



## MILL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

# *Governance Handbook 2023-24*

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Dr. Elizabeth Kaufman

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## ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

The Board of Trustees is to stay focused on the big picture while fulfilling five responsibilities in a series of job areas. These five responsibilities are:

1. We set the direction.
2. We establish the structure.
3. We provide support.
4. We ensure accountability.
5. We serve as community leaders.

## UNITY OF PURPOSE

The Board of Trustees and Superintendent share a common focus on serving the best interests of the students and school community based on district values and goals (add link to website)Our Governance Handbook sets forth essential agreements, understandings and beliefs about the manner in which we govern, and will guide a respectful and dignified process as we strive for consensus. Dedicating ourselves to quality governance is the indication of an effective and transparent decision making process that benefits all of the stakeholders of the Mill Valley School District. Our decisions are driven by evidence and facts, the professional judgment of our staff, and we set aside personal and political preference and opinions.

## GOVERNANCE ROLES

Successful governance teams value and respect their essential roles, reach mutual agreement on the roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent, and strive to operate within them.

The superintendent is hired by the school Board to provide professional expertise in the day-to-day leadership and management of the district. The Superintendent assists the Board in carrying out its responsibilities in each of the job areas, and leads the staff toward the accomplishment of the agreed upon District vision and goals. The roles of the Superintendent are:

1. To serve as the chief administrative officer for the school district.
2. To work with the school Board to develop an effective governance leadership team.

School Board trustees are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure the district schools educate the children in consideration of the interests of the local community. The role of the School Board is to govern the school district. The Board of Trustees:

1. Sets the direction for the community's schools by:
  - Focusing on student learning.
  - Assessing district needs.
  - Generating, reviewing, and revising direction-setting documents: (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
  - Ensuring an appropriate inclusive process is used to develop these documents.
  - Ensuring that these documents are the driving force for all district efforts.
2. Establishes an effective and efficient structure for the school district by:
  - Employing the superintendent.
  - Setting policy for hiring of other personnel.

- Setting policies.
  - Setting direction for and adopting the curriculum.
  - Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget.
  - Overseeing facilities issues.
  - Providing direction for and voting to accept collective bargaining agreements.
3. Provides support through our behavior and actions by:
- Acting with a professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision.
  - Making decisions and providing resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals.
  - Upholding Board approved district policies.
  - Ensuring a positive personnel climate exists.
  - Being knowledgeable about district efforts and able to explain them to the public.
4. Ensures accountability to the Public by:
- Evaluating the superintendent
  - Monitoring, reviewing, and revising policies
  - Serving as a judicial and appeals body
  - Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as indicated
  - Monitoring and adjusting district finances
  - Reviewing facilities issues
  - Monitoring the collective bargaining process
5. Acts as community leaders by:
- Speaking with a common voice about district priorities, goals, and issues.
  - Engaging and involving the community in district schools and activities.
  - Communicating clear information about policies, programs, and fiscal conditions of the district.
  - Educating the community and the media about issues facing the district and public education.
  - Advocating for children, district programs and public education to the general public, community, and local, state, and national leaders.

## **GOVERNANCE STANDARDS**

### **BB 9005**

The Board of Education believes that its primary responsibility is to act in the best interests of every student in the district. The Board also has major commitments to parents/guardians, all members of the community, employees, the state of California, laws pertaining to public education, and established policies of the district. To maximize Board effectiveness and public confidence in district governance, Board members are expected to govern responsibly and hold themselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct.

The Board expects its members to work with each other and the Superintendent to ensure that a high-quality education is provided to each student. Each individual Board member shall:

1. Keep learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
2. Value, support, and advocate for public education.

3. Recognize and respect differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents, and the community.
4. Be an active listener, open to others ideas and be respectful of opinions
5. Come prepared to board discussions having digested pre-reading to allow for efficient, effective meetings that respect all participants including staff, speakers, community audience, and fellow Board members.
6. Act with dignity and understand the implications of demeanor and behavior.
7. Keep confidential matters confidential.
8. Participate in professional development and commit the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
9. Understand the distinctions between Board and staff roles, and refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff
10. Understand that authority rests with the Board as a whole and not with individuals

Board members also shall assume collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture. To operate effectively, the Board shall have a unity of purpose, and:

1. Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for all students.
2. Communicate a common vision.
3. Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
4. Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
5. Govern within Board-adopted policies and procedures.
6. Take collective responsibility for the Board's performance and will periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.
7. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform Board Deliberations.

## **GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP CULTURE**

The following governance norms and protocols were developed to support and promote the effectiveness of the district governance team and to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among board members, the Superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. The norms and protocols were developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed.

## **GOVERNANCE TEAM NORMS**

- Keep our focus on the best interests of all students
- Value and consider a diversity of ideas
- Be responsible for the success of the meeting and speak at the table
- Hold efficient and impactful meetings
- Assume positive intentions
- Everyone's opinions count. We will be open to the ideas of others
- We will wait to speak until a team member has finished talking.
- We will keep our remarks brief and to the point so that all opinions can be expressed.
- Anyone can call a "time out" if they feel the need for a break.
- We will communicate openly and honestly with each other.
- While on the dias personal devices will not be used to communicate with the public
- We will respect differences. We will show respect – never dismiss or devalue others.
- All team members may offer their ideas and resources
- Each member will take responsibility for the work of the team.
- We will respect team meeting times: start on time, return from breaks promptly, and avoid unnecessary interruptions.
- We will stay focused on our goals and avoid getting sidetracked.

