BEND LA PINE SCHOOLS

Becoming a Board Member

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Are you considering running for school board?

Bend-La Pine Schools is governed by an elected board of seven members that help direct the superintendent. Board actions affect the families of hundreds of students and employees, now and for years to come. Your duty as a school board member will be representing all students, staff and members of the community as you work with other board members to craft policy.

School board authority rests with the board as a whole, not with individual board members. Board decisions are made by majority rule and, as one member of this ruling body, you will find yourself in the position of supporting some decisions that you voted against.

Board service often requires long unpaid hours working alone, on committees and with members of your community. You'll struggle sometimes to find solutions to complex problems – and still the solutions won't please everyone. However, you'll have the satisfaction of watching students develop a strong academic foundation; develop a passion, purpose, and plan for their future; and experience wellness, inclusion, and belonging in our schools.

What does a school board do?

When you're elected to serve on the board, your education has just begun. Board service is like inheriting the reins of a corporation without any training. The "learning curve" for education leaders is steep.

The board's major responsibility is setting policy. The Board, supporting the work of staff, the welfare of students and the interests of the community, holds itself accountable to the citizens of the district by ensuring that all action taken is consistent with law and the Board's policies. The Board's work is guided by the principles of Policy Governance as outlined by John Carver. Because they serve the community, board members must work with the public as they establish the mission and direction of education. It's up to the board to engage the community in public education.

Policy Governance

The policy governance model enables the board to govern the system rather than run it, to define and demand educational results rather than probe into processes, to redirect ritual actions to strategic leadership, to grant administrators great latitude within explicit boundaries, to be in charge of board agendas instead of dependent on staff, and to guarantee unbroken accountability from classroom to taxpayer. In a sense, the board gets out of the way of the superintendent doing their job and takes responsibility for their own job as a board.

The board hires a superintendent who in turn hires staff to put policies into practice. The superintendent is accountable to the board for managing the district according to board policies.

A board member must be a skilled decision-maker and team player, a public education advocate, a vital link between community and school, and a policy maker. As a public employer, the board establishes policies that govern the recruitment, employment, supervision, evaluation and dismissal of employees.

What makes a good board member?

Many of the qualities that make board members great are acquired over time, through training and experience, so don't discredit your potential worth as a board member, even though you may never have served in such a capacity. As you consider running for the school board, think about whether these characteristics of effective board members describe you:

- You hold a conviction that public education is important.
- You are committed to public involvement.
- You have the ability to make decisions.
- You believe in the democratic process.
- You're willing to devote time and energy to your new position.
- You can accept the will of the majority.
- You have the courage to stand up for your convictions.
- You have respect for district employees.
- You communicate well with others.

These are some characteristics of ineffective board members:

- They become involved in school administration.
- They allow personal feelings toward others to affect their judgment.
- They allow personal interests to transcend the best interests of the district.
- They neglect board duties.
- They can't make decisions or take a stand.
- They represent special interests or a particular geographic area rather than the interests of the entire district.
- They adopt an arrogant or paternalistic attitude toward district employees or the public.

How much time does being a good board member require?

School board service involves a substantial time commitment – and remember, there's no salary. Before the monthly meetings, you'll need to study the materials provided (board packets) so you can make informed decisions. There are committee meetings, work sessions and appearances on behalf of the district. During collective bargaining with employee unions, you may find yourself immersed in a very time-consuming process.

How to become a candidate

Board members are elected to four-year terms. You must be a registered voter and you must have lived in the district for one year immediately preceding the election. School district employees elected to serve on their board must give up employment with the district to sit on the board.

Board members are elected by zones or as at-large representatives. Board members elected at large may live anywhere in the district. Board members elected by zone live in the zone and are elected by all district voters.

School board elections

Half of the board members in Oregon's schools are elected or re-elected in each odd-numbered year. Under Oregon law, school board elections are held the third Tuesday in May. The filing deadline for board positions is the 61st calendar day prior to the May election date. Candidates can file with the county clerk in one of two ways:

- Submit a petition containing the signatures of 25 registered voters or 10 percent of the registered voters in the district, whichever is less; or,
- Submit a declaration of candidacy with a $10 filing fee

Your campaign

Board candidate campaigns range from simple to sophisticated, depending on the candidate and the community. One common element, however, is the state requirement for reporting campaign finances. State law limits the sources and amounts of contributions and the purposes for which those contributions may be

spent. Contact the Secretary of State Elections Division or Deschutes County Elections Office for guidance before accepting any campaign contributions or making any campaign expenditures.

More Information

Oregon School Boards Association

- www.osba.org
    - Candidate information and school board roles and responsibilities
- Free Online Learning Course: New Board Member Orientation
    - www.osba.org/olc

Campaign regulations and finance reporting requirements: http://oregonvotes.org/

Elections Division Secretary of State's Office
255 Capitol St NE, Ste 501
Salem, OR 97310
(503) 986-1518

Bend-La Pine Schools (BLS) Board Basics

Board Meetings

Regular Board meetings are typically held on the second Tuesday of each month during which regular business is completed, actions are taken and public comment is received. Work Sessions are typically held on the fourth Tuesday of each month during which the Board engages in discussion on key Board work and initiatives. Meetings are held at 5:30 p.m. at the Education Center, unless otherwise noted. The Board Meeting Calendar is generally set in June of each year.

It is important for Board members to ask questions during a Board meeting. Participation and questions help elicit discussion, further the conversation, and encourage sound decision making by the Board. That said, Board members should use caution during public session to avoid asking questions that may personally embarrass someone. Those questions are better asked in an email to the Board Chair and the Superintendent prior to the meeting.

Meeting Agendas

Board Agendas, in accordance with GP-5, shall be developed by the Board Chair in coordination with the Vice Chair and Superintendent, and consistent with the interests of the Board. Any agenda item requested by at least four members of the Board will be placed on the agenda.

Board Appointed Committees

Committees formed by and reporting to the board have to follow all of the same public meetings law requirements that the board itself has to follow. A committee should have a clear charge and meeting discussion should stick to the committee topic. The function of special committees is deliberative and advisory fact-finding rather than legislative or administrative. Committees make recommendations directly to the board as a whole, and the board alone may take action.

Budget Committee

The role of the Budget Committee is primarily to provide a lay review of the proposed budget in the context of the Board of Directors' established goals and priorities.

The Budget Committee is charged with holding one or more meetings to:

- Receive the budget message and the budget document;
- Provide members of the public an opportunity to ask questions about and comment upon the budget document; and
- Approve the budget document as submitted by the budget officer or as revised and prepared by the budget committee.

Board Development and Training

In keeping with the need for continued Boardsmanship development, the Board encourages the participation of its members at appropriate Board conferences, workshops, conventions and District-sponsored in-service training sessions. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted on an annual basis.

The Bend-La Pine Schools Board of Directors realizes that proper Board training is important. Decisions about school policy, personnel, finance, curriculum and communications can be overwhelming and may require training. Training Board members to be effective leaders and decision makers is an educational investment that benefits the entire community. The Board believes that with proper training, it can create a positive and productive atmosphere for decision-making. There needs to be strong leadership among Board members demonstrated by teamwork, effective communication, problem-solving skills and positive relationships between the Board and the Superintendent.

The Board places a high priority on the importance of a planned and continuing program of education for its members. The central purpose is to enhance the quality and effectiveness of public-school governance in our community. The Board shall plan specific in-service activities designed to assist Board members in their efforts to improve their skills as members of the policy-making body; to expand their knowledge about trends, issues, and new ideas affecting the continued welfare of our local schools; and to deepen their insights into the nature of leadership in a modern democratic society.

Board Member Orientation

The Board Chair, Superintendent, and/or Board & Governance Program Supervisor will provide, as soon as practicable, for the orientation of new members. The purpose of the orientation will be to help new members become acquainted with their duties and responsibilities as members of the Board. The orientation will provide a basic introduction to Board member roles and obligations and ways to communicate and handle problems.

All new Board members are required to complete a background check and to have a picture taken for District issued identification badges. Board members are required to check in at the front desk at all District facilities with their badge when attending as a Board member. If the badge is lost, the Board member must contact the Board Clerk as soon as possible to arrange for a replacement badge.

