

Briarcliff Manor Union Free School District Protocols and Board/Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities 2026-27
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As stewards of the Briarcliff Manor Union Free School District, we aim to maintain a high degree of trust between the Board of Education, the administrative staff, the teaching staff, and the community. Agreement on these protocols is the Board's attempt to support our efforts.

BOARD MEMBER ROLES/AUTHORITY

1. The Board sees itself primarily as a policy-setting body and delegates the administration of schools to the superintendent and staff.
2. The Board ensures goals and priorities are in place for the District, reviews those goals annually, and makes updates and changes as necessary, taking into account recommendations from the Superintendent.
3. Board members have authority as members of the corporate board, but not to take individual action.
4. Board decisions are binding on all board members.
5. The Board evaluates itself and reviews its protocols at the end of each academic year in order to maintain standards of best practice.
6. The Board strives to reach decisions through the consensus process rather than simply by majority vote, whenever possible.

SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE/AUTHORITY

1. The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for the administration of the school district and serves as the chief executive officer.
2. The Superintendent of Schools shall suggest regulations, rules, policies and procedures deemed necessary for the well ordering of the school district.
3. The Superintendent of Schools provides the board with the information and analysis required and necessary to formulate policy and take other appropriate actions.

COMMUNICATION

1. Individual Board of Education member communication with the Superintendent of Schools with regard to important questions, district governance and specific board matters should be shared with rest of the Board of Education. The Superintendent shall respond to all inquiries from the Board of Education as soon as practicable and will share the response with all Board Members.
2. Individual Board members will only contact district employees or vendors in their capacity as members of the board with board consensus. Appropriate reasons for individuals serving on the Board to contact district employees would be limited to approved committee work or when designated as a liaison by the Board of Education and in these cases the Superintendent shall be included on any written correspondence and updated on any conversations.
3. Individual Board Members may contact district employees regarding their own children and in these instances should be clear to separate their parent role from their Board role.
4. Should the Board or the Superintendent of Schools recommend the need for executive session, the Superintendent of Schools will be the sole representative of the District unless he/she or the Board of Education determines it is appropriate, for informational purposes, to include other district office personnel.

5. The Superintendent of Schools will be the district's primary provider of news and information to the school community.
6. The Superintendent should provide information to all board members within a reasonable amount of time. If the Superintendent does not believe the request is for information that is readily available, they will ask for consensus of the Board for the request at a public meeting of the board.

AGENDA SETTING

1. Responsibility is shared by the Superintendent of Schools and the Board President or Vice President.
2. Avoid surprises: Board members, to the extent practicable, shall let the Superintendent of Schools and Board president know in advance, about issues, errors or omissions which they intend to raise at the Board meeting, and the Superintendent of Schools will do the same.
3. The board packets and preliminary agenda will be distributed electronically to Board Members the weekend prior to the regularly scheduled board meeting whenever practicable.
4. The board packet will include a Superintendent's Report highlighting pertinent information in the Board packet as well as other noteworthy developments in the district. The report may also include relevant highlights from the Asst. Superintendent and other Directors as determined by the Board to be necessary for their understanding of district matters.
5. Presentations for Board meetings (even if in draft form), should be made available to the Board at least 24 hours before the board meeting.
6. Legal questions may be presented to the school attorney by board leadership or by an individual board member with the permission of the board president, vice-president or Superintendent of Schools. If an inquiry involves the performance by a board member regarding his or her fiduciary duties, such inquiry shall be made through the protocol set forth above and, if consent is not given, the contact with the school attorney may then be made without such consent.
7. All legal opinions given by the school attorney pursuant to this protocol shall be shared, in writing, with the whole board and superintendent of schools, unless the matter involves the superintendent's employment with the district or a claim/litigation brought by an individual board member, in which event the response will not be shared with that board member.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Rules for confidentiality are those consistent with the Open Meetings Law.
2. Discussions in executive session must remain completely confidential.

PARENTAL AND STAFF COMPLAINTS

1. Board members direct parents who call with complaints to work up through the hierarchy talking to the teacher, the principal, the Superintendent of Schools before further involving board members.
2. Board members relay other more substantive criticisms, complaints or suggestions to the president, who in turn will assure circulation to the full board and refer them to the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent of Schools does the problem-solving, with staff assistance as necessary. Board members do not attempt the problem-solving including the fact finding.

MEDIA CONTACT

1. All official statements of board positions, as well as responses to media inquiries on behalf of the Board, come from the Board president and/or Superintendent of Schools (or their designees).

MEETING DYNAMIC

1. In both public meetings and executive sessions, each Board member has a right to be heard once on an issue prior to others having a second chance. Members agree to listen to one another and not interrupt.
2. Motions should be used to focus discussion on action items, and any member may “call the question” to test whether the Board is ready to vote.
3. The Board President is authorized to focus discussion toward closure.
4. The goal for public meetings is a two-hour time limit, insofar as possible in doing justice to the business affairs of the district.
5. Board members should address the Board as a whole with their comments, rather than addressing the public.