- When we have a difference of opinion, we will debate the facts of the situation and avoid personalities.

**PROTOCOLS TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP**

The following processes guide the operation of the governance team and determine how they do business. Protocols are the agreements that ensure that all members of the team are operating within their agreed upon roles.

The Goals of the Protocols:

1. To refine and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the district’s governance team by more clearly defining roles, relationships, and responsibilities, including communication and other protocol.
2. To develop and maintain a positive working relationship with all Board Members and the Superintendent, and between individual Board Members.

<b>Topic 1</b>	<b>Board Meetings as a Strategic Leadership Tool (BB 9322)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board meetings are opportunities for the public to see what is important to the Board and for the Board to demonstrate leadership and to ensure transparency to the public. All actions taken by the Board are performed at a public Board meeting to ensure transparency to the public.</li> <li>• Board meetings are opportunities to strategically move the district forward and to make progress on District goals.</li> <li>• Board meetings will focus on information sharing, discussions and actions that are aligned and focused on the most critical Board responsibilities as reflected in District priorities and goals around the success of students.</li> <li>• The Board will periodically use study sessions as a time for in-depth review and discussion of District and Board business in the spirit of “inquiry” rather than “advocacy.”</li> <li>• Study sessions will be a time to consider new ideas and ways of doing business; and to gain a more extensive understanding of the most complex and critical decisions facing the Board and the District.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board agenda will be structured to define the Board’s work around its four critical responsibilities: setting District direction, establishing policy structure, ensuring accountability, and providing community leadership and community engagement.</li> <li>• The Board meeting agenda will focus on strategic initiatives and goals, and the Board will review progress at regular intervals.</li> <li>• The Board President and Superintendent, with concurrence of the entire Board, will establish the topics and schedule for Board study sessions.</li> <li>• Study sessions will generally focus on one issue to allow for comprehensive exploration and understanding of critical and complex governance issues, thorough and inclusive sharing of perspectives, and the formation of proposals for action, as appropriate. The session design will include description of expected results and outcomes.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 2</b>	<b>Board Agenda Structure and Planning (BB 9322 and BB 9323)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board meeting agenda should be structured to align with the Board’s overriding responsibilities: setting District direction, establishing policy</li> </ul>

	<p>structure, creating a supportive environment, ensuring District performance accountability, and demonstrating community leadership.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board members have a community leadership responsibility to bring forward relevant agenda items that are in the best interests of the district and focus on District efforts toward student learning and achievement.</li> <li>●</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Board agenda will be developed by the Board President in collaboration with the Superintendent.</li> <li>● Any Board member, or a member of the public, may request that an item be placed on the Board agenda. Refer to Board Bylaw 9322 for the specific process to be followed by the Board President.</li> <li>● Board members agree to follow a process that supports bringing forward new ideas while maintaining the Board's focus on identified District goals.</li> <li>● No individual Board member will direct staff to conduct any research regarding exploration of a new idea. Only the full Board may direct the Superintendent to act. The Superintendent will decide on the delegation of assignments to other District staff.</li> <li>● New ideas will be presented to the full Board at regular Board meetings during the "Future Board items or Board comment/report" agenda item. The full Board will decide if the new idea should be further developed and studied. The full Board may decide if staff time should be invested in pursuing new ideas by consensus vote if a member makes a request for a new idea and it is seconded by another member. Otherwise, the Board President and Superintendent shall set the agenda. The Superintendent will determine timing.</li> <li>● Individual Board members, during interactions with constituents, will be careful not to make or imply commitment of the full Board to explore or proceed with implementing new ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 3</b>	<b>Meeting Preparation and Attendance</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The purpose of a board meeting is to conduct board business in public.</li> <li>● Board of Trustees represent the community and provides oversight</li> <li>● Only a majority vote of the board at a board meeting provides direction to the Superintendent.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board members should be equally informed.</li> <li>● Comply with the Brown Act and public meeting requirements.</li> <li>● The Board President, board Vice President, and superintendent plan each board meeting agenda to promote and support thoughtful deliberation and effective use of time.</li> <li>● The Board President facilitates the board meeting.</li> <li>● The board will strive to keep open session meetings to no more than three hours.</li> <li>● Board members will read the posted agenda and accompanying material.</li> <li>● Board members will attend regularly scheduled board meetings unless an emergency occurs that makes attendance impossible.</li> <li>● Members will cooperate in scheduling special meetings and work sessions.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 4</b>	<b>Board Member Interaction with the Public at Board Meetings (BB 9322 and BB 9323)</b>

