board President serves as liaison between the Board and the Superintendent
3. The Board President is responsible for sharing information pertaining to Board business with all Board members on a timely basis

4. The Board President runs meetings in an orderly manner, utilizing parliamentary procedure. He/she encourages open discussion and deliberation among Board members, and guides the Board to reach decisions.
5. With the Superintendent, the Board President is the primary media contact and spokesperson for the Board.
6. The Board President responds to written communications to the Board of Education from community members and notifies the Board of the original correspondence as well as the response.
7. The Board President takes an active role in the orientation and mentoring of new Board members.

BOARD VICE PRESIDENT'S ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITY

Policy 2220 Board Officers

1. The Board Vice President has no greater authority than any other Board member
2. The Board Vice President assists the President in sharing information pertaining to Board business with all Board members on a timely basis
3. The Board Vice President stands in for the President when he/she is not available.
4. The Board Vice President works with President in providing guidance mentoring to incoming Board members
5. The Board Vice President serves as a sounding board for the President

ELECTING BOARD OFFICERS

Policy 2210 Board Organizational Meeting

1. Generally, election of officers will be held at the annual Reorganization meeting.
2. Board members are encouraged to announce their interest in holding office prior to the meeting. The board may ask that candidates offer a public statement at the meeting in support of their nomination.
3. The board will elect a president, vice president and secretary in accordance with board policy.
4. Members nominated for office are encouraged to have served at least one year on the board.
5. Elections will be conducted in accordance with the parliamentary procedures in place, most commonly, Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised:
 - a. Any board member may make a nomination.
 - b. Nominations will not be closed until all who wish to make a nomination have done so.
 - c. More than one person may be nominated for a given office.

6. Board members must avoid informally gathering as a quorum of members to discuss member qualifications in preparation for the election of officers, as it is a violation of the Open Meetings Law.
7. The vote for officers must occur in open session; no vote will be taken by secret ballot

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Rules for confidentiality are those consistent with the Open Meetings Law.
2. Board members shall not disclose confidential information acquired in the course of official duties.
3. Board members have secure email addresses and access to a confidential version of Boarddocs which can be used to share confidential matters. Text and other email addresses should not be used to share confidential information.
4. Discussions in executive sessions must remain completely confidential. Board members shall not disclose any information regarding matters discussed in executive session. (Policy 2160)

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

[Policy 2330 Executive Sessions](#)

1. Items for executive sessions must be consistent with the Open Meetings Law. This includes:
 - Matters which will imperil the public safety if disclosed;
 - Any matter which may disclose the identity of a law enforcement agent or informer;
 - Information relating to current or future investigation or prosecution of a criminal offense which would imperil effective law enforcement if disclosed;
 - Discussions regarding proposed, pending or current litigation;
 - Collective negotiations pursuant to Article 14 of the Civil Service Law (the Taylor Law);
 - The medical, financial, credit or employment history of a particular person or corporation, or matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation;
 - The preparation, grading or administration of examinations; and

- The proposed acquisition, sale, or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities, but only when publicity would substantially affect the value thereof.

PARENTAL AND STAFF INQUIRIES

1. Board members encourage parents and staff who call or email with inquiries to work up through the hierarchy talking to the teacher (if applicable), the principal, the Asst. Superintendent and the Superintendent before further involving Board members. (*Policy 1400*)
2. Board members relay other more substantive criticisms, complaints or suggestions to the President, who in turn will refer them to the Superintendent. The Superintendent does the problem solving, with staff assistance as necessary. Board members do not investigate or attempt problem solving .
3. The Board generally does not act on anonymous complaints but may refer them to the Superintendent for awareness if they relate to broader concerns. Community members are encouraged to raise issues through established channels to support open and effective resolution.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN BOARD MEETINGS

[Policy 1230 Public Participation at Board Meetings](#)

1. The Nyack Board of Education recognizes its responsibility to hear and respond to public comments and therefore encourages public participation at Board meetings (Policy #1230)
2. Each meeting agenda includes opportunities for the public to address the Board during the sections entitled “Citizens' Proposals, Questions, and Concerns”.
3. Public opportunity to raise an issue or to raise a question about an issue not on the agenda occurs during the “Remarks” section of the agenda. There are also opportunities to speak during the Workshop and Action-General sections of the agenda.
4. In order to manage Board meeting time effectively, a person wishing to speak is requested to sign in and indicate the topic on which they would like to address the Board.
5. Up to thirty minutes is allotted for public comments in the opening portion of the meeting. Therefore, a person's remarks may be limited depending on the number

of requests to speak. A person may not be recognized to speak again until all others seeking the floor have had a turn.

