

## GOVERNANCE STANDARDS: BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT PROTOCOLS

These procedures are established as guidelines for the conduct of Board-Superintendent relations. They support implementation of Governance Standards adopted by the Board on February 20, 2001. They should be reviewed and updated as changes in Board composition and Superintendent leadership occur.

### I. Board Meeting Preparation

#### A. Advance Notice:

1. The Board Meeting Calendar for the year is adopted by July 1.
2. The Board Agenda Calendar for the year is adopted by August 1.

#### B. Staff Responsibilities:

1. Provide full information for agenda items in advance of meetings.
2. Include background information with an executive summary and succinct details.
3. Present options, ramifications, implications.
4. Include recommendations (action) or status (information).
5. Include only routine items or issues that have been thoroughly addressed in prior meetings in the Consent Calendar.

#### C. Board President Responsibilities:

1. Review agenda items with Superintendent.
2. Serves as liaison between Board members and Superintendent.

#### D. Superintendent Responsibilities:

1. Arranges for proper information, presentations, and staff to be available at board meetings.
2. Provides estimated timing for agenda items considering flexibility to meet discussion needs.
3. Provides the following information for recommendations made:
  - a. Process used (Explanation and identity of people involved).
  - b. Reasons supporting the recommendation.
4. Receives Board questions about agenda items.
5. Provides answers to Board member questions.

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### E. Board Member Responsibilities:

1. Read and study the agenda prior to the meeting.
2. Submit questions and requests for additional information concerning the agenda to the Superintendent prior to the meeting.
3. Submit corrections to the minutes or agenda items prior to the meeting.
4. Contact the Board President or Superintendent concerning suggestions for future agenda items.

## II. Board Meeting Guidelines

### A. Policy/Issue Board Member Discussions:

1. Time Limits-None.
2. Discussion: Each Board member shall have the opportunity to state initial position and reasoning. Avoid repetition.
3. Summary Discussion: Each Board member shall have the opportunity to react to other opinions, to restate position, and to ask for new information.
4. Action:
  - a. Request additional information and next step.
  - b. Vote on issue.

### B. Policy/Issue Public Hearing Discussions

1. Board President:
  - a. Requests that speakers limit their comments to 5 minutes and that 20 minutes total will be allowed to a subject.
  - b. Reminds speakers that Public Communication/Public Hearings become part of public record.
  - c. If appropriate, Brown Act limitations or confidentiality considerations will be voiced for public information.
2. The Board will respect the needs of the audience to address the issue.

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3. The Board shall not debate with the audience and avoid discussion of any non-agenda items since there was no advance public notice that the topic would be on the agenda.
4. The Board President may summarize the input received and the plan of action.
5. The Superintendent will report the action/status/resolution of the issue.

### C. Reports to the Board

1. Written Reports are included with the agenda and are not repeated orally.
2. Oral Reports include:
  - a. Executive summary (concise).
  - b. Answers to questions received in advance.
3. Response to NEW questions/information requests will be provided subsequent to the meeting by update/memo/later report.

### D. Public Recognitions:

1. Give advance notice so persons being recognized may attend. (Superintendent)
2. Announce award or recognition before name(s) or calling Board members to present awards. (Superintendent-Board President)
3. Streamline process, when possible, by calling a series of names without applause in between. (Superintendent-Board President)
4. Avoid scheduling a large number of recognitions at any one meeting. (Superintendent)

## III. General Board Meeting Rules

- A. Board meeting agendas will be balanced in recognition, policy, report, discussion, and action items.
- B. Board members and staff will follow agreed-upon guidelines.
- C. Board members will:
  1. Consider staff time required to meet requests.
  2. Not expect immediate answers to new questions/requests.
  3. Avoid public criticism of specific schools or personnel.

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4. Recognize that concerns expressed may appear to be critical in nature.
5. Not be compelled to speak on each issue.
6. Avoid repeating own positions/opinions.
7. Avoid repeating opinions/information already presented.
8. Refrain from "playing" to the audiences to the detriment of Board business.
9. Ask questions that require detailed information or research in advance.