Board Member Zone Summary

- BLS Board Member Zone 1
  - Deschutes County Precincts: 3, 5, 7, 8, 27, 35, 47, 49
  - BLS Schools:
    - Elementary: Elk Meadow, Highland, High Lakes, Pine Ridge, Westside Village and W.E. Miller
    - Middle: Cascade and Pacific Crest
    - High: Summit
- BLS Board Member Zone 2
  - Deschutes County Precincts: 1, 11, 12, 13, 20, 26, 37, 41, 46

- BLS Schools:
  - Elementary: Ensworth, Lava Ridge, North Star, and Ponderosa
  - Middle: Sky View
  - High: Mountain View
- BLS Board Member Zone 3
  - Deschutes County Precincts: 2, 4, 6, 9, 25, 32
  - BLS Schools:
    - Elementary: Amity Creek, Bear Creek, Juniper, R.E. Jewell, and Silver Rail
    - Middle: Pilot Butte
    - High: Bend and Deschutes River
- BLS Board Member Zone 4
  - Deschutes County Precincts: 16, 23, 24, 38, 39, 40, 50
  - BLS Schools:
    - Elementary: La Pine, Rosland, and Three Rivers
    - Middle: La Pine
    - High: La Pine
- BLS Board Member Zone 5
  - Deschutes County Precincts: 21, 33, 34, 42, 43, 44
  - BLS Schools:
    - Elementary: Buckingham
    - Middle: High Desert and Realms
    - High: Caldera
- BLS Board Member Zone 6
  - At-Large
- BLS Board Member Zone 7
  - At-Large

Public Meeting Law

Requirements of the law and best practices.

1. ORS 192.610-192.695
   a. "A meeting is the convening of a governing body of a public body for which a quorum is required in order to make a decision or to deliberate toward a decision on any matter."
   b. Public attendance law, not a public participation law
   c. Work of the Board must be done in public, not with the public
2. Basic requirements of the law
   a. Open to public attendance
   b. Establishment of a quorum
   c. Conducted within the geographical boundaries of the governing body
      i. Generally held at its administrative headquarters
   d. Accessibility for all
      i. Requests for accommodations must be requested at least 48 hours prior to the meeting
   e. Reasonable notice must be provided
3. What is ***not*** considered a meeting?
   a. Visiting schools, programs, building sites, etc.,
   b. Attendance at national, regional, or state association meetings or conferences
   c. Social gatherings in which no official business is discussed
4. Public Comment
   a. Oregon Attorney General's Public Records and Public Meetings Manual:

i. "The right of public attendance guaranteed by the Public Meetings Law does not include the right to participate by public testimony or comment."

b. Public comment is ***not***
   i. Required by law but is best practice
   ii. An opportunity to file a complaint
      1. Complaints must be submitted in accordance with KL-BP
   iii. Q & A session
   iv. Forum for public debate

Tips for newly appointed board members

- Policies, policies and more policies.
  - Read and ask questions to make yourself with the Board Goals, Governance Processes, and Executive Limitations.
- Who said what and why?
  - Review the last six months of minutes and meeting videos to become familiar with processes and current issues.
- Where does all the money go?
  - Meet with Chief Financial Officer for a clear understanding of the district's budget.
- Who do I call for what?
  - Utilize the Board and Governance Program Supervisor as your first stop.
- Have an open mind.
  - Abandon preconceived notions and hidden agendas, including opinions about staff.
- Be flexible and willing to compromise.
- Being the minority is ok, but graciously accept the majority decision.
  - Expect to be the minority voice on some board decisions, but always accept the majority decision graciously.
  - Opinions are voiced before a vote, not after a decision has been made.
- You won't always be popular.
  - Some Board decisions will be unpopular with your constituents or even the community as a whole.
- Doctrine of No Surprises.
  - Don't surprise the superintendent, administrators, or fellow board members at a public meeting with unexpected comments, requests, or obscure questions
- Ask Questions!
  - You don't and can't know everything, so capitalize on every opportunity to learn.

Board Organization and Governance

Mission, Vision, and Organizational Goals

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Bend-La Pine Schools Board of Directors operates under a Policy Governance framework inspired by a modified version of the Carver model. This approach ensures clarity of roles, accountability, and alignment with the district's mission. The Board governs by establishing broad policy direction and desired outcomes for students and the community, while delegating operational authority to the Superintendent. Through this model, the Board maintains focus on long-term vision and student success, reflects community values, and monitors progress toward goals while empowering the Superintendent to manage day-to-day operations.

MISSION
"Educating Thriving Students"

VISION
Every student in Bend-La Pine Schools is known by name, strengths, and needs, and graduates ready for college, career and community engagement, and life.

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS
The Organizational Goals define the Board's highest priorities and provide a clear framework for guiding its work throughout the year. These goals translate the district's mission and values into focused outcomes for students and the community, ensuring that Board actions remain strategic, accountable, and aligned with long-term vision. By centering decision-making and oversight on these goals, the Board maintains clarity of purpose, fosters transparency with the community, and supports the Superintendent in advancing the success and well-being of all students.

1. Students are engaged and develop a strong academic foundation.
2. Students have a passion, purpose, and plan for their future.
3. Students, families, and staff experience wellness, inclusion, and belonging in our schools.
4. Operational systems align and support an academically effective and sustainable organization.

Governance Commitment and Style (GP-1)

Governance Commitment
The Board, supporting the work of staff, the welfare of students and the interests of the community, holds itself accountable to the constituents of the district by ensuring that all action taken is consistent with Oregon law and the Board's policies. The Board governs using a modified Carver Policy Governance® Model that emphasizes clarity of roles, focus on student outcomes, and accountability of the Superintendent, while also adopting general board policies to ensure effective oversight and responsive governance.

The Board's purpose is to assure that Bend-La Pine Schools achieves the results described within its Mission, Vision, and Organizational Goals and operates within the parameters described in its Executive Limitations policies.

GOVERNANCE STYLE
The Board shall govern with emphasis on its stated Mission, Vision, and Organizational Goals, respect diversity in viewpoints, focus on strategic leadership rather than administrative detail, observe clear distinction between the Board and Superintendent roles, make collective rather than individual decisions, and govern proactively rather than reactively.

1. The Board shall commit to excellence in governing. The Board shall use the expertise of individual Board Members to enhance the ability of the Board as a body, but shall not substitute individual judgments for the Board's collective values. Accordingly, Members shall:
    a. respect decisions of the full Board,
    b. exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming each other, and
    c. make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the District and one another.
2. The Board shall exercise self-discipline as it applies to attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuity of governance capability.
3. The Board shall lead the district through the careful establishment of policies reflecting the Board's values and perspectives. The Board's major policy focus shall be on the intended long-term benefits for

students, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those benefits. Accordingly, Members shall not:
    a. assume responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints, or
    b. give personal direction to any part of the operational organization.
4. Continuous Board development shall include orientation of new Members in the Board's governance process. All Board Members shall participate in ongoing professional development.
5. The Board shall monitor its process and performance on an annual basis.
6. The Board, by majority vote, may revise or amend its policies at any time.

Board Member Qualifications (GP-2)

The Board shall consist of seven members elected by voters community-wide to represent the entire school district. Board Members must reside in one of five zones or be elected to one of two at-large positions. Each Member elected to a position of the Board will typically be elected for a term of four years in accordance with Oregon state statute.

A person is eligible to serve as a Board Member if the person is a qualified elector[1] of the District and has been a resident within the district for one year immediately preceding the election or appointment. If the district and the position sought is one elected or nominated by zone, the person must also reside in the zone from which the person is nominated except as authorized by law.

A person who is an employee of the District is not eligible to serve as a Board Member while so employed. A person who is an employee of a public charter school may not serve as a Member of the Board of the District in which the public charter school that employs the person is located.

Board Members are subject to the same criminal history background checks that are required of school volunteers, including the criminal history records check that will be conducted every two years. If a Board Member fails to clear the background check, they will be required to comply with the provisions of KK-AR: Visitors to District Facilities when entering a school for any purpose.

VACANCIES ON THE BOARD

Elected Board Members are expected to serve their full term of office. Vacancies will be filled by appointment of the Board. The Board Chair will announce and declare vacancies at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. The Board will determine the procedures to be used in filling the vacancy.

If a member decides to terminate service prior to the completion of their term of office, a letter of resignation addressed to the Board Chair shall be submitted. The letter must have a clear effective date and is binding unless withdrawn in writing and submitted to the Board Chair prior to next regularly scheduled board meeting. The Board may begin a replacement process and select a successor prior to the effective date of the resignation; however, the actual appointment shall not be made before the resignation date.

Board appointees must be qualified electors of the District and have been a resident within the District for one year immediately preceding the appointment. Appointees may be sworn and seated immediately or at the next regularly scheduled board meeting. Appointees shall serve until June 30th of the next regular election, at which time a replacement will be duly elected. The individual elected shall serve the remaining years of the term of office of the Board Member being replaced.

In the event of multiple vacancies, the position of the Board Member who resigned first shall be filled first.

[1] "Elector" means an individual qualified to vote under Article II, section 2, Oregon Constitution.

Individual Board Member Authority, Responsibility, and Code of Conduct (GP-3)

The Board commits itself and its Members to ethical, respectful, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board Members. Board Members shall demonstrate commitment to the District's constituents. This commitment shall supersede commitments to staff, other organizations, and personal interests. Members shall act in a manner consistent with the conflict of interest provisions in Board policy GP-4: Board Member Ethics, Nepotism, and Conflicts of Interest and Oregon law.

Members shall at all times endeavor to act as a part of the Board as a whole and avoid circumstances or actions that may be interpreted as an exercise of individual authority. A Board Member has the authority to act in the name of the Board when authorized by a specific Board motion. The affirmative vote of the majority of the Members of the Board is required to transact any business. An individual Member's interactions with public, press, or other entities shall accurately represent Board positions or decisions. When expressing personal opinions in public, the Board Member shall clearly identify the opinion as their own. The Board Chair is authorized to speak for the Board; Board Members shall inform the Chair of interview requests from the media.

Board Members shall recognize the Superintendent as the chief executive officer to whom the Board has delegated authority to establish regulations and oversee the implementation of Board policy. Board Members may visit schools or other facilities to gain information, and may request information from the Superintendent, but no individual Board Member may direct the Superintendent to action without Board authorization. Board Members shall not intervene in the management of the District or its schools.

Board Members shall abide by appropriate Oregon public meetings law and shall conduct the public's business in open meetings. Expected conduct includes the following:

1. Board Members shall be properly prepared for Board Meetings and shall discharge the duties of the office as prescribed by statute.
2. Members shall contribute to thoughtful governance discussions and decisions by being well informed, open minded and deliberative.
3. Members shall protect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and other matters that may compromise the integrity or legal standing of the Board and District.
4. Board discussions appropriately conducted in executive session under Oregon public meetings law shall be kept confidential by members outside of executive session.
5. Members shall respect the decision of the final vote of the Board.
6. Board members may choose to publicly express dissenting opinions after a vote and following the conclusion of a Board meeting, but shall be respectful of the majority decision and the desire of the Board to move on to other matters.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibility of the Board of Directors is to represent the constituents of Bend-La Pine Schools by providing visionary leadership through policy and practice that ensures the best possible education for students with respect to local, state, national and international standards of excellence while adhering to all legal requirements.

To distinguish the Board's work from that of the Superintendent and staff, the Board shall concentrate its efforts on the following:

1. Advocating on behalf of the school district, students, and the constituency it serves.
2. Interacting with students, staff, and parents/guardians, both as individual members of the Board and as a whole Board, to gather feedback that may help guide decisions facing the Board.

3. Developing written governing policies that, at the broadest levels, address:
    a. **Board Mission, Vision, and Organizational Goals:** Organizational impacts, benefits, and goals for specified recipients and their relative worth;
    b. **Executive Limitations:** Boundaries of acceptability within which staff methods and activities can be responsibly left to staff. These limiting policies, therefore, apply to staff means rather than to ends;
    c. **Governance Process:** How the Board shall conceive, carry out, and monitor its own work;
4. Ensuring the Superintendent's performance through monitoring the District's Organizational Goals and Executive Limitations policies.
5. Ensuring Board performance through monitoring Governance Process policies.
6. Ensuring that the Board Mission, Vision, and Organizational Goals are the focus of organizational performance.

When Board Members receive complaints or request for action from staff, students, or members of the public, the Board Members shall direct the individuals to KL-AR: Public Complaints. Such information shall be conveyed to the Superintendent.

If a Board Member chooses to create social media account(s) associated with their role as a Board Member, they shall be responsible for maintaining such account(s) and following the suggested guidelines for use of social media below:

- Members should clarify that they are communicating as an individual member of the Board and that their statements reflect their own views and not necessarily the official position of the district or Board. Board members shall only post on behalf of the district if they have been delegated to do so by the Board.
- Board Members shall keep in mind that they may be perceived by the public as official district spokespersons. As such, Board Members shall avoid posting information that has not been verified or has not been made available to the public and shall never post anonymously about District business.
- Board members shall encourage community input be provided through the appropriate channels. Individual Board Member's social media sites shall not be used to conduct discussion or decisions of Board business.
- Board Members shall avoid posting content that indicates they have already formed an opinion on matters pending before the Board.
- When attempting to communicate about matters from a previous Board meeting, Board Members shall clarify that the posting is not an official record of the Board meeting and only share information from the open portions of the meeting.
- Board Members shall report communications that are harassing, discriminatory, bullying or defamatory to the Superintendent or designee if the communications involve District officials, staff, students or business.
- Board Members are considered mandatory reporters and are required to abide by the same reporting responsibilities in a social media context.
- Board Members are reminded that they are subject to the District's records retention requirements and must retain their own posts and the content posting to their social media sites when required to do so by the District's record retention policy.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Board Members shall not publicly express individual judgments of staff performance.

Process for Addressing Board Member Violations

The Board and its members are committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the Board's policies. In the event of a Member's violation of policy, the Board may seek remedy by the following process:

1. Conversation in a private setting between the offending Member and the Board Chair or other individual Member(s);
2. Removal of the offending Member from a committee or other Board-designated responsibility, if appropriate;
3. Public censure of the offending Member of the Board.

Board Ethics, Nepotism, and Conflicts of Interest (GP-4)

No Board Member shall use or attempt to use their official position or office to obtain personal financial benefit or avoid financial detriment for themself, a relative, or a member of the household, or any business with which the Board Member, a relative, or a member of the household is associated.

This prohibition does not apply to any part of an official compensation package, honorarium allowed by ORS 244.042, reimbursement of expenses, or unsolicited awards of professional achievement. Further, this prohibition does not apply to gifts from one without a legislative or administrative interest. Nor does it apply if the gift is under the annual $50 gift limit from one who has a legislative or administrative interest in any matter subject to the decision or vote of the Board member.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

"Business" means any corporation, partnership, proprietorship, enterprise, association, franchise, firm, organization, self-employed individual or any legal entity operated for economic gain. This definition excludes any income-producing tax exempt 501(c) not-for-profit corporation with which a public official or a relative of the public official is associated only as a member or board director or in a nonremunerative capacity.

"Business with which a Board Member or relative is associated" means any private business or closely held corporation of which a Board Member or relative is a director, officer, owner, employee or agent or any private business or closely held corporation in which a Board Member or relative owns or has owned stock, another form of equity interest, stock options or debt instruments worth $1,000 or more at any point in the preceding year; any publicly held corporation in which a Board Member or relative owns or has owned $100,000 or more in stock or another form of equity interest, stock options or debt instruments at any point in the preceding calendar year; or any publicly held corporation of which a Board Member or relative is a director or officer.

"Relative" means spouse[2], parent, step-parent, child, sibling, step-sibling, son-in-law or daughter-in-law of the Board Member; or parent, step-parent, child, sibling, step-sibling, son-in-law or daughter-in-law of the spouse of the Board Member. Relative also includes any individual for whom the Board Member has a legal support obligation, whose employment provides benefits[3] to the Board Member, or who receives any benefit from the Board Member's public employment.

"Member of the household" means any person who resides with the public official.

No Board Member shall solicit or receive, either directly or indirectly, any pledge or promise of future employment based on any understanding that the Board Member's vote, official action or judgment would be thereby influenced.

[2]The term spouse includes domestic partner.
[3]Examples of benefits may include, but not be limited to, elements of an official compensation package including benefits such as insurance, tuition or retirement allotments.

No Board Member shall attempt to use or use for personal gain any confidential information gained through their official position or association with the District. A Board Member will respect individuals' privacy rights when dealing with confidential information gained through association with the District.

If a Board Member participates in the authorization of a public contract, the Board Member may not have a direct beneficial financial interest in that public contract for two years after the date the contract was authorized.

Individual Board Members and the Board as a public entity are bound by the ethics laws for public officials as stated in Oregon law.

ACTUAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

"Actual conflict of interest" means any action or any decision or recommendation by a Board Member that would result in a financial benefit or detriment to self or relatives or for any business with which the Board Member or relatives are associated, unless otherwise provided by law.

A Board Member must publicly declare an actual conflict of interest. The Board Member may not vote lawfully if an actual conflict of interest exists unless a vote is needed to meet a minimum requirement of votes to take official action. Such a vote does not allow the Board Member to participate in any discussion or debate on the issue out of which an actual conflict arises.

POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

"Potential conflict of interest" means any action or any decision or recommendation by a Board Member that could result in a financial benefit or detriment to self or relatives or for any business with which the Board Member or relatives are associated, unless otherwise provided by law.

A Board Member must publicly declare a potential conflict of interest. A Board Member may, after declaring their potential conflict of interest, either vote or abstain on the issue. Abstaining from a vote does not meet the legal requirement of publicly stating a potential conflict.

CLASS EXCEPTION

It will not be a conflict of interest if the Board Member's action would affect to the same degree a class consisting of all inhabitants of the state, or a smaller class consisting of an industry, occupation or other group including one of which or in which the person, or the person's relative or business with which the person or the person's relative is associated, is a member or is engaged. For example, if a Board Member's spouse is a member of the collective bargaining unit, the Board Member may vote to approve the contract, as it will affect all members of that class to the same degree. However, if the collective bargaining unit is very small, the class exception may not apply. Similarly, if the contract contains special provisions that might apply only to particular persons, then the class exception may not apply. For example, if a Board Member's spouse is the only one in the bargaining unit that has a doctorate and there is a pay differential for employees with doctorates in the collective bargaining agreement, the Board Member should not vote on the contract.

GIFTS

Board Members are public officials and therefore shall not solicit or accept a gift or gifts with an aggregate value in excess of $50 from any single source in a calendar year that has a legislative or administrative interest in any matter subject to the decision or vote of the Board Member. All gift related provisions apply to the Board Member, their relatives, and members of their household. The $50 gift limit applies separately to the Board Member and to the Board Member's relatives or members of household, meaning that the Board

Member, each member of their household and relative can accept up to $50 each from the same source/gift giver. "Gift" means something of economic value given to a Board Member without valuable consideration of equivalent value, which is not extended to others who are not public officials on the same terms and conditions.

DETERMINING THE SOURCE OF GIFTS

Board Members shall not accept gifts in any amount without obtaining information from the gift giver as to who is the source of the gift. It is the Board Member's personal responsibility to ensure that no single source provides gifts exceeding an aggregate value of $50 in a calendar year, if the source has a legislative or administrative interest in any matter subject to the decision or vote of the Board Member. If the giver does not have a legislative/administrative interest, the ethics rules on gifts do not apply and the Board Member need not keep track of it, although they are advised to do so anyway in case of a later dispute.

DETERMINING LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INTEREST

A "legislative or administrative interest" means an economic interest distinct from that of the general public, in any action subject to the decision or vote of a person acting in the capacity of a Board Member. For example, everyone within a county has a general interest in the fire department, but the person who sells the uniforms to the fire department has a legislative or administrative interest in the fire department that is distinct from the general public.

DETERMINING THE VALUE OF GIFTS

The fair market value of the merchandise, goods, or services received will be used to determine benefit or value.

"Fair market value" is the dollar amount goods or services would bring if offered for sale by a person who desired, but was not obligated, to sell and purchased by one who is willing, but not obligated, to buy. Any portion of the price that was donated to charity, however, does not count toward the fair market value of the gift if the Board Member does not claim the charitable contribution on personal tax returns. Below are acceptable ways to calculate the fair market value of a gift:

1. In calculating the per person cost at receptions or meals the payor of the Board Member's admission or meal will include all costs other than any amount donated to a charity.

For example, a person with a legislative or administrative interest buys a table for a charitable dinner at $100 per person. If the cost of the meal was $25 and the amount donated to charity was $75, the benefit conferred on the Board Member is $25. This example requires that the Board Member does not claim the charitable contribution on personal tax returns.

2. For receptions and meals with multiple attendees, but with no price established to attend, the source of the Board Member's meal or reception will use reasonable methods to determine the per person value or benefit conferred. The following examples are deemed reasonable methods of calculating value or benefit conferred:
    a. The source divides the amount spent on food, beverage and other costs (other than charitable contributions) by the number of persons whom the payor reasonably expects to attend the reception or dinner;
    b. The source divides the amount spent on food, beverage and other costs (other than charitable contributions) by the number of persons who actually attend the reception or dinner; or
    c. The source calculates the actual amount spent on the Board member.
3. Upon request by the Board Member, the source will give notice of the value of the merchandise, goods, or services received.
4. Attendance at receptions where the food or beverage is provided as an incidental part of the reception is permitted without regard to the fair market value of the food and beverage provided.

VALUE OF UNSOLICITED TOKENS OR AWARDS: RESALE VALUE

Board Members may accept unsolicited tokens or awards that are engraved or are otherwise personalized items. Such items are deemed to have a resale value under $25 (even if the personalized item cost the source more than $50), unless the personalized item is made from gold or some other valuable material that would have value over $25 as a raw material.

ENTERTAINMENT

Board Members shall not solicit or accept any gifts of entertainment over $50 in value from any single source in a calendar year that has a legislative or administrative interest in any matter subject to the decision or vote of the Board Member unless:

1. The entertainment is incidental to the main purpose of another event (i.e., a band playing at a reception). Entertainment that involves personal participation is not incidental to another event (such as a golf tournament at a conference); or
2. The Board Member is acting in their official capacity for a ceremonial purpose.

Entertainment is ceremonial when a Board Member appears at an entertainment event for a "ceremonial purpose" at the invitation of the source of the entertainment who requests the presence of the Board Member at a special occasion associated with the entertainment. Examples of an appearance by a Board Member at an entertainment event for a ceremonial purpose include throwing the first pitch at a baseball game, appearing in a parade and ribbon cutting for an opening ceremony.

EXCEPTIONS

The following are exceptions to the ethics rules on gifts:

1. Campaign contributions are not considered gifts under the ethics rules;
2. Gifts from "relatives" and "members of the household" to the Board Member are permitted in an unlimited amount; they are not considered gifts under the ethics rules;
3. Informational or program material, publications, or subscriptions related to the recipient's performance of official duties;
4. Contributions made to a legal expense trust fund if certain requirements are met;
5. Food, lodging, and travel generally count toward the $50 aggregate amount per year from a single source with a legislative or administrative interest, with the following exceptions:
    a. Organized Planned Events. Board Members are permitted to accept payment for travel conducted in the Board Member's official capacity, for certain limited purposes:
        i. Reasonable expenses (i.e., food, lodging, travel, fees) for attendance at a convention, fact-finding mission or trip, or other meeting do not count toward the $50 aggregate amount IF:
            1. The Board Member is scheduled to deliver a speech, make a presentation, participate on a panel, or represent the district; AND
                a. The giver is a unit of a:
                    i. Federal, state, or local government;
                    ii. An Oregon or federally recognized Native American Tribe; OR
                    iii. Nonprofit corporation.
            2. The Board Member is representing the district:
                a. On an officially sanctioned trade-promotion or fact-finding mission; OR
                b. Officially designated negotiations or economic development activities *where receipt of the expenses is approved in advance by the Board.*
        ii. The purpose of this exception is to allow Board Members to attend organized, planned events and engage with the members of organizations by speaking or answering

questions, participating in panel discussions or otherwise formally discussing matters in their official capacity. This exception to the gift definition does not authorize private meals where the participants engage in discussion.

6. Food or beverage, consumed at a reception, meal, or meeting IF held by an organization and IF the Board Member is representing the District. Again, this exception does not authorize private meals where the participants engage in discussion.

"Reception" means a social gathering. Receptions are often held for the purpose of extending a ceremonial or formal welcome and may include private or public meetings during which guests are honored or welcomed. Food and beverages are often provided, but not as a plated, sit-down meal;

7. Food or beverage consumed by the Board Member acting in an official capacity in the course of financial transactions between the public body and another entity described in ORS 244.020(6)(b)(I)(i);
8. Waiver or discount of registration expenses or materials provided to the Board Member at a continuing education event that the Board member may attend to satisfy a professional licensing requirement;
9. A gift received by the Board Member as part of the usual or customary practice of the Board Member's private business, employment or position as a volunteer that bears no relationship to the Board Member's holding of public office.

HONORARIA

A Board Member shall not solicit or receive, whether directly or indirectly, honoraria for the Board Member or any relative or member of the household of the Board Member if the honoraria are solicited or received in connection with the official duties of the Board Member.

The honoraria rules do not prohibit the solicitation or receipt of an honorarium or a certificate, plaque, commemorative token or other item with a value of $50 or less; or the solicitation or receipt of an honorarium for services performed in relation to the private profession, occupation, avocation or expertise of the Board Member or candidate.

NEPOTISM

To avoid both potential and actual conflicts of interests, Board Members shall abide by the following rules when a Board Member's relative or member of the household is seeking and/or holds a position with the District:

1. A Board Member shall not appoint, employ or promote a relative or member of the household, or discharge, fire or demote or advocate for such employment decision for a relative or member of the household, unless the Board member complies with the conflict of interest requirements of ORS Chapter 244.

This policy does not apply to decisions regarding unpaid volunteer positions unless it is a Board Member position or another Board-related unpaid volunteer position (i.e. a Board committee position).

2. A Board Member shall not participate as a public official in any interview, discussion or debate regarding the appointment, employment or promotion, discharge, firing, or demotion of a relative or member of the household. A Board Member may still serve as a reference or provide a recommendation.

Board Member Roles and Board Committees (GP-5)

In accordance with ORS 332.040, the Board shall annually elect a Chair and Vice Chair. The incumbent Board Chair shall preside until a successor is elected, whereupon the successor shall assume the Chair. In the event no incumbent Chair or Vice Chair remains on the Board, the most senior member of the Board shall preside. In the event the Chair or Vice Chair is unable to fulfill their duties at any time, the Board shall elect a new Chair or Vice

Chair. At the Board's discretion, one additional officer (e.g. Secretary, Treasurer) may also be elected to carry out specific duties.

BOARD CHAIR ROLE

The Board Chair has the following authority and duties any of which may be explicitly delegated to other members of the Board to capitalize on the interests and strengths of individual Board Members:

1. Monitor Board behavior to ensure it is consistent with its own rules and policies and those legitimately imposed upon from outside the organization;
    a. Conduct and monitor Board meeting deliberations to ensure only Board issues, as defined in Board policy, are discussed;
    b. Ensure Board meeting deliberations are fair, open, and thorough, but also efficient, timely, orderly and to the point;
    c. Preside over Board meetings in accordance with the law and modified *Robert's Rules of Order*;
2. Make all interpretive decisions that fall within the topics covered by Board policies, Governance Process policies, and the Board/Superintendent Operating Agreement, except where the Board specifically delegates such authority to others, using any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in those policies;
    a. Refrain from making any interpretive decisions about policies created by the Board in the Executive Limitations policy areas;
    b. Refrain from exercising any authority as an individual to supervise or direct the Superintendent.
3. Develop, in coordination with the Vice Chair and Superintendent, and consistent with the interests of the Board, agendas for Board meetings.
    a. Any agenda item requested by at least three members of the Board shall be placed on the agenda.
4. Within the framework of policy governance, approach the Superintendent with concerns or requests that are supported by a majority of the Board.
5. With input from the Board, appoint committee members to standing and ad hoc committees and initiate ad hoc committees to accomplish specific tasks.
6. Participate in the orientation of new Board Members.
7. Ensure that Executive Limitations policy monitoring results are documented in a timely way.
8. Coordinate the evaluation process for the Superintendent.
9. Lead the Board in an annual self-assessment.
10. Provide oversight of the Board's resources and budget.
11. In dealing with the media and the public in general, the Chair or their designee shall serve as the spokesperson of the Board.
12. The Chair or designee shall respond to public emails on behalf of the Board and shall facilitate follow-up with those who provide public input at board meetings.
13. Attend events to strengthen the school Board's relationship with community partners. The Chair may delegate this to any other willing member.

VICE CHAIR ROLE

The Vice Chair shall preside at Board meetings in the absence of the Chair and shall perform all of the duties of the Chair in case of their absence or disability. In the absence of the Chair and the Vice Chair, the Board's most senior member present shall preside.

The Vice Chair shall carry out other duties as delegated by the Chair or by a vote of the Board.

INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER ROLES

The authority of individual Board Members is limited to participating in actions taken by the Board as a whole when legally in session. The Board or District staff shall not be bound in any way by an action taken or statement made by any individual Board Member except when such statement or action is pursuant to specific instructions and official action taken by the Board.

Each Board Member shall review the agenda and any study materials distributed prior to the meeting and be prepared to participate in the discussion and decision-making for each agenda item.

Each Member is obligated to attend Board meetings regularly. Whenever possible, each Member shall give advance notice to the Chair of their inability to attend a Board meeting.

BOARD COMMITTEES

Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority shall be carefully stated in policy in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Superintendent.

Board committees shall be organized by agreement of the majority of the Board with members appointed by the Chair.

BUDGET COMMITTEE

By law, the Budget Committee is charged with making recommendations concerning financial priorities.

The Budget Committee shall have the responsibility for reviewing the financial programs of the district, reviewing the proposed district budget as presented by the Superintendent, and recommending an annual or biennial district budget in keeping with the provisions of applicable state laws.

Educational policy decisions are the responsibility of the Board, not the Budget Committee. The Committee does not have the authority to add programs or to approve additional personnel or increase salaries. While the Committee may, in effect, delete programs because of a fund decrease, the Committee is charged primarily with a fiscal evaluation of programs. The Committee may, alternatively, set an amount that changes the recommended budget and may request the administration make such changes in accordance with priorities set by the Board.

The following shall govern the make-up and process of establishing the district's Budget Committee:

1. The Budget Committee consists of seven members appointed by the Board plus the elected Board members of the district. To be eligible for appointment, the appointive member must:
    a. Live and be registered to vote in the district;
    b. Not be an officer, agent or employee of the district.
2. At least one member of the Budget Committee must be a member of the district's Educational Equity Advisory Committee;[4]
3. No Budget Committee member may receive any type of compensation from the district;
4. The Board shall identify vacant Budget Committee positions which must be filled by appointment of the Board. The Board shall announce the vacancies and receive applications from interested persons during the month of December. Such applications will include a signed statement that the applicant is willing to

[4]The Budget Committee is not required to include a member of the Educational Equity Advisory Committee until a vacancy on the Budget Committee occurs by a member who is not also a member of the school district Board. The district is not required to include a member of the Educational Equity Advisory Committee on the Budget Committee if no member of the committee is willing or able to serve on the Budget Committee.

serve as a member of the Budget Committee and to adhere to the policies of the district. The Board may appoint Budget Committee members to as many consecutive terms as deemed appropriate;
5. The appointive committee members of a Budget Committee in a district that prepares an annual budget shall be appointed for three-year terms. The terms shall be staggered so that, as near as practicable, one-third of the appointive members' terms end each year.
6. If any appointive member is unable to complete the term for which the member was appointed, the Board shall announce the vacancy at the first regular Board meeting following the committee member's resignation or removal. An appointment to fill the position for its unexpired term shall be made at the next regular Board meeting.

Budget Committee Responsibilities

The following items explain the Budget Committee responsibilities:

1. At its first meeting after appointment, the Budget Committee shall elect a presiding officer from among its members. It may also establish other ground rules as necessary for successful operation of the committee;
2. A majority of the constituted committee is required for passing an action item. Majority for a 14-member Budget Committee is 8. Therefore, if only 8 members are present, a unanimous vote is needed for passing an action;
3. The Budget Committee shall hold one or more meetings to receive the budget message, receive the budget document and to provide members of the public with an opportunity to ask questions about and comment on the budget document. The budget officer shall announce the time and place for all meetings, as provided by law. All meetings of the Budget Committee are open to the public;
4. The Budget Committee may request any information used in the preparation of or for revising the budget document from the Superintendent or Chief Financial Officer. The Committee may request the attendance of any district employee at its meetings. The Budget Committee shall approve the budget document as submitted by the Superintendent or as subsequently revised by the Committee;
5. After approval of the original or revised budget document, the Budget Committee's duties cease. The hearing on the approved budget is held by the Board.

Board Organization and Governance (GP-6)

To accomplish its stated objectives, the Board shall govern in a consistent and efficient manner. Accordingly, no later than the first meeting held after July 1 of each year the Board shall:

1. Organize by electing officers in accordance with GP-5: Board Member Roles and Board Committees.
2. Establish an annual meeting schedule.
    a. The schedule may be changed with proper notice.
    b. Special meetings may be held at the request of the Chair, or by mutual consent of the Members, or may be called by four members of the Board serving written 24-hour notice on the other members and the Superintendent. Special meetings must be scheduled at least 24-hours in advance to allow for notification to the public and media.
    c. Emergency meetings may be held upon less than 24-hour notice as is appropriate to the circumstances. The minutes of such a meeting shall describe the justification for providing less than 24-hours notice to the public and the media.
3. Review and adopt a Board/Superintendent Operating Agreement.

Additionally, the Board shall:

1. Comply with Oregon Public Meetings Laws (ORS 192.610-192.705).
    a. "Meeting" does not include:
        i. Any on-site inspection of any project or program.

ii. Attendance of members of the Board at any national, regional, or state association to which the Board or its members belong.
iii. Private or social meetings of a quorum when decisions or deliberations are not taking place.

2. Allow for public attendance at regular and special meetings. The right of public attendance at a public meeting does not include the right to participate by public testimony or comment.
   a. Any member of the audience who continues to disrupt a Board meeting after being asked to cease by the Chair may be excluded from the meeting (or muted in a virtual meeting) by the Chair if necessary to maintain order, conduct business efficiently, or allow others the ability to participate. The intent is that such disruption be addressed as efficiently and uniformly as possible.
3. Vote on motions using "yeas" or "nays" and record the result of the vote.
4. Adhere to a majority vote requirement, which requires affirmative votes by a majority of the membership of the Board (4 out of 7) to pass any motion before the Board.
5. Conduct a Board meeting only if a majority of the Board Members are present.
6. Appoint and maintain a 7 member citizens' Budget Committee as required by Oregon Revised Statute and utilize the majority vote requirement, which requires affirmative votes by a majority of the committee (8 out of 14) be required to pass any motion before the Budget Committee.

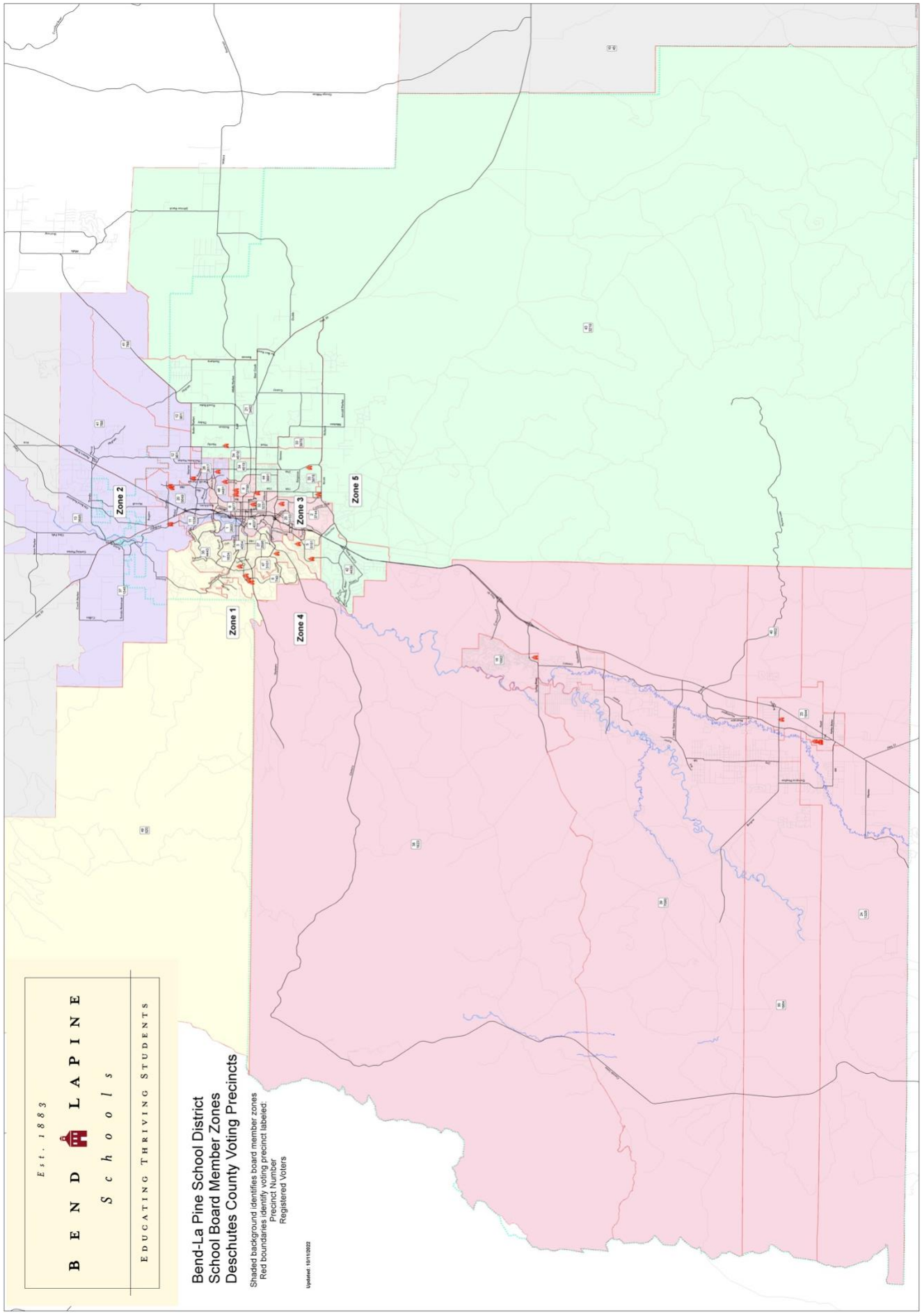
PUBLIC COMMENT

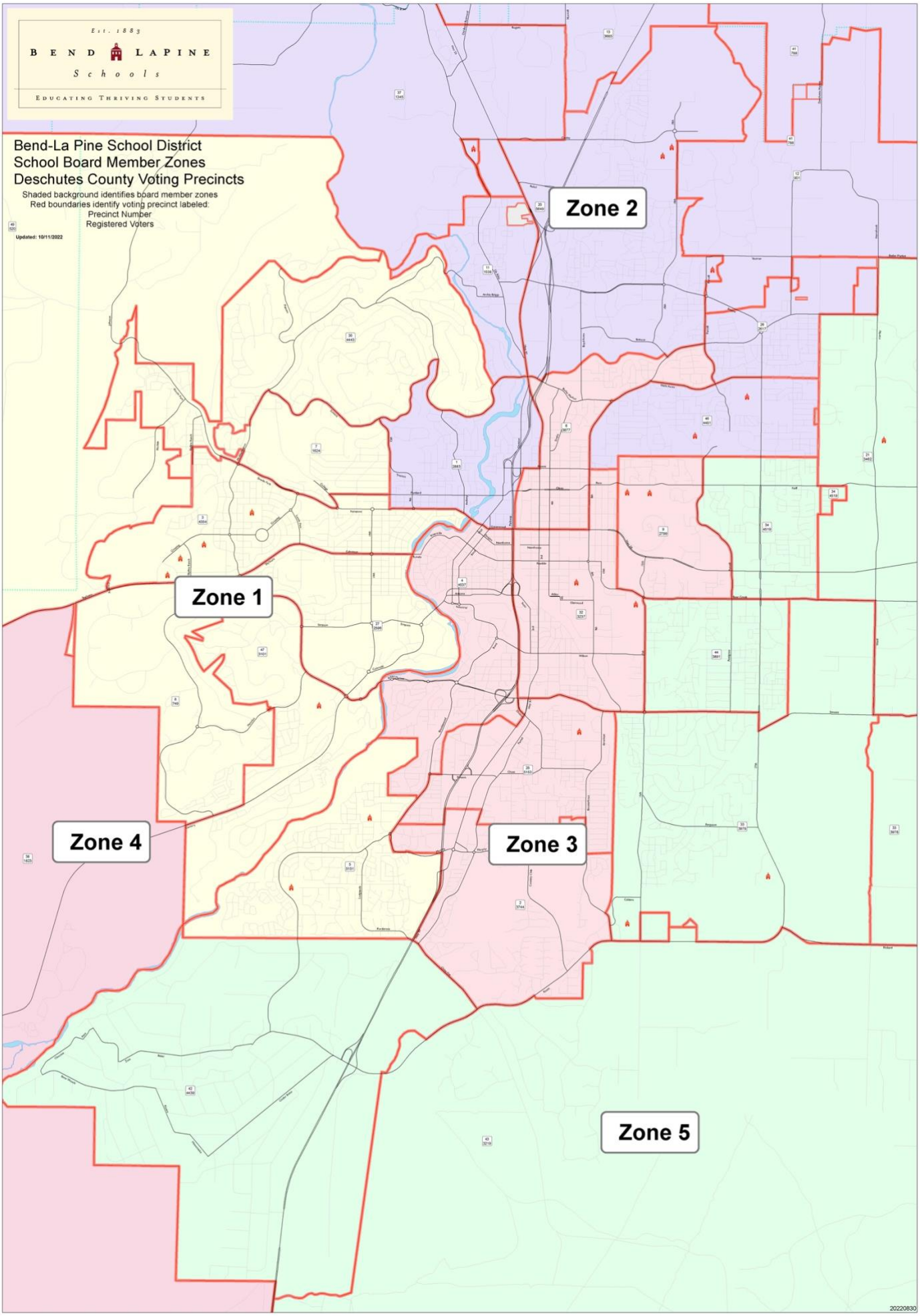
The Board establishes the following procedures for public comment at Board meetings held in open session. The information shall be accessible and available to all patrons accessing or attending such a Board meeting.

Public comment is typically only received at regular business meetings, not at work sessions. The following shall serve as guidelines when public are attending a meeting:

1. Individuals wishing to make public comment must sign up prior to the start of the meeting. Individuals will be asked to include full name, contact information, and agenda item they are speaking to, or topic of comment if they are speaking to a non-agendized item.
2. Individuals will be called upon to speak by the Chair or designee and will be prioritized in the following order: Bend-La Pine Schools (BLS) students, BLS residents, and those who have not been heard from in the two previous business meetings.
3. The typical time per speaker will be a maximum of two (2) minutes until the time cap has been reached for that agenda item. The Board will typically allow up to ten (10) minutes for comments on the same agenda item and up to ten (10) minutes for comments on non-agendized items. A group of visitors with a common purpose are encouraged to designate a spokesperson for the group. Remarks should be addressed to the Board as a body rather than directed to any particular Member.
4. Speakers may offer feedback of District operations and programs, but the Board will not hear complaints or comments concerning individual District staff members or Board Members. The Chair or designee shall direct the visitor to the appropriate means for filing a complaint or for offering feedback.
5. Public comment is a time for members of the public to express their views; therefore, the Board shall not engage in discussion or answer questions during public comment.
6. The Chair or designee may interrupt and/or end public comment when time has been exceeded, complaints/comments are made about an individual District staff member or Board Member, or when comments and/or behavior become inappropriate. Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to, attempting to engage individual Board Members in conversation; insults, obscenities or profanity; discriminatory or racist comments; attacks against any person in their personal capacity; and/or physical violence or threat thereof. A Board Member may also ask for a Point of Order to address such comments.

Supplemental Documents


Zone 1
Zone 2
Zone 3
Zone 4
Zone 5
Bend-La Pine School District
School Board Member Zones
Deschutes County Voting Precincts
Shaded background identifies board member zones
Red boundaries identify voting precinct labeled:
Precinct Number
Registered Voters
Updated: 10/11/2022
Est. 1883
BEND LAPINE
Schools
EDUCATING THRIVING STUDENTS


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Zone 5
20220830

Principles of a Successful Board Member

Being elected to the school board is a responsibility not to be taken lightly.

1. The child comes first!
   - Decisions should be viewed in light of how each affects the children of the district and their education.

2. You are a community member who establishes the rules
   - You've hired the best superintendent available, they're responsible for the day-to-day operations!
     - Respect district staff as skilled professionals.

3. Function as a Board, not an Individual
   - Individually you have no authority
   - Your votes together hold tremendous power
   - Voice the minority when voting, but then support the majority in the community

4. Set Policy
   - The superintendent's responsibility is to carry out the policies

5. Know your schools
   - Visit schools, talk with principals and staff to inform your votes
   - You are <u>not</u> there to evaluate or find fault

6. Represent the People
   - Counsel your constituents on how to use the chain of command for solving problems
     - Teacher, principal, level leader, superintendent, board
   - Never promise resolution to a problem
   - Present criticisms to the superintendent directly; not to staff and not in a meeting

7. Participate
   - Take part in regional, state, and national meetings
     - Meet board members from other areas, get a broader view of local issues, and learn about state and national concerns that may affect the district

8. Abide by the Code of Conduct and Board Ethics
   - Don't refuse to disclose public information
   - Don't disclose confidential information
   - Don't play favorites with special-interest groups
   - Don't speak out in public in opposition to a board action

9. ENJOY YOURSELF!
   - Embrace the opportunity to challenge your creativity, wisdom and courage
   - <u>Remember,</u> you are providing educational opportunities for the children in the district

Remaking Governance



The creator of 'Policy Governance' challenges school boards to change

BY JOHN CARVER

The familiar—even cherished—practices of school boards are strangling public education. Most of what school boards currently do is a travesty of their important role. Much of what is published for boards—including advice appearing regularly in these pages—reinforces errors of the past or, at best, teaches trustees how to do the wrong things better. In my opinion, school boards don't need improvement so much as total redesign. And they are not alone in this predicament, for governance is the least-developed function in all enterprises.

Preparing people for contributing, satisfying adulthood is worth the most effective governance a board can achieve. If school boards must completely reinvent themselves to be worthy of their mission—as I'm convinced they must—then so be it. If that means much of current board training must be discarded—as I'm convinced it must—then let it be done. No role deserves transformation more than that of the nation's school boards.

A new governance model

For two decades I have studied and taught governance—the process by which a small group, usually on behalf of others, exercises authority over an organization. I have found that

ELISE RUGOLO-CROWE

although boards work hard to solve practical problems as they arise, the crucial missing element is credible theory. The Policy Governance model of board leadership that emerged from my work is arguably the only existing complete theory of governance, whether of businesses, nonprofits, cities, or schools. Its philosophical foundations lie in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social contract, leadership philospher Robert K. Greenleaf's servant-leadership, and modern management theory.

The model redesigns what it means to be a board, challenging other approaches as founded more on anecdotal wisdom than good theory. A tightly reasoned paradigm, the model must be used in total to achieve its promise of greater accountability. Partial implementation sacrifices the model's benefits, for it is a complete, logical system, not merely tips for improvement.

Using this new paradigm requires a school board to exercise uncharacteristic self-discipline, but it enables the board to govern the system, rather than run it; to define and demand educational results rather than poke and probe in educational and administrative processes; to redirect time from trivia and ritual actions to strategic leadership; to give a superintendent one boss rather than several; to grant administrators and educators great latitude within explicit boundaries; to be in charge of board agendas instead of dependent on staff; and to guarantee unbroken accountability from classroom to taxpayer.

Space here does not allow full explication of Policy Governance. I can, however, list seven characteristics that differentiate this model from governance as now widely practiced and taught.

1. Primacy of the owner-representative role. The board directly touches three elements of the "chain of command": the general public, the board itself, and the superintendent. Although the succession of authority within the system is best left to the superintendent, the board must maintain the integrity of the initial three elements. Let's consider the first link in that chain.

The board's primary relationship is with those to whom it is accountable—the general public, the "shareholders" of public education. The board is the public's purchasing agent for the educational product. The public-board relationship supersedes the board's relationship with everyone else.

The central task of a board is to assimilate the diverse values of those who own the system, to add any special knowledge (often obtained from experts, including staff), then to make decisions on behalf of the owners. The formal link from owners to trustees is the election process—a tight link with respect to a trustee holding office, but a very loose link with respect to knowing the public's mind. Typically, boards rely on open meetings, public hearings, and constituent phone calls for the bulk of public input. These methods not only fail to fulfill the board's obligation to connect with the owners, they are misleading in that the "public" is self-selected and typically expresses not its owner role, but its customer, vendor, or operator role. Boards rarely hear from a representative sampling of owners. Because the general public is so large, a continual system of focus groups, surveys, and advisory mechanisms is required to achieve even a semblance of fulfilling the board's owner-representative role. The time is overdue for putting the public back into public education.

Cultivating a principal-agent relationship between the public and the board holds great promise for the position of education in society, but this relationship has been impaired by decades of conventional practice. For example, boards promote an inappropriate direct link from public to superintendent. This connection circumvents the board's role as sole owner-representative and lets the board off the hook for poor system performance. If the public can blame poor school performance on the superintendent, then the fact that it is the board that has let the public down might go unnoticed. Making the hiring of a superintendent into an affair of high-profile community involvement is part of this same aberration. Superintendents are instruments of the board, not of the public. The public's instrument is the board.

Another mistake is behaving as if parents are the system's owners and that the board is their representative. Boards historically have shortcut the owner-board-organization-customer circuit, partly because parents are the most vocal subgroup of owners, and partly because they are fewer and easier to identify than the true ownership. Consequently, both politics and logistics induce boards to act as if parents own the system. Parents might resist losing any part of this role, but public policy (and, in the long run, parents and students) will benefit by facing the fact that parents, *as parents*, do not own the public schools. Parents are owners by virtue of being part of the public, but they constitute only a percentage, not the whole. The same is true of teachers, administrators, and the media.

This is not to denigrate the importance of parents. Parents and their children are customers/consumers of the system and, as such, are no less important and no less to be courted and pleased than customers of any other enterprise. Nor does this formulation minimize the central role of parents in their children's education. In fact, failing to give parents an integral role in the educational process would be unconscionable.

2. One voice from plural trustees. Trustees have authority only as a full board—but few boards behave accordingly. Staff members take instructions from and answer to individual trustees and board committees. Individual trustees judge staff performance on criteria the board as a body has never stated. Superintendents seek to keep individual trustees happy quite apart from fulfilling board requirements. Trustees enjoy getting things "fixed" for constituents. There is often unspoken agreement that "you can meddle in your district if you'll let me meddle in mine." It is not enough to dismiss these phenomena as simply politics and personalities. Whether the board intends it or not, the realpolitik of school systems demonstrates regularly that staff members do, in fact, take direction from individual trustees.

If a board seriously intends to speak with only one voice, it must declare that the staff can safely ignore advice and instructions from individual trustees, that only the explicit instructions

of the board must be heeded. Excellence in governance will not occur until superintendents are certain that trustees *as a group* will protect them from trustees *as individuals*.

Commitment to the authoritative unity of the board in no way compromises board members' right to speak their minds. Vigorous disagreement among trustees does not damage governance, but allowing intraboard skirmishes to affect the staff is irresponsible. In short, trustees who disagree with the vote may continue to say so, but may not influence organizational direction. It is in boards' interest that superintendents treat a 5-4 vote as a 9-0 vote.

3. The superintendent as a real chief executive officer. Boards frequently give direction to subordinates of the superintendent, degrading the chief executive role and the board's own ability to hold the superintendent accountable. Only if the board expresses its aims for the system as a whole—rather than part by part—can the powerful utility of the chief executive role be harnessed, simultaneously simplifying accountability and saving board time.

In other words, the superintendent is the only person the board instructs and the only person the board evaluates. The superintendent should be authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of instructions the board gives. This requires the board to take full responsibility for its words and enables the superintendent to take the board at its word.