6. The Board President or Superintendent may summarize discussion to gather information and get clarity. Responses can take place immediately or at a later date if more information is needed for a proper response.
7. Interruption of Board discussion is not permitted.

GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

1. The Superintendent's confidential weekly packet is the primary source of Board information.
2. All emails and texts are subject to FOIL; care should be taken to ensure discussions do not violate the Open Meetings Law.
3. The Board President will update trustees on meetings or discussions with the Superintendent that relate to Board matters.
4. Information requests to the Superintendent are encouraged to go to the Board President to manage volume and maintain focus.
5. Inter-board communication—whether by phone, text, email, or in person—should be mindful of public decision-making guidelines and Open Meetings Law.
6. Board members should be concise in their communication and mindful of overall volume.
7. Board members should clearly separate personal views from official Board positions on social media. They should avoid posts that suggest Board business is being conducted outside of meetings and must refrain from sharing confidential or sensitive information.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT

1. The Board President serves as the primary liaison between the Board and the Superintendent, facilitating communication and representing Board consensus where appropriate.
2. It is the President's responsibility to share relevant information with the entire Board in a timely manner.
3. When a Board member plans to communicate with the Superintendent on matters related to Board work, they should notify the Board President in advance.
4. If an urgent or unplanned communication occurs (defined as time-sensitive issues that arise outside the regular meeting schedule and require immediate attention), the Board member or the Superintendent should inform the Board President as soon as possible afterward, ideally within 24 hours.

COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF INCLUDING CENTRAL ADMIN

1. Contact with members of the staff occurs through the superintendent when board members are wearing their "board hat." When contacting staff as a parent, it is reassuring to say, "I am calling just as a parent."
2. An exception applies to committee work, where Board members may directly contact staff serving on committees.
3. While school board members can have casual conversations with staff, including friends, they must not discuss confidential matters or take action on their own. It's important to maintain ethical standards and avoid potential conflicts of interest when engaging with staff, even those they are friends with.

PLANNING FOR BOARD MEETINGS/AGENDA SETTING

Policy 2342 Agenda Preparation and Dissemination)

1. The Board President and Vice President will meet with the Superintendent before Board meetings to review the agenda and gather information.
2. The agenda and most supporting materials will be available on BoardDocs, typically by the Friday before a Tuesday meeting.
3. In general, updates to the agenda will be made at least 24 hours before a scheduled Board meeting.
4. Board members can contact the Board President, and notify the full Board, to suggest items they would like to see on the agenda.
5. Board members are encouraged to email agenda-related questions to the Board President and Vice President, copying the full Board. If they cannot address the questions, they will consult the Superintendent.
6. The Superintendent will collaborate annually with the Board to develop a workshop schedule, which will be shared with the community.
7. Workshop presentations will generally be provided to Board members one week before the meeting, with feedback due within 48 hours.

BOARD MEETING DYNAMICS

Policy 2350 Board Meeting Procedures

1. The Board President will facilitate meetings in a way that encourages participation, maintains order, and ensures that all voices are heard respectfully and equally.

2. Board members are encouraged to ask clarifying questions, express their viewpoints, and engage in constructive debate.
3. If needed, the Board President may pause discussions to restore decorum and maintain a collaborative atmosphere.
4. Each Board member has the right to speak once on an issue before others take a second turn.
5. Members agree to listen actively and refrain from interrupting.
6. Discussions should remain among Board members and the Superintendent, without public engagement during meetings.
7. Any unanswered questions or requests for further clarification following a Board meeting should be submitted in writing to the Board President and the responses will be shared with the full Board to ensure transparency.

PRESS CONTACT

[Policy Media Relations 1130](#)

1. All official statements of board positions as well as responses to questions come from the board president and/or superintendent or their designee.