<p><b>Rationale</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Based on state law, Board meetings cannot be conducted in an unstructured “town hall” style manner. Public input into the business of the board will be structured in a manner that balances the public’s “right” to address the board and the board’s “right” to conduct its meeting in a productive and efficient manner.</li> <li>● Meetings will be conducted in a civil, orderly, and respectful manner, under the administration and discretion of the Board President.</li> <li>● Board members want to ensure that all and multiple voices of the community are heard at the designated times during the meeting.</li> <li>● The main purpose of public participation at board meetings is to inform board deliberations.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Protocol</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Time will be provided at all board meetings for public comment on agenda and non-agenda items.</li> <li>● The board will establish guidelines for public comment that balance efficient board meeting management and full participation of the public.</li> <li>● A maximum of 20 minutes will be allocated at the beginning of the meeting for public comment on non-agenized items. and 15 minutes maximum to each agendized item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Each speaker may be allotted a maximum of three minutes. At the Board’s discretion, if the time to accommodate all speakers exceeds the total allotted time, the time may be reduced per speaker to enable maximum public input.</li> <li>○ Each speaker may speak once at the podium on each agenda item; and once during the “non agenda item” comment period.</li> <li>○ An individual’s time may not be deferred to another speaker.</li> <li>○ Written comments received by the board will be distributed to all board members.</li> <li>○ If individuals elect to speak together, they will share the allotted individual time (e.g. 3 minutes total).</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Should large groups attend board meetings to speak on a single subject, Board President is encouraged to ask the group to summarize its comments within a 10-minute time segment, when possible.</li> <li>● The Board President will open the public comment period for the specific agenda item. The Board President will manage the public comment period in a fashion that ensures an open and inclusive forum conducted within accepted meeting decorum standards. “Excessive” and “disruptive” verbal and non-verbal expressions from the audience will not be tolerated. Members of the public will not speak from the audience at any time. If the board meeting becomes unmanageable the Board President may, at their discretion, call a recess or clear the room of public participants in order to continue with the business of the district.</li> <li>● The Board President will close the public comment period when there is no further demonstrated interest in public comment. Additional public comment will not be accepted after the board has begun deliberating on an item. The public is encouraged to provide comments in writing, if unable to speak for any reason before the board and will be distributed to each board member for reading after the board meeting.</li> <li>● At the end of the public comment period, the Board President will poll board members to make other modifications of the public comment period and process to accommodate special circumstances consistent with the board’s stated principles.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The board will consistently abide by these agreements so that all persons are treated fairly and equally.</li> <li>● All public comments or questions should be addressed to the board through the Board President.</li> <li>● Public comment for all items on the agenda will be submitted prior to the approval of the Consent Agenda.</li> <li>● People speaking at board meetings will be listened to with respect.</li> <li>● To avoid unintentionally agendizing a non-agenda item during the non-agenda public comment period, board members and staff will limit their response to non-agenda public comment. Generally, the Board President will respond on behalf of the board. All responses will conform to the following guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ A brief statement to acknowledge appreciation and respect for the public comment.</li> <li>○ Do not “debate” with the public member</li> <li>○ As appropriate, provide a reference to a staff member or other resource for factual information and/or follow-up.</li> <li>○ Request a staff report back to the board at a later meeting; or</li> <li>○ Direct staff to bring the matter forward as a future agendized discussion item.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Topic 5</b>	<b>Board Deliberation (BB 9323)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Board has strong interest in ensuring the efficient, thorough, and fair consideration of all discussion/action items on the Board’s agenda.</li> <li>● The Board wants to ensure that public input and Board discussion occur in a manner that truly informs Board deliberation and decision making.</li> <li>● Board members agree to come fully prepared to engage in the discussion and deliberation on every Board agenda item.</li> <li>● Board discussion and deliberation should be focused on the issue at hand and should not become “muddied” by extraneous issues and perspectives.</li> <li>● The Board wants to promote a decision-making process that will encourage each Board member to freely state her or his perspectives, and that will help each member feel she or he has been heard and understood by all Board colleagues prior to decision making.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The process for Board action agenda items will be as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Introduction of the agenda item.</li> <li>○ Staff explanation and expression of a recommendation, if appropriate.</li> <li>○ Public comment.</li> <li>○ Following public comment, Board members will be recognized by the Board President for the purpose of asking questions and discussing agenda items.</li> <li>○ Questions of staff and of each other will occur prior to the Board President’s request for a motion and second. This is a period of “inquiry” by Board members, not a period of “advocacy.”</li> <li>○ The Board President will monitor the questioning/ discussion period to help ensure that the Board stays focused on the agenda item, that members do not use this time to advocate a position, and that members “explore new information” rather than “rehash old information.”</li> <li>○ Board members should be mindful of not asking more than three questions so that all Board members may have a turn without having to wait for a significant length of time to do so. Board members should limit</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p>the length of their comments/questions to three minutes and take care that they are not consuming a majority of the discussion time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Board members shall be efficient and succinct in their comments, being mindful not to repeat comments already made..</li> <li>○ Following the completion of Board member questions and discussion, the Board President will accept a motion and second on action items.</li> <li>● During Board discussions and deliberations, Board members will strive to direct their comments to their fellow Board members and not directly to the public.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 6</b>	<b>Closed Session Practices/Confidentiality</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	The Brown Act established conditions for discussion of some board business in confidential, closed sessions. The Brown Act strongly supports the “public’s right to know” but recognizes that some highly sensitive matters must be discussed in a confidential setting, in part to protect the legal rights of other parties.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Only matters legally allowed by the Brown Act will be discussed in closed session. These matters include but are not limited to employee contract negotiations, district litigation, personnel matters, and the substance of the superintendent evaluation.</li> <li>● The public’s trust and the trust among board members are breached if confidential matters are shared in a public manner.</li> <li>● When closed session discussions are shared, there is potential for liability and violation of employee and student rights.</li> <li>● The board will maintain confidentiality around all matters discussed in closed session.</li> <li>● If a board member violates the legal requirement to keep all closed session discussions confidential, the Board President and superintendent will take immediate action to rectify the matter.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 7</b>	<b>Communications</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is essential that important and accurate information be communicated to members of the board, the staff, and the community in as timely a fashion as possible.</li> <li>● The governance team recognizes that some situations have legal or other considerations that may place restrictions on what may be told to the media or public.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The governance team commits to speaking with one voice. The designated spokesperson will vary depending on the issue or situation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Crisis/Disaster: The superintendent is the primary spokesperson and may involve the Board President at his or her discretion.</li> <li>○ Non-Crisis: The superintendent and Board President will serve as primary spokespersons.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Emails/documents to Board: If a communication is sent to a board member, the board member may respond and will forward that information to the Superintendent for the group. The superintendent or Board President or their designee will respond.</li> <li>● Board members may not communicate with more than one member on a topic outside of publicly agendized meetings. Communications may be</li> </ul>

