



## **School Board Working Agreements - 2021-2022**

The Board of Directors is the educational policy making body for Eugene School District 4J. The Board is responsible to guide practices, processes, and programs with the goal of producing the highest educational achievement for all students. The board is charged with accomplishing this goal while also being responsible for prudent management of available resources. To ensure student success, members of the school board and the superintendent agree to function together with integrity and commitment as a leadership team. To help the Board function together effectively and efficiently, the Board establishes Working Agreements that provide a set of guidelines, shared agreements and expectations and hold each other accountable to follow them.

These agreements are intended to augment and detail section A and B of the Eugene School District 4J Policies. (See <http://www.4j.lane.edu/board/policies/>)

### **Board Organization and Governance**

1. The board will seek to work with the superintendent in a cooperative and collaborative partnership aligned toward a common mission and goals.
2. The board will focus on the responsibilities of policy making, planning and evaluation of the superintendent, and fiscal oversight.
3. The board will make decisions in the best interest of students and the district as a whole.
4. The board will actively solicit input, listen to all perspectives, and carefully consider all issues presented to the board.
5. Individual board members have no authority to take individual action regarding policy or district and school administrative matters.
6. The Board will respect each individual member's right to express opposing viewpoints and vote their convictions, whether they are in the minority or the majority. Individual Board members will abide by decisions made by the Board and will not interfere with action on settled decision.
7. Each year the board will select a chair and vice chair and this constitutes "Board Leadership."
8. Newly elected or appointed board members will be offered and expected to participate in orientation sessions to be provided by Eugene 4J staff and supplemented by outside training as deemed appropriate. And Board leadership will work with staff to develop a list of topics and resources for orientation and onboarding. The list will be given to new board members before July 1<sup>st</sup> and the new board members will complete the onboarding before the first Board meeting in August. Board Leadership and staff will help new Board members connect with resources.
9. The Board follows Robert's Rules of Order to structure meetings. A copy of Robert's Rules will be offered to any new Board member during the orientation process.

### **Meeting Agreements**

1. Board members will arrive on time for meetings and will carefully review all meeting materials in advance of the meeting.
2. Board meetings will begin at the designated start time and members will work to end meetings on time.
3. Board members will attend all regular meetings of the board. Members will contact board leadership and the superintendent, in advance of the meeting if unable to attend. Attending meetings via phone or web conference (i.e. Zoom) is an option but should be used only in rare occasions when in-person attendance is not possible.
4. Board members will cast a vote on all matters before the board, except when a board member must recuse themselves from the vote, such as in circumstances of a conflict. Abstentions are not allowed.
5. Board meetings will be held only at accessible locations.
6. Board meetings will be properly noticed and adhere to Oregon Public Meeting Law requirements as per Oregon Revised Statutes 192.610–192.690.
7. The Board may hold an executive session as defined in ORS 192.660 and ORS 332.061. Board members must respect and adhere to the confidentiality of all matters and all materials discussed within an executive session of the board. Information shall not be shared with anyone outside of an executive session except if the document has already been published.

### **Duties, Responsibilities and Role of Board Leadership**

1. Board leadership is the annually elected chair and vice chair of the board. Terms for these roles begin on July 1 and end on June 30. A confirmation vote will take place at the first Board meeting on or after July 1<sup>st</sup> in those years when incoming new Board members are unable to vote for leadership.
2. The board chair and vice chair will meet regularly with the superintendent to develop, set, and review agendas for board meetings. A single board member will attend each leadership meeting and agenda review in a rotation format. The schedule of attendance at leadership will be included in the board calendar.
3. Board leadership, in conjunction with the superintendent, will provide a list of board meetings and topics at least once a month. Leadership will take extra care to prioritize items that have been supported by at least three members of the Board. This list is subject to change by a majority vote of the Board.
4. Board leadership will informally survey each member of the board to determine preference and interest for the various board committees. The chair will present the annual board assignments during a regular meeting of the board of directors and will seek ratification of these assignments at that same meeting. When making committee assignments, the chair will consider the preferences expressed by individual board members and will strive to rotate assignments to maximize opportunities to gain a broader understanding of the district. At the same time, the board chair will assign mentor relationships with the student board representatives. The chair retains the right to make these assignments should ratification not occur.
5. Board members who are not the official appointee to a committee may attend meetings of any committee, but the board member(s) should take caution and be aware that four members of the board constitute a quorum of the board.
6. Board leadership will be responsible for the board self-assessment.
7. Board leadership will be responsible to ensure the annual evaluation of the superintendent occurs in a timely manner and is consistent with the superintendent's contract.

## **Communication by Board Members**

1. Board member communication is subject to the Oregon Public Meetings Law as defined and established in ORS 192.610–192.690. Board members should not deliberate toward any public decisions in any format except for public meetings. A discussion by a quorum in a non-public forum on any board matter is not allowed.
2. When a board member receives information about a concern or complaint from a stakeholder, they will not seek to act upon or resolve those issues directly with staff members (such as by requesting reports or further investigation). When possible, Board members should relay information to the level of the Superintendent's office, particularly when stakeholders seek out Board members about issues of public concern. This does not imply that a board member must relay information to the superintendent from confidential or informal conversations that board members participate in their roles as a 4J community members, etc.
3. Information requests by individual Board members that can be expected to require roughly 15 minutes or more of staff work or staff resources will be referred by the superintendent to board leadership or the full board to determine if the request to use resources aligns with board and district priorities.
4. When attending meetings, speaking publicly, or speaking directly to staff, board members are expected to be mindful of their status as elected leaders and how they may be perceived.
5. As a courtesy, board members may communicate with leadership and/or the superintendent about actions they intend to take.
6. The board chair or designee is the official spokesperson for the board. If a media request is made to another member who is not the chair, that member may speak with the media as an individual member, and they should inform the chair or the board as a whole.
7. The board chair will be responsible to answer in writing all correspondence sent to the board. All board members will be copied on responses. However, board members should be cautious to abide by the Oregon Public Meetings Law (ORS 192) regarding serial meetings via electronic communication; avoid the use of “reply all.” The board chair will strive for a timely response to correspondence.
8. In some instances, board members may have an existing professional relationship or volunteer relationship with schools, programs, or Eugene 4J staff that necessitates interactions in the board member’s capacity as a private citizen or volunteer. The board member must clearly state the visit or interaction has no official board-related purpose. The board member should inform the superintendent and building administrator of this visit or interaction. When visits or interactions are as a part of a work or volunteer schedule, the board member should inform the superintendent, to the extent possible, of the schedule of meetings. This does not apply when 4J Board members are acting as parents, grandparents, or other trusted adults in relationship to 4J students.
9. Occasionally, building administrators or program staff may proactively invite board members to a site or program visit as learning opportunities; these are encouraged. Again, board members will communicate with the superintendent when such requests are received and should be mindful of the Oregon Public meetings law.
10. With the popularity and availability of photography for social media purposes, photos of students in which students can easily be identified should not be posted without prior and explicit consent of the parent or guardian of the student.

## **Agenda Planning**

1. The agenda of each regular board meeting is developed in collaboration between the superintendent and board leadership and is based on an annual calendar and board goals set by the board at a summer retreat.
2. At each regular meeting of the board there will be an opportunity for any member to request an item to be considered for further information or inclusion on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. Board leadership will assess interest or agreement by other members of the board with a straw poll. In order to better plan and manage board time and staff and district resources, the request will be considered if it is supported by at least three members of the board. Each request will be reviewed by board leadership and will be considered for next steps, which may be information provided to the board in the superintendent's weekly memo, an item for information or an item for future action on an upcoming board meeting agenda. Leadership will communicate the next steps decided for the proposed topic to the requesting board member.
3. Regular meeting agendas will include a short verbal report by the chair to preview upcoming meetings and the major topics to be considered. The weekly memo from the superintendent will also include the working calendar of agenda topics for upcoming meetings.
4. In general, agendas will not be changed after they have been published.
  - On occasion, an item may be removed, postponed, or changed by board leadership with proper notice to the board and the public in advance of the meeting.
  - On occasion, with a majority vote of the board during agenda review at the beginning of the meeting, an agenda may be changed to remove, postpone, or change an item. During a meeting, an item may be postponed due to time or other constraints, with consent of the Board.
  - In exceptional circumstances, during agenda review at the beginning of the meeting a majority vote of the board may change an agenda, either to add an item or to change an item from information to action. This is discouraged, as it reduces the possibility for public comment and does not allow for staff preparation. It should be done only for a time-sensitive matter under circumstances that could not have been foreseen.
  - This will not lead to a board action in the same meeting in which it is raised except under true emergency conditions. An emergency condition would be one where:
    - Acting immediately is critical for the operations of the district, *and*
    - not acting immediately would threaten health and safety or create either an unacceptable financial consequence or timing problem for operations.

## **Planning and Evaluation**

1. Board members will conduct an annual self-assessment of the board's performance; the annual review ideally should be completed within the context of the board's spring retreat.
2. Board members will review the "Board of Director's Guiding Beliefs and Values" statement and "Working Agreements" at least annually.
3. Board members will participate in establishing annual expectations and goals for the superintendent.
4. Board members will objectively evaluate the superintendent's annual performance and provide appropriate feedback.
5. The board will annually set goals for itself, which will be reviewed and evaluated within the agenda of the summer board retreat.

I \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand these working agreements. I agree to work under these agreements during my term as an elected school board member.

---

(Signature)

1. [Board Policy Sections A and B](#)
2. List of Board Committees
3. Role of Student Representatives ([Board Policy BCBA](#))
4. ORS 192.610-690, (Oregon Public Meetings Law) <https://www.doj.state.or.us/5regon-department-of-justice/public-records/attorney-generals-public-records-and-meetings-manual-2014/> OSBA: Public Meetings [http://www.osba.org/Resources/Article/Board\\_Operations/PublicMeetings.aspx](http://www.osba.org/Resources/Article/Board_Operations/PublicMeetings.aspx)

Approved February 23, 2022