### D. Board President will:

1. Ask the Superintendent to introduce agenda items.
2. Monitor meeting guidelines/timelines and provide respectful reminders to those who deviate.
3. Provide concise background or summary information of prior Board discussions to inform the attending and TV audiences.
4. Ask for general reactions rather than calling on each individual Board member.
5. Encourage the Student Board Member to participate in issue discussions.

### E. Staff members will:

1. Agree to gather answers/information for a later date.
2. Not feel compelled to give immediate responses.

## IV. Critical/Sensitive Issue Decisions

### A. Board members will thoroughly inform themselves prior to votes on critical/sensitive issues.

1. Staff will provide substantial background information on all aspects of the issue.
2. Board members will request more information if needed.

### B. Board members voting "NO" or abstaining:

1. Are not required to state reasons for such votes.
2. May state an abstention is because of "conflict of interest," "perception of a conflict of interest," or "missed prior discussion."

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- C. When the Board request recommendations from committees, it:
  - 1. Will establish any parameters/limitations prior to committee formation.
  - 2. Should be willing to accept a range of possible, reasonable recommendations.
  - 3. Always retain the voting authority for the final decision.
  
- V. New Issues for Board Meeting Discussion
  - A. Board members may request the Board to address a new issue by:
    - 1. Contacting the Board President.
    - 2. Contacting the Superintendent.
    - 3. Making a request at a Board meeting. No discussion of the issue takes place at this time.
  
  - B. The Superintendent will:
    - 1. Recommend the appropriate process to address a new issue (Board agenda item, report, memo, etc.) and appropriate timelines.
    - 2. Ensure follow-through.
    - 3. Contact the Board member who raises an issue and share the information with other Board members.
  
  - C. The Superintendent and Board:
    - 1. Remain committed to involving key stakeholders in addressing issues and seeking solution.
    - 2. Identify the role that stakeholders play.
    - 3. Retain the authority for the ultimate decision.
  
- VI. Board Contacts with Staff/School
  - A. Board members are encouraged to be visible, interested, positive forces in the schools and districts sites.
  
  - B. Board member courtesies for school/site visits and attendance at school activities.
    - 1. Make an advance appointment when appropriate and possible.

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2. Check in at the main office to announce your arrival.
  3. Confirm that your presence will not disrupt school activities and student learning.
  4. Seek the positive in your observations and share what specifically impresses you.
  5. If you observe concerns, present them to the Superintendent for resolution and follow-through.
  6. Acknowledge the time given your visit and send a note of thanks, which includes positive observations.
  7. Smile! Your smile will help relieve tension and assure staff that you are there in a role of support.
- C. Board members may serve as liaisons to committees if appointed by the Board President. Guidelines for successful participation include:
1. Listen. Use the time to hear other points of view.
  2. Speak seldom. Board comments may dominate because of the "Board Member" title. If necessary, share an idea succinctly.
  3. Be positive in observations, suggestions and demeanor.
- D. Board members seeking answers or resolutions to specific problems involving district matters will follow these guidelines:
1. Present questions, concerns, requests or recommendations to the Superintendent who will follow through and then communicate the resolution to all Board members.
  2. Make no personal requests for themselves/friends which are not available/appropriate by non-board members. However, it should be remembered that a request from a board member is often interpreted as a directive by staff.
  3. Avoid "micro managing."
  4. Avoid making "snap judgments." Direct the question/concern to the Superintendent who will gather facts, pose solutions and communicate the information to all Board members.
- E. General Communication
1. The Board:
    - a. Shares questions, concern and problems with the Superintendent.

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- b. Adheres to the open meeting provisions of the Brown Act.
  2. The Board President is spokesperson for the Board.
  3. The Superintendent:
    - a. Provides regular updates on key District, department and school activities.
    - b. Responds in a timely manner to appropriate requests for information or questions.
    - c. Provides adequate background information to support Board member decision-making.