	shared with the superintendent and then shared by the superintendent with all board members.
<b>Topic 8</b>	<b>Board Member Response to Complaints (BB 9200)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board members should be responsive to the community and staff and be good listeners.</li> <li>● It is important for Board members to be consistent in their responses to staff and the community.</li> <li>● Complaints received by Board members are sent to the Superintendent</li> <li>●</li> <li>● The Board is potentially the “court of last resort” and members who have been too involved early in the situation may have to recuse themselves if they cannot be impartial or be perceived as impartial.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Board will consider its judicial review responsibility, staff and student confidentiality rights, and due process issues.</li> <li>● When approached by a member of the community or staff with questions or concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Board members will direct that person to the Superintendent;</li> <li>○ Because the Board is the final decision-maker, should a hearing be ultimately required, it is important that personal opinions for resolution not be shared with the constituent;</li> <li>○ The Superintendent or designee should be notified of these conversations to keep the lines of communications open between the Board and the Superintendent, and that the Superintendent can verify or clarify the situation and follow through as necessary and/or appropriate.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Topic 9</b>	<b>Role of the Board President (BB 9121)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● At the annual organizational meeting, the Governing Board shall nominate the Vice President to Board President.</li> <li>● The Board President will serve as a “facilitative leader” of all open and closed Board meetings and the overall workings of the Board.</li> <li>● The President will chair all Board meetings; and will ensure that all meetings of the Board are conducted in an efficient, civil, orderly, and respectful manner.</li> <li>● In the absence of the President, meeting will be chaired by the vice President or designee if the Vice President is not available.</li> <li>● The Board President will lead the Board in its relationships with the community at large; guiding the Board’s public communications and serving as the governance team spokesperson in tandem with the Superintendent.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The Board President will perform the following specific tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Meet with the Superintendent to set the agenda for all Board meetings and determine the way information will come before the Board for consideration and action; facilitate the identification and inclusion of agenda items requested by other Board members and the public; help ensure effective communication of Board agendas.</li> <li>● Coordinate the work of all standing committees and ensure that committee work produces reports and recommendations for the entire Board in a timely manner.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Superintendent to ensure Board members receive necessary materials and information to assess and make informed decisions.</li> <li>• Open the meeting and announce each agenda item in a fashion consistent with accepted parliamentary procedure.</li> <li>• Oversee the exercise of Board-adopted parliamentary procedures necessary to ensure professional decorum and fairness in the conduct of Board meeting business.</li> <li>• Set a positive tone for all discussions and deliberations; maintain order; recognize all persons who seek to speak at Board meetings; keep discussions focused and bring discussions to conclusion; thoughtfully consider differing perspectives but serve as the final arbiter of the appropriate and necessary parliamentary decisions and actions.</li> <li>• Report out Board decisions</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 10</b>	<b>Role of the Board Vice President (BB 9123)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	At the annual organizational meeting, the Governing Board shall nominate a Vice President from its own membership, who will serve as VP for first year and President the following year.
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The duties of the Vice President shall be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certify or attest to actions taken by the Board when required</li> <li>• Maintain such other records or reports as required by law</li> <li>• Sign the minutes of the Board meetings following their approval</li> <li>• Sign documents as directed by the Board on behalf of the district, and sign all other items which require the signature of the Vice President</li> <li>• Serve as presiding officer in the absence of the President</li> <li>• The Vice President will carry out the responsibilities as determined in Board Bylaw 9123.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 11</b>	<b>Role of the Board Secretary (BB 9122)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	The Superintendent or designee will act as secretary to the Governing Board.
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The Superintendent or designee, acting as secretary to the Governing Board shall have the following duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and maintain the Board agenda</li> <li>• Prepare and maintain the Board minutes</li> <li>• Maintain Board records and documents</li> <li>• Submit to Board officers the correspondence addressed to them</li> <li>• The Secretary will carry out the responsibilities as determined in Board Bylaw 9122.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 12</b>	<b>Board Role in Public (BB 9010 and 9012)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board members understand the importance and value of being visible and accessible to the community.</li> <li>• Board members have been elected by the community to provide leadership and citizen oversight of the district. The Board shall ensure that the district is responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community.</li> <li>• Board members represent the Board in what they say and do and will set an example of professionalism.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Published opinion pieces by Board members about the Board and MVSD and authored by Board Members are public acts.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board members will strive to educate the public about their role as public servants, entrusted with the education of all the children in the district.</li> <li>Board members will make visible their dedication and commitment to public education. They will strive to actively engage community members in discussions around critical public education matters in the district.</li> <li>When speaking to community groups, the media, or other members of the public, individual Board members should recognize that their statements may be perceived as reflecting the views and positions of the Board. Board members have a responsibility to identify personal viewpoints as such and not as the viewpoint of the Board.</li> <li>Confidentiality will be maintained in communication with members of the public regarding matters prescribed as confidential by state law and Board by-laws.</li> <li>Board members wishing to publish opinion pieces should do so with the explicit byline “X is a member of the MVSD Board of Education but is speaking solely as an individual member of the Board.”</li> <li>Opinion pieces will be shared with the Superintendent prior to publication so that staff may have an opportunity to suggest edits and clarifications.</li> <li>Opinion pieces will be shared with the Board President prior to publication.</li> <li>Multiple members of the Board will only collaborate on opinion pieces if directed by the full Board at a Board meeting.</li> <li>Board members will refrain from attributing particular intentions to other members of the Board.</li> <li>The Board may send out direct communication from the Board to the school community in times of crisis to reaffirm the board’s commitment to provide leadership and citizen oversight. The correspondence will be drafted by the Superintendent and Board President.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 13</b>	<b>Board Self-Evaluation (BB 9400)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Board understands the value of periodically assessing their performance as part of a comprehensive approach to holding the entire District accountable to the public.</li> <li></li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board shall schedule at least one governance self-evaluations based on CSBA governance standards.</li> <li>The Board will also review, and revise norms and protocols as warranted by the results of the self-evaluation.</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 14</b>	<b>Guidelines for Board Members’ Visiting Schools</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Board members are assigned to specific schools to improve communications and climate in the district.</li> <li>Demonstration of support for staff, parents, and children by increased visibility in schools, classrooms, and school-sponsored activities.</li> <li>Information can be gathered to better serve schools.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Protocol</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board members will contact the Superintendent’s office when concerns arise or complaints from parents are received.</li> <li>● Board members should always check in at the school office upon arrival.</li> <li>● Board members will strive to attend school events such as opening ceremonies, back to school, open house, plays, concerts, etc., of their respective assigned schools and inform the principal of their presence.</li> <li>● Board members will stay abreast of unique issues that pertain to each school and, as appropriate, bring matters to the attention of central office administrators and fellow Board members, and ensure consistent messaging</li> <li>● Board members should arrange visits outside of regularly scheduled events and meetings with the Superintendent’s office and the principal.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Topic 15</b></p>	<p><b>Requesting Information from Staff (BB 9200 and BB 9322)</b></p>
<p><b>Rationale</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The Superintendent and other staff members are valuable resources of information for Board members.</li> <li>● The work of staff who have policy development responsibilities can be better informed by understanding Board member perspectives as demonstrated by the kind of questions they ask and information they seek.</li> <li>● It is important for the Superintendent to be aware of the nature of information being requested from staff so as to fulfill the role most effectively as an advisor to the Board. Requests for information from staff should go through the Superintendent and be distributed to all Board members.</li> <li>● It may not be reasonable or practical for the Superintendent to approve every individual Board member question of District staff.</li> <li>● Board meetings can operate more efficiently when questions of a background nature are asked and answered before Board meetings.</li> <li>● Questions of a substantive nature are best answered during the Board meeting, but advance notice to the Superintendent of the nature of such questions can help ensure that staff is fully prepared to respond. This approach supports a norm of “no surprises.”</li> <li>● Board members, individually, do not have the authority to request information from or direct the work of staff associated with the response to an inquiry.</li> <li>● Staff can be placed in a difficult situation when asked to respond to requests made of them by individual Board members.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Protocol</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The full Board agenda and supporting materials will be delivered to all Board members 72 hours prior to the meeting.</li> <li>● Agendas and supporting material for special and emergency meetings will be made available to all Board members at least 24 hours in advance.</li> <li>● All agenda items are archived on Agenda Online.</li> <li>● Board members will make every attempt to notify the Superintendent’s executive assistant no later than Monday evening prior to the meeting regarding questions or clarifications they have about agenda items and supporting materials.</li> <li>● Staff will make every attempt to provide responses to questions regarding Board meeting items at least one day prior to the Board meeting and copy all Board members.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requests for information in support of Board meeting agenda action items will be given the highest priority for response. The next highest priority will be for information in support of Board agenda information items.</li> <li>• Board member requests for information must be directed to the Superintendent.</li> <li>• Board member requests for information from staff will take into consideration the time and effort required to provide the information in relation to the urgency, purpose, and value of the information to the Board member.</li> <li>• Should a Board member need to speak and/or meet with a staff member on a particular issue, appointments must be made in advance, for a time certain, for efficient use of staff's time. The staff member's supervising chief must be notified of such a meeting in advance.</li> <li>• Requests for information that represent "new research" related to items not yet scheduled for a Board agenda will be processed through the Superintendent's office. In all cases of communications from Board members to the Superintendent, the Superintendent will reply within a week with either a substantive response or an expected time at which the information will become available.</li> <li>• The Superintendent, or designee, will respond promptly, taking into account the gravity and sense of urgency surrounding the nature of the request.</li> <li>• The Superintendent, or designee, will determine how the request for information can best be satisfied. The Superintendent may direct a Board member to the appropriate staff member.</li> <li>• Information provided to one Board member in response to a specific question will be provided to all Board members</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 16</b>	<b>Quiet period with Bargaining Units (BB 9200)</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	We trust in our staff to serve as negotiators for our district. The involvement of board members may derail efforts in some instances. Therefore, we believe the board of trustees should maintain their distance during the negotiation period.
<b>Protocol</b>	Per CSBA guidance, during active negotiations, we will refrain from, as individual board members, of having meetings with members of the bargaining unit negotiation team.
<b>Topic 17</b>	<b>On-Boarding of New Trustees</b>
<b>Rationale</b>	In order to make a smooth transition of adding a new trustee to the governance team, we will make sure the new trustee is provided with documents and information needed to give a deeper understanding to the position.
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend CSBA New Trustee Orientation</li> <li>• Familiarize oneself with CSBA website and governance norms.</li> <li>• Review the Governance Handbook protocols and agreements (BB9230)</li> <li>• Review of Board agenda process and procedures.</li> <li>• Review of 9000 series of Board Policies.</li> <li>• Review of the Brown Act and discussion of confidentiality.</li> <li>• Review of CSBA Professional Governance Standards.</li> <li>• Review of ACSA/CSBA Professional Standards and job description for the Superintendent. Review contract provisions and evaluation procedures</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Discussion of pending litigation and critical issues.</li> <li>● Review of major programs and projects.</li> <li>● Reach out by the sitting board members to the new trustee.</li> <li>● Meet with the CBO.</li> <li>● Opportunity to participate in Masters in Governance.</li> <li>● Resources to be provided including “Call to Order’ and “The Governance Code”</li> </ul>
<b>Topic 18</b>	<b>Evaluation of Superintendent</b>
	The board will evaluate the superintendent's performance annually in accordance with the contractual agreement.



**We have reviewed and agree to abide by and institutionalize the aforementioned governance team standards and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Mill Valley School District Board of Trustees, Superintendent, staff, students, and the community. We shall renew this agreement at each Annual Organizational Meeting of the Board of Trustees.**

To be Affirmed on February 8, 2024

<hr/> <p>Elli Aboli, Trustee</p>		<hr/> <p>Michele Crncich Hodge, Trustee</p>
<hr/> <p>Natalie Katz, Trustee</p>		<hr/> <p>Sharon Nakatani, Trustee</p>
<hr/> <p>Yunhee Yoo, Trustee</p>		<hr/> <p>Elizabeth Kaufman, Superintendent</p>

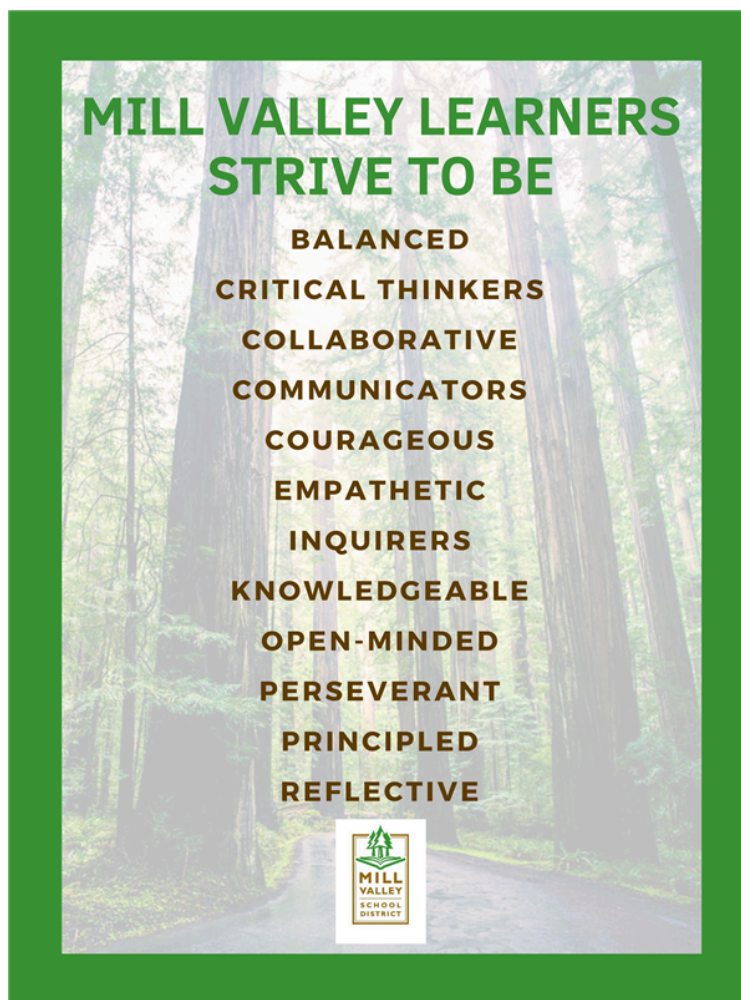
## **Exhibit A District Mission and Vision**

### **Vision**

Our learning community is dedicated to developing globally minded, compassionate, resilient, and courageous students to learn and lead change in their world.

