



Board of Education Operating Procedures

Vision Statement

Your partner in transforming lives through education, leadership and service

Mission Statement

To extend educational opportunities to all learners by complementing and enhancing the efforts of our local districts and communities

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AAESA Board of Education Operating Procedures

In effective school systems, the Superintendent and the Board function as a “Board Team.” A structured approach to developing a vision for the district and setting goals is enhanced by first developing a system of standard operating procedures. The School Board is the corporate policy making body for the District and the Superintendent and staff provide the leadership to cause Board policies to be implemented. Therefore, the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency Board of Trustees and Superintendent function as a “Board Team” to provide open communication to the staff and patrons of the district.

The Allegan Area Educational Service Agency Board of Trustees adopts these guidelines as Standard Operating Procedures to effectively communicate with staff and members of the District and greater community.

CODE OF ETHICS

As members of the Allegan Area Educational Service Agency Board of Education, we realize that to be the most effective advocates for children, we, as a Board, must function as a team and at all times treat each other and the people we serve with the utmost courtesy, dignity, respect and professionalism. Should we, for whatever reason, fail to follow these guidelines, we ask that our fellow Board members call it to our attention. Should that occur, we pledge to accept the feedback without anger or retribution, and to renew our efforts to follow this Code of Conduct and Board Operating Procedures. We shall promote the best interests of the school district as a whole, and, to that end, all decisions will place the needs of children first by adhering to the educational and ethical standards outlined in this document.

As a Board Member:

- I will bring about desired change through legal and ethical procedures. Upholding and enforcing all laws, administrative rules and regulations, court orders pertaining to schools and district policies and procedures.
- I will make decision in terms of the educational welfare of all children in the District regardless of ability, race, creed, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or social standing.
- I will recognize that the Board must make decisions as a whole in public, as a body corporate, and make no personal promise or take private action that may compromise the role and integrity of the Board.
- I will focus Board action on policy-making, goal-setting, planning and evaluation.
- I will vote to appoint the most highly qualified personnel available after due consideration of the recommendation by the Superintendent or his/her designee.
- I recognize that the role of the Board is to govern and oversee the management of the District. I will delegate authority to the Superintendent for the day-to-day operations of the District.
- I will not step outside my role to govern and oversee the management of the District by seeking to participate in the administration of the day-to-day operations of the District.
- I will hold confidential all matters that, if disclosed may have a negative impact on the District. I will respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law, including closed session discussions.
- To the extent possible, I will attend all regularly scheduled and specially set Board meetings: arrive on time; and be informed of the issues to be considered at the meetings.

1.0 Meetings

- 1.1 Developing the Board Meeting Agenda – Who can place items on an agenda and the guidelines?
 - A. Agendas are created by the Superintendent and Board President and reasonable effort will be made to ensure that these are presented to the Board four (4) days prior to the meeting.
 - B. Board members must request to the Superintendent of Board President a least seven (7) days prior to the Board meeting any item they desire to have placed on the agenda. A verbal request will be followed up by written request or email.
 - C. Reasonable effort will be made to limit additions or deletions to the agenda, which as a practice should be modified rarely.
 - D. The Superintendent and Board President shall include on the agenda all trustee requested agenda items that have been submitted according to Board operating procedures.
 - E. Any agenda item considered for a closed meeting shall state the reason permitted under the appropriate sections of the Open Meetings Act.
- 1.2 Board Member Preparation for Meetings
 - A. The Administration will ensure that supporting information required for informed decision-making is supplied to each Trustee before a Board meeting.
 - B. All meeting participants must be prepared to address items on the agenda. Trustees will read agenda packet materials before the meeting.
 - C. Trustees may ask agenda item related questions of the Superintendent or designee before the meeting.
 - D. Trustees are not precluded from asking questions about agenda items during meetings. However, the right to question should not serve as an excuse for lack of preparation.
- 1.3 Trustee Questions about the Agenda
 - A. Questions regarding the agenda or items attached thereto should be directed to the Superintendent and/or President based upon the nature of question being asked. The answer, if appropriate, should be shared with all other Trustees.
- 1.4 Board Trustee Participation/Conduct During Meetings
 - A. Any time three or more Board members are gathered together physically, through electronic means or a combination of both to discuss school business it is considered a meeting (quorum).
 - B. In addition to the following procedures, at all times Board members shall adhere to the Board Code of Conduct.
- 1.5 Board Trustee Participation in Discussion, Debate and Voting
 - A. All Trustees will vote on all action items. Trustees shall recuse themselves from voting in the case of a legal conflict of interest publicly identified by the Trustee.
 - B. All Trustees may make motions, second motions and enter into debate on all agenda items.
 - C. In case of a tie, the action item fails. The President may bring the item back to the Board for further consideration.
 - D. In case of a less than unanimous vote, the Board will support the majority decision and go forward in harmony.
 - E. A majority of the members elected or appointed to and lawfully serving on the Board (normally four of seven; three if only five Board members are lawfully