### VII. Board Focus

- A. Board members will:
  1. Focus discussions, inquiries and decisions on the needs of students and schools.
  2. Avoid personal interests and narrow concerns.
  3. Refocus priorities to address emergencies and other areas as needed.
  4. Be visionary, future-oriented and proactive.

### VIII. Collaboration

- A. The Board:
  1. Maintains positive, productive relations with staff and employee associations by demonstrating interest and support through participation in joint activities, attending school activities and district activities.
  2. Supports and encourages staff, parent and student involvement in key decisions which affect their schools. Board members avoid being the "experts" or "heroes" who provide all the answers themselves.
  3. Supports and encourages communication and collaboration with representative stakeholders in developing district visions, goals, policies and priorities.
  4. Respects the interests and opinions of others.
  5. Maintains an open mind to alternate solutions.

### IX. Board Member Teamwork and Professionalism

- A. The Board works together as a team by:

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1. Respecting each other's opinions.
  2. Avoiding attempts to "show each other up."
  3. Supporting final Board decisions even though opposed.
  4. Keeping communications open, courteous and focused on student needs.
- B. Board members remain professionally prepared for their responsibilities by:
1. Reading Board Reports prior to decisions.
  2. Continuing training in District, Board, education matters.
  3. Maintaining knowledge of school/District accomplishments.
  4. Focusing on student learning, curriculum and instruction.
  5. Avoiding any compromising situations including those that jeopardize confidentiality.
- X. School and Community Involvement
- A. Board members should:
1. Visit schools.
  2. Attend District and school special events.
  3. Participate in City, Chamber and other community events.
  4. Share positive school news and accomplishment to community groups and to individuals.
  5. Serve as a representative of the Board on community committees/boards as appointed by the Board President.
- XI. Complaints/Requests from the Public
- A. Board members who receive complaints or requests from the public or staff should:
1. Listen to the speaker, noting concerns.
  2. Recognize their feelings about the situation.
  3. Acknowledge that the person has concerns and needs a response.



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4. Ask what steps they have taken and/or for clarification for details.
5. Inform the speaker that there is a Procedure Policy to ensure fair and consistent treatment.
6. Explain that Board members do not solve specific problems but help in getting them referred to the right people.
7. Explain that the individual involvement by a Board member may compromise the Board member's ability to render a final decision on the matter.
8. Refer the person to the appropriate staff member or inform them that you will refer the problem to the Superintendent.
9. Contact the Superintendent for follow-through and communication to all Board members.
10. Contact, if appropriate, the person to check on status.

### XII. Legal Communication (Brown Act)

Private group interaction/discussion among Board members and/or staff to reach a consensus/decision/position is illegal and in violation of the open meeting provisions of the Brown Act.

### XIII. Ethical Leadership

- A. Board members will adhere to the District's Code of Ethics by:
  1. Working for the common good of the citizens of the Glendale Unified School District and not for any private or personal interest.
  2. Assuring fair and equal treatment of all persons, claims, and transactions coming before the School Board and its committees.
  3. Complying with the laws of the nation and the State of California in the performance of their public duties.
  4. Avoiding even the appearance of impropriety in their professional and personal conduct.
  5. Refraining from abusive conduct, harassment, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the School Board, committees, the staff or public.
  6. Respecting the administrative functions of the school district or the professional duties of District staff.

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7. Not impairing the ability of staff to implement School Board policy decisions.
8. Supporting the maintenance of a positive and constructive work place environment for District employees and for parents and citizens dealing with the District.
9. Recognizing their special role in dealing with District employees and refrain from creating the perception of inappropriate direction to staff.

**XIV. Implementation:**

As an expression of the standards of conduct for School Board members, these rules are intended to be self-enforcing. Standards shall be included in the regular orientations for candidates for School Board as well as newly elected School Board members. Members entering office shall sign a statement affirming they have read and understood the Board of Education Protocols.