### **Mission**

We provide a balanced education, enabling all students to achieve academic success in an environment that fosters social-emotional development, equity, and creativity. We prepare our students to be responsible, contributing members of our community, to be wise stewards of our natural environment, and to thrive as global citizens in a rapidly changing world.



## Exhibit B Strategic Plan and LCAP

### Strategic Plan 2018-2023

**Objective 1: Balanced Learners.** All students will learn in an environment that fosters social-emotional well-being, equity, global perspectives, and awareness through inquiry and project-based instruction.

- **Strategy A:** Integrate social-emotional learning (SEL) by embedding the attributes of the Mill Valley School District (MVSD) Learner Profile into the curriculum.
- **Strategy B:** Students will reach high levels of achievement as evidenced by standardized and authentic performance assessments.
- **Strategy C:** Student learning opportunities will foster global-mindedness through perspective taking, investigating the world, communicating effectively, and taking action.

**Objective 2: Supported Staff.** Attract, develop, and retain excellent staff in a quality work environment.

- **Strategy A:** Target staff compensation in top quartile of comparable districts.
- **Strategy B:** Implement a staff wellness plan that includes mindfulness training and support, community and morale building, and other opportunities that support staff health and wellness.
- **Strategy C:** Provide high-quality professional development that increases the staff's capacity to collaborate, design, and implement innovative curriculum. Incorporate staff input when planning professional development.
- **Strategy D:** Support teachers in their pursuits of innovation in the classroom.
- **Strategy E:** Maintain equitable class sizes across the district among grade levels given the budget, enrollment patterns, and class size loading guidelines.

**Objective 3: Communications.** Maintain positive student, staff, parent/guardian, and broader community support for our district and schools.

- **Strategy A:** Widely promote the District's vision for all students' success by effectively communicating with students, parents/guardians, staff, trustees, and the community-at-large.
- **Strategy B:** Proactively communicate future issues, initiatives, and opportunities.
- **Strategy C:** Encourage open communication (through group interaction between school officials and staff/community)

**Objective 4: Sound Finance and Infrastructure.** Procure sustainable sources of operating and capital funding to achieve and support the district's strategic goals.

- **Strategy A:** Issue bonds to modernize and reconstruct Mill Valley Middle School (MVMS).
- **Strategy B:** Maintain prudent levels of financial reserves for long-term financial solvency.
- **Strategy C:** Continue our commitment to proactive fiscal planning strategies that provide long-term projections of key financial drivers and levers.
- **Strategy D:** Adjust services and instructional support commensurate with enrollment changes.
- **Strategy E:** Provide safe, properly equipped, well-maintained, updated facilities and infrastructure that support our mission, strategic plan, and educational programs.

[Comprehensive 2018-2023 Strategic Plan](#)

## Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) 2021-2022

**Goal 1: Balanced Learners.** Each student receives equitable, articulated, relevant, standards-based instruction and support that ensures high levels of personal and academic growth. Students learn in classrooms that foster relationships and social emotional wellness; deepen critical thinking, inquiry, and global perspectives; and support their development as citizens and scholars.

- **Action 1:** High Levels of learning for All
- **Action 2:** Social Emotional Wellness (Executive Function, Emotional Regulation, etc.)
- **Action 3:** Targeted Academic Support and English Language Development

**Goal 2: Supported Staff.** We will provide consistent, ongoing professional growth opportunities to Mill Valley School District staff.

- **Action 1:** Anti-Racism, Equity and Inclusion
- **Action 2:** Staff will be trained to analyze data effectively to support learning and SEL needs
- **Action 3:** Learning communities

**Goal 3: Communications & Parent/Family Engagement.** Maintain positive student, staff, parent/guardian, and broader community support for our district and schools.

- **Action 1:** Electronic Communication
- **Action 2:** Student Engagement
- **Action 3:** Formation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion groups and provide training

**Goal 4: Sound Finance and Infrastructure:** Procure sustainable sources of operating and capital funding to achieve and support the district's strategic goals.