In effect, the board does not tell the system how to operate, but how not to.

4. Authoritative prescription of "ends." The board's greatest and most difficult responsibility is to clarify and reclarify why the system exists. This requires the board to be both proactive and authoritative—to define expected results for students and to demand system performance. The public is buying specifiable results for specifiable groupings of students at specifiable costs or priorities.

Informed obsession with the system's "ends"—that is, results, recipients, and cost of results—should be the dominant work of the board. Involvement in curriculum, special reading initiatives, or testing programs will not suffice. To the contrary, holding a system accountable is impeded by board involvement in these and other internal processes. Instead of demanding ends performance, boards routinely fail to describe the ends and then intervene in what they've hired professionals to do. No amount of telling people how to run the system can substitute for simply demanding designated results and getting out of their way.

5. Bounded freedom for "means." Boards struggle with the dilemma of being accountable for others' work. Control is necessary, but so is empowerment. Authority not given away does little good, but too much given away constitutes rubber stamping or dereliction. How can the board have its arms around the system without its fingers in it?

If ends expectations are met (right results, right recipients, right costs or priorities), the "means"—that is, other decisions, such as methods, practices, and conduct—must have worked. So the board does not have to control means prescriptively. In fact, to tell staff how to accomplish ends impedes creativity and innovation. Why does the board need to control means at all? Because not all means are justified by the ends—some means would be unacceptable even if they work. The achievement of ends demonstrates that means are effective, but it doesn't prove that means are acceptable.

To address the acceptability of means, the board need only define the boundaries of acceptability. The board limits the superintendent's latitude regarding certain situations, activities, or risk. In effect, the board does not tell the system how to operate, but how *not* to—an approach that is simpler and safer for the board and freeing for the staff. The message from board to superintendent, then, is, "Achieve these ends within these restrictions on means." This instruction embraces the whole of board-staff delegation, which is to say, the superintendent's job description.

6. Board decisions crafted by descending size. There is no way the board can determine every result for every child and the cost appropriate for that result. Similarly, it is impossible to state every unacceptable action or situation. So what prevents the seemingly simple protocol of prescribing ends and proscribing means from deteriorating into maddening detail?

Boards must manage the sequence of different sizes of decisions. First, the board defines ends and unacceptable means in as broad a way as possible. For example, the broadest version of ends might be, "Students acquire skills and understandings for successful life at a tax rate comparable to that of similar districts." The broadest version of means limitation might be, "Don't allow anything imprudent or unethical." This is broad indeed—which is to say it is open to a wide range of interpretation. If the board were willing to allow the superintendent to use any reasonable interpretation of these words, the board could stop with these two short instructions.

But no board would allow that. Instead, the board must define a bit more, perhaps adding, "Don't allow assets to be unnecessarily risked or inadequately maintained," along with similarly narrowed prohibitions about personnel treatment,

compensation systems, parental involvement, and so forth. As to ends, the board might augment its initial, broad statement with, "Students will be literate above age-level expectations." This is also too broad for most boards, so the next step is to define still further. The process continues step-by-step into more detail until the majority of trustees are willing to accept any reasonable interpretation of the words used to that point. At this level the board stops and superintendent authority begins.

7. System-focused superintendent evaluation. The only reason to have a chief executive officer is to ensure system performance. Consequently, board expectations of the system (ends and limits on means) are the *only* criteria on which a superintendent should be assessed. The board actually evaluates the entire system (not the superintendent personally) and "pins it" on the superintendent. Most discussions of superintendent evaluation—including articles in recent issues of *ASBJ*—miss the power of this simplicity, falling back on such nonperformance, personalized irrelevancies as "leads by example" and "proficient in educational thinking." It is archaic and spurious to evaluate a superintendent on anything other than whether the system produces and operates as it should. It is *system performance* for which the board is accountable to the public.

Annual board approval of the superintendent's objectives is another testimony to poor governance. If the superintendent accomplishes the board's expectations, it is immaterial whether he or she achieves his or her own as well. Typically, boards have not expressed system expectations sufficiently to enable recognition of success and failure on their own. In the Policy Governance model, ends to be achieved and means disallowed embrace all the board's expectations. Moreover, they are targeted at system accountability, unaffected by how a given superintendent retains or delegates the various elements of management.

Monitoring data are reviewed throughout the year, as frequently as the board chooses. Because these data directly address performance on ends and means limitations, they constitute a continual evaluation of the superintendent. Although there might also be a summative annual evaluation, the criterion-focused monitoring system is the most direct measure of superintendent performance—a seamless process through time rather than a sporadic event.

This comparison of reality to expectations must be fair as well as uncompromising. Trustees should not judge the superintendent's performance on criteria the board has never stated. Expectations not incorporated into the board's ends or means limitations cannot be admitted into evaluative monitoring. Further, "any reasonable interpretation" of the board's expectations must mean just that—not the interpretation of the most influential trustee or what the board had in mind but didn't say.

What it looks like

What does the public see the board doing differently under Policy Governance? The board gets out of the superintendent's job and takes responsibility for its own job. Because agendas are no longer staff-driven, board meetings are the *board's* meetings—not the staff's meetings for the board. The steady stream of documents for approval disappears from the regular agenda due to more sophisticated delegation. (Criteria that would have led to disapprovals are known and monitored, so the "approval syndrome" becomes inconsistent with proper delegation. The consent agenda is reserved for decisions the board would delegate, but on which law requires board action.) Freed from endless crowding of its agenda by managerial material, the board does its own work instead of pretending that looking over the superintendent's shoulder *is* its work.

Board meetings are not characterized by shoot-from-the-hip instructions to the superintendent, much less to the staff. Board meetings are not to help manage the system, nor to go over operational details. The board no longer struggles through extensive reports unrelated to preestablished criteria. It has learned that what it previously thought was monitoring was merely wandering around in the presence of data.

Board meetings are not parent and vendor complaint meetings. Any system in which customer complaints must go to the board for resolution is poorly designed. (Envision having to take your cold hamburger to the fast food chain's board.) On the contrary, the board expects the superintendent to have parents taken care of as courteously and effectively as possible. If a parent problem gets to the board, it is considered symptomatic of a system flaw rather than an opportunity for trustee involvement. Parents get their say in the way the system affects their children, but not by supplanting the owners' meetings.

Most board committees disappear. If a board has committees, it does so only for help with *its* job—never to help, advise, or instruct staff, lest it destroy the clarity of delegation. The board does not believe that the kind of internal involvement described in an article about board committees in a recent issue of *ASBJ* is related to governing the system. For a board committee to focus on staff activities is probably the most intrusive of board practices and the most wasteful of staff and trustee time.

Liberated from hours of preoccupation with system operations, trustees have more time to meet with community groups, other public boards, and pertinent authorities. Raising its visibility as a governmental leader, the board demonstrates its focus on ends and its long-term perspective by the language it uses, questions it asks, and topics it schedules. Joint meetings with city councils, hospital boards, social service boards, and other organs of the public become commonplace.

Board meetings are spent learning diverse points of view on what is most important for schools to produce, differing projections of future needs of students, and any other wisdom that helps in making wise long-term decisions about ends. The public is integral to these meetings, but carefully organized so the board gets representative input.

Many board meetings are not meetings in the usual sense at all, but take place in community settings where certain segments of the public can be heard. Wherever the meeting, the atmosphere is tailored for listening and entering into dialogue.

Board meetings are places of thoughtful dialogue and debate rather than the trivia that commonly besets conventional agendas.

Through focus groups, the board assesses public values about priorities and costs of educational products. This is not a sporadic or single-purpose effort, but an unending process. These carefully planned interactions are not for public relations, but for the dual purpose of enhancing board understanding and reinforcing the public's sense of ownership of its schools. Trustees are perceived as the public's servant-leaders in the great challenge of preparing citizens for a democracy.

What schools are for

The critical role of education in a democracy demands exceptional governance integrity. Commitment and intelligence cannot overcome our institutionalized hodgepodge of traditional practices. Conscientious, detailed preoccupation with what schools *do* can never compensate for failing to define clearly what schools are *for*, then demanding system performance from a chief executive officer. Visionary leadership is not forged in a flurry of trivia, micromanagement, and administrative detail. If school boards are not the place for serious, perpetual community debate of how much this generation is willing to pay for which skills and understandings of the next generation, what other place does the public have?

Earlier, in illustrating flaws of conventional wisdom, I cited two articles from previous issues of *ASBJ*. I'll close by quoting a refreshing article ("Changing the Entitlement Culture," Paul McGowen and John Miller) in the August 1999 issue. "The challenge is for leaders to change the culture. ... It is time for public school leaders to seize the initiative." If there is to be a renaissance of public education, it will begin when boards discard the conceptually incoherent practices of today for a public leadership founded on sound governance theory.

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