1.6 Board Meeting Protocol

- A. Board members will comply with all legal and local policy regarding the execution of Board meetings.
- B. Board members will maintain professional and courteous behavior throughout the meeting even during emotionally charged discussions over complex issues.
- C. Board members will demonstrate respect to fellow Board members and public participants through the following behavior:
 - 1. Listen and treat each other respectfully.
 - 2. Be cordial when disagreeing.
 - 3. Say what needs to be said as briefly and clearly as possible.
 - 4. Direct comments solely to the business under deliberation.
 - 5. Support hearing the voice of all Board members on each agenda item that is being discussed and refrain from dominating the conversation.
 - 6. Call ahead to staff regarding simple “clarifying” needs for agenda items and focus dialogue on critical agenda items.
 - 7. Courteously accept other viewpoints and Board votes, which were not supported by self.
 - 8. Seek solutions and reasonable compromises or consensus when there are differences of opinions.
 - 9. Make decisions in the context of what is best for all students in the district.
 - 10. Attempt always to have dialogue (multiple perspectives) on complex issues.
 - 11. As a courtesy to others, electronic devices will be set in a non-audible mode during Board meetings. Emergency situations warrant exceptions.

1.7 Election of Officers

- A. Prior to the annual organizational meeting the Board Secretary shall:
 - 1. Poll trustees for interest in officer positions.
 - 2. Check with interested trustees to see if they would serve.
 - 3. Inform trustees as to the names of those who have interest in officer positions.
- B. The Officers shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer who shall be members of the Board. The Board may assign a District employee to provide clerical assistance to the Board. Board officers shall serve for a term of one year, or until a successor is elected. Officers may succeed themselves in office. Each officer shall perform any legal duties of the office and other duties, as required by the Board.
- C. A vacancy among officers of the Board shall be filled by majority.

2.0 Communication

2.1 Board Member Communication with Each Other

- A. Board members shall not deliberate issues outside the Board meetings.
- B. Electronic Communications:
 - 1. Shall abide by the spirit and letter of the Open Meetings Act.
 - 2. Restricted to one-on-one communications, informal inquiries, historical perspectives and the like.
 - 3. Emails and text from one Board member to all Board Trustees should be avoided. If it is necessary to use email, it generally should be a one-way communication.

- 2.2 Board Member Requests for Information Other than Agenda Items
- A. Individual Trustees, acting within their official capacity, shall have the right to seek information from the District. The request for information shall be made to the Superintendent or another person designated by the Superintendent. An oral report with appropriate documents may be used for delivery of such information as determined by the Superintendent.
 - B. Directives to the Administration to prepare reports shall be by written request through the Board President. Should the President deny the request, it may be resubmitted by two or more Trustees to the Administration. Within a reasonable period of time, the Administration shall respond by providing copies of the requested material to the Trustee (and all other Trustees) or provide reports as directed by the Board.
- 2.3 Board Member Visiting Campus
- A. Board members are encouraged to visit campuses but should make a reasonable attempt to contact the building principal and notify the Superintendent before the visit if the visit is not for a scheduled campus activity.
 - B. Trustees shall be mindful of public perception when in one-on-one situations with students and staff.
 - C. Board members are not to enter teacher classrooms or on campuses for the purpose of investigation or personnel evaluation.
 - D. Trustees should wear some form of identification (name badge or district ID) when visiting campuses in an official capacity.
- 2.4 Citizen Request/Complaint to Individual Board Members
- A. The Board member, who is presented with a request or complaint outside the Board meeting, shall receive enough information in order to be able to understand the nature of the request or complaint.
 - B. The Board member should then refer the citizen to the appropriate person/chain of command as appropriate.
 - C. The Board member should not become individually and personally involved in the request for complaint.
 - D. The Board member should remind the citizen of their role and that as a Board member they must remain impartial in the event the situation comes before the Board.
 - E. The Board member should notify the Superintendent as soon as possible of potentially significant requests or complaints.
 - F. The Superintendent will ensure that the citizen is contacted in a timely manner. Board members will be notified of the disposition of the complaint if appropriate as deemed by the Superintendent.
- 2.5 Employee Request/Complaint to Individual Board Members
- A. The Board member should hear the employee request or complaint to be sure they understand the nature of the complaint.
 - B. The Board member should then refer the employee to the appropriate person/chain of command as appropriate.
 - C. The Board member should not become individually and personally involved in the request for complaint.
 - D. The Board member should remind the employee of their role and that as a Board member they must remain impartial in the event the situation comes before the Board.