- **Action 1:** Facility Master Plan
- **Action 2:** Budget Development Planning
- **Action 3:** Bond Exploration

[Click here for the link to the Local Control and Accountability plan document](#)

**Exhibit C**  
**Board Members & District Administration**

**Board Members:**

Elli Abdoli

Term Commencement: December 2020

Term Expiration: December 2024

Email: [eabdoli@mvschools.org](mailto:eabdoli@mvschools.org)

Michele Crncich Hodge

Term Commencement: December 2020

Term Expiration: December 2024

Email: [mcrncichhodge@mvschools.org](mailto:mcrncichhodge@mvschools.org)

Natalie Katz

Term Commencement: December 2022

Term Expiration: December 2026

Email: [nkatz@mvschools.org](mailto:nkatz@mvschools.org)

Sharon Nakatani

Term Commencement: December 2022

Term Expiration: December 2026

Email: [snakatani@mvschools.org](mailto:snakatani@mvschools.org)

Yunhee Yoo

Term Commencement: December 2022

Term Expiration: December 2026

Email: [euhlhorn@mvschools.org](mailto:euhlhorn@mvschools.org)

**Superintendent and Cabinet:**

Dr. Elizabeth Kaufman, Superintendent, [ekaufman@mvschools.org](mailto:ekaufman@mvschools.org)

Dr. Michele Rollins, Assistant Superintendent, Business Services

Julio Arroyo, Director of Maintenance, Operations and Safety

Laura Myers, Director of Educational Services

Erin Conklin, Director of Student Services

Kate Sprague, Director of Educational Technology & Accountability

**Administrative Support:**

Anna Russell, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & Board/Special Projects

Cyd Amaral, Executive Assistant to Cabinet/Communications Specialist

**Mill Valley School District Office**

411 Sycamore Ave., Mill Valley

415-389-7700

## **Schools/Principals**

### **Edna Maguire Elementary School**

Daniel McCord, Principal  
K - 5 School  
80 Lomita Drive  
415-389-7733 - Angela Sohn, Administrative Assistant

### **Old Mill Elementary School**

Jason Matlon, Principal  
K-5 School  
352 Throckmorton Avenue  
415-389-7727 - LJ Hudson, Administrative Assistant

### **Park School**

Aubrey O'Connor, Principal  
K-5 School  
360 East Blithedale Avenue  
415-389-7735 - Anne Malvaux, Administrative Assistant

### **Strawberry Point School**

Kimberley Russell, Principal  
K-5 School  
117 East Strawberry Drive  
415-389-7660 - Cathy Wilmoth, Administrative Assistant

### **Tamalpais Valley School**

Lisa Lamar, Principal  
K-5 School  
350 Bell Lane  
415-389-7731 - Amy Trapp, Administrative Assistant

### **Mill Valley Middle School**

Danny Chui, Principal  
Jonna Palmer, Assistant Principal  
Rob Celli, Dean of Students  
6-8 School  
425 Sycamore Avenue  
415-389-7711 - Kathleen Wiltshire, Administrative Assistant

**Exhibit D**  
**Board Self-Evaluation Tool**

**SCHOOL BOARD SELF-EVALUATION TOOL**

This evaluation is a self-evaluation the board will complete annually. Each member will score each action according to how frequently it occurs. Each member will tabulate the scores and assign a number. At the end of the evaluation, the board will assign an overall number reflective of the board as a whole.

Self-Evaluation												
This action occurs:	Frequently			Occasionally			Rarely			Never		
1. The Board takes time to learn about important issues facing schools through actions such as school site visits, attendance at school functions, reading weekly Friday updates, etc.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
2. The Board attends monthly board preparation meetings in person or telephonically.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
3. The Board recognizes the superintendent as chief executive officer and educational leader of the district and designates authority to the superintendent for all personnel matters.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
4. The Board conducts an explicit examination of its responsibilities, discussing its role in district management.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
5. The Board is given and reads the agenda and background materials well in advance of meetings and directs all questions to the superintendent for staff to prepare for clarification ahead of time.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
6. The Board participates in in-service programs at regional, state and national levels.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	

This action occurs:	Frequently			Occasionally			Rarely			Never	
7. The Board members hold confidential items in confidence.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
8. Once a decision is made, the Board works together to see that it is accepted and carried out. Board members recognize the value of speaking with "one voice" and refrain from unilateral action.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
9. The Board members work collectively to carry out efficient board meetings and maintain a reasonable length of meetings.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
10. The Board members conduct themselves in a professional manner in both words and actions.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
11. The Board members maintain the formality of their role and uphold The Brown Act.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
12. The Board recognizes that issues or questions of a complex nature will require a reasonable amount of time for staff to prepare answers.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
13. Before reaching a decision on important issues, the board considers input from students or staff likely to be affected by the decision.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
14. The Board prioritizes the needs of the district over those requests of outside organizations.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
15. The Board maintains channels of communication with key community leaders.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0



<b>This action occurs:</b>	<b>Frequently</b>			<b>Occasionally</b>			<b>Rarely</b>			<b>Never</b>	
16. The Board is actively involved in state and federal education legislation.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
17. The Board sets clear organizational priorities for the year ahead and asks the superintendent to articulate his/her vision for the school district's future and offer strategies to realize that vision.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
18. The Board compares reports on schools' progress with the district's long-term goals.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
19. The Board has a procedure in place for conducting superintendent evaluations.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
20. The Board members consistently make decisions in the best interest of students.	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0

OVERALL GRADE:		
_____ /200	_____ %	GRADE:
COMMENTS: _____		
GOALS: _____		

**Exhibit E**  
**Links to Board Resources**

[Board Information on MVSD Website](#)

[Board Policies and Board Bylaws](#)

[Brown Act](#)

[Mill Valley Teachers Association \(MVTA\) contract](#)

[California School Employees Association \(CSEA\) contract](#)

[Board Liaison/Committee Assignments 2022](#)

[Board Meeting Schedule for 2022](#)