- E. The Board member should notify the Superintendent as soon as possible of potentially significant requests or complaints.
 - F. The Superintendent will ensure that the employee's request/concern is addressed in a timely manner. Board members will be notified if Superintendent deems appropriate.
- 2.6 Board Member Communication with the Media
- A. The Superintendent shall be the official spokesperson for the district.
 - B. The Board President shall be the official spokesperson for the entire Board to the media/press.
 - C. All Board members who receive calls from the media should direct them to the Board's President or designee.
- 2.7 Board Trustee Communication with the Community
- A. The Board will communicate with the community through public hears, regular Board meetings and regular publications.
 - B. Individual Board Trustees cannot speak in an official capacity outside of a Board meeting.
 - C. Community electronic communications with the Board, including Twitter, Facebook and text messages, need to comply with Board Policy regarding Trustees communication and be consistent with the Open Meetings Act.
 - D. If a Trustee receives an email, it will be forwarded to the Superintendent and the rest of the Board Trustees. Then the procedure followed in the contract with the community will be followed.
- 2.8 Administration Communication with Board Trustees
- A. The Superintendent will exercise his/her best judgment to determine what Board Trustees need to know based upon the specific situation.
 - B. Three types of communication will occur with Board Trustees:
 1. Not urgent or not in the media – Board Packet
 2. Very important but not crisis – communication included e-mail to each Board member.
 3. Crisis/Emergency situation – phone call to each Board Trustee.
 - a. In the case of an emergency or crisis, the Superintendent or his/her designee will attempt to provide the following six pieces of information: What, Where, When, Who, Action Taken and a public statement for the Board Trustees.
 - b. Phone calls will be placed in the following order: Presented, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Trustees.
 - c. The Superintendent or his/her designee will provide updates as practicable.
- 3.0 **Board Development**
- 3.1 Board Member Orientation Checklist – for use by new Board members indicating what they need to take responsibility for learning about during their first three months on the board. Please see **Attachment A**
- 4.0 **Board District Oversight**
- 4.1 Establishment of the district's vision, mission and annual goals.
- A. The Superintendent and Board of Education shall develop district vision and mission statements and annual district goals.
- 4.2 Board Approval of District Goals

- A. The Superintendent shall review district goals and if necessary revise them on an annual basis.
 - B. District goals shall be approved by the Board.
 - C. The Board will be updated on progress toward goals based on what is best for all students in the district.
- 4.3 Board Approval of District and Building Improvement Plans and Annual Education Reports.
- A. The Superintendent shall develop District and School Improvement Plans and Annual Education Report (AER) on an annual basis.
 - B. District and School Improvement Plans shall be presented to the Board by the Superintendent and approved by the Board.
- 4.4 Board Review of the Instructional Program.
- A. The Board will annually review the instructional program for each subject category.
- 4.5 Development and Adoption of the District Budget (full cycle).
- A. The administration shall present to the Board an annual budget for approval every spring.
 - B. The Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Operations shall report to the Board regularly as to the budget status and changes, if any.
- 5.0 **Board Policy**
- 5.1 Review of Board Policy
- A. Because adherence to policy is critical, all Trustees are required to familiarize themselves with the district Policy Manual. The administration is responsible for ensuring that each new Trustee understands how to access a copy of the complete manual at the orientation meeting.
- 5.2 Development of Board Policy
- A. New Board policies are developed in response to district or administration needs by the Superintendent or his/her designee with support of NEOLA or other legal guidance.
 - B. New Board policies are approved by the Board.
- 6.0 **Personnel**
- 6.1 Evaluation of the Superintendent (full cycle)
- A. The Board shall evaluate the Superintendents performance annually. A superintendent evaluation form shall be developed by the Board and completed by each Board member.
 - B. The Board President will consolidate the results of that review and present it to the Board and Superintendent.
 - C. The Superintendent may choose to have his/her review during a closed or open session.
- 6.2 Board member concerns about the Superintendents professional performance.
- A. We value the Superintendent's role in the community and how the district is represented. If tis representation is less than favorable and witnessed by a Board member, the Board member shall:
 1. Communicate his/her concerns directly to the Superintendent.
 2. Communicate with the Board President to address questions and/or concerns.
- 6.3 Hiring of Personnel other than the Superintendent.
- A. The Board does not directly hire any personnel other than the Superintendent.

- B. The personnel changes shall be presented to the Board monthly by the administration and approved by the Board.

ATTACHMENT A

Information	What to Do	Who	When	Completed
Program	Tour facilities Presentation by Superintendent Written Materials			
Finances	Presentation by Asst Supt of Finance Review of Resent Financials Learn how to read and understand financial statements			
History	Read Written Materials			
Strategic Direction	Review of Strategic Plan			
Organizational Structure	Review of Bylaws Review of Organizational Chart Introduction to key staff			
Board Roles	Review of written materials from MASB Discussion with Board President and Superintendent			
Board Member Responsibilities	Signed Letter of Agreement Signed Conflict-of-Interest Policy Obtain ID Badge			
Board Operations	Review of Board Procedures Manual Meeting with Board President Accept Committee Assignment			
Technology	Set up electronic device, email and password			
State Laws	Review State Laws for Board Members			

ATTACHMENT B**Yearly Action/Discussion Items for Board Meetings by Month**

September: Special Education Plan and Update
Superintendent Goals Update

October: Literacy Update
Early Childhood

November: Tech Center Programming

December: Hillside Update
Superintendent Goals Update

January: Early College
Negotiation Goals

February: AAESA Culture

March: Superintendent Goals Update

April: Budgets

May: Review Progress on District Goals

June: Superintendent Evaluation

July: Organizational Meeting

August: