

Community Consolidated School District 93

Board Member Agreements

The Board of Education recognizes that we are leaders elected by the Community Consolidated School District 93 community to act at all times in the best interest of the students while providing sound stewardship of committed resources to the community. We will serve and conduct ourselves as role models through a cooperative working relationship, actively displaying respect at all times and exemplifying our District Mission to: **Maximize the academic, social and emotional potential of each student.** These Board Member Agreements have been established to remind all Board members of our collective responsibility.

Board Member Orientation

- We support a robust onboarding process which includes engagement with other Board members as well as the superintendent and staff as specified in our policy.
- *Policy 2:120 - Board Member Development*

Board Member Roles & Responsibilities

- We understand that our primary role is to ensure and implement sound governance for the success of the District.
- We employ the superintendent who is solely responsible and accountable to the Board for “day to day” District operations, achievement of District goals, and the success of the District.
- We will speak with “one voice” to the superintendent. We will reach majority consensus when directing the superintendent or clarifying required information/research.
- We will govern the District, based on input from the community, with a focus on the future, results, and continuous improvement.
- We will encourage and respect collective discussion and diverse viewpoints when making decisions.
- *Policy 2:20 - Power and Duties of the Board of Education; Indemnification*
- *Policy 2:80 - Board Member Oath and Conduct*

Board Members Listening to Concerns from the Community

- We must maintain an awareness that we are recognized as leaders in the community and must always be aware that the community views us as Board members in any setting.
- We understand that our comments will impact the views of community stakeholders.
- We will listen carefully to any concerns while remembering that we are hearing only one side of the story.
- We will gently speak to the person and clarify that a Board member has no individual authority to intervene or resolve a concern.
- We will advise those with concerns to speak with the most appropriate staff member in the District able to help them resolve their concerns (Chain of Command).

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- We will inform the superintendent when we hear a concern that could be of importance to the community. The superintendent will address the concern and follow up with the entire Board as appropriate.
- *Policy 2:140 - Communication To and From the Board*

Board Interactions and Behavioral Expectations

- As visible role models for the students and community, we will conduct and hold ourselves accountable in a respectful manner in meetings, community events and private situations.
- We have, along with the superintendent, the right to expect respect, performance, candor, and honesty from one another.
- Our discussions will always be respectful and focus on solving problems through a collaborative process culminating with all members supporting the decision of the Board and actively working towards its implementation.
- We will approach discussion with the belief that everyone has good intentions.
- We will sincerely and actively seek to understand the viewpoints of others by listening.
- *Policy 2:20 - Power and Duties of the Board of Education; Indemnification*
- *Policy 2:80-E - Board Member Code of Conduct*

No Surprises

- We members of the Board and the superintendent agree to timely communication so that neither side is surprised during the meetings or between meetings.
- Avoiding surprises is paramount in displaying respect for all District administration and the community.
- *Policy 2:130 – Board-Superintendent Relationship*

Preparing for Board Meetings

- We recognize that our personal schedules drive the timing for a thorough review of the agenda information.
- We will endeavor to contact the superintendent and/or Board president with any questions on the agenda before the Board meeting.
- We agree that the same submitted questions may be asked in open session along with new questions that arise during the discussion.
- The process and intention of asking questions prior to the meeting is to help the superintendent provide the best possible answer for the community.
- The Board president or vice president will offer “insight or background” to members on discussions with the superintendent following agenda preparation meetings. The Board president serves as a conduit for any concerns that Board members may express in regard to District business.

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- We understand our responsibility to prepare for meetings and to timely and effectively communicate our concerns either to the superintendent or Board president prior to any meetings.
- *Policy 2:110 - Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers*

Requests for Information/Questions

- Our requests or questions will go directly to the superintendent for disposition.
- The superintendent will delegate the retrieval of information and set the time frame for a response.
- We will not contact individual staff members as that action interferes with District operations.
- We will self-monitor and ensure that one person's request for information or questions does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve District goals.
- The superintendent will provide all Board members the same information when responding to an individual member's request for information. The philosophy is "One gets information, we all get information."
- The superintendent will set the time frame for gathering a response as balanced against current needs of the District.
- The superintendent, based on a need to unexpectedly extend resources in gathering an answer, may seek to confirm requests for information with a majority of the Board.

Placing Items on the Agenda

- The Board of Education president and vice president are responsible for focusing Board meeting agendas on appropriate content.
- We may submit items for the agenda to the superintendent or the Board president for the agenda.
- We will submit items for the agenda no later than the evening before the scheduled Board presidents meeting. The superintendent will apprise all members on the timing of the agenda preparation meetings.
- We will provide a brief written or verbal rationale when submitting an agenda item.
- *Policy 2:110 - Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers*
- *Policy 2:220 - School Board Meeting Procedure*

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Closed session meetings

- We will, at all times, respect the confidentiality of privileged information and will not divulge conversations, discussions, or deliberations that take place during a closed session meeting.
- We understand that to divulge closed session information damages the relationship of the team and has the potential for far reaching consequences which may impact future district operations.
- *Policy 2:80-E - Board Member Code of Conduct*

Board Discussion During Meetings

- We will actively engage and participate during meetings while sharing time with other members to ask questions of staff.
- We will respect the positions of other members during discussion and encourage focused discussion on the agenda topic.

Board Member Voting or Action on Agenda

- When a vote is taken upon any measure before the Board with a quorum being present, a majority of votes cast determines the outcome. We respect the right of individual Board members to vote as they determine to be in the best interest of the District.
- All items listed on the Consent Agenda are considered routine and are adopted by one motion unless any Board member or the superintendent requests that one or more be removed from the Consent Agenda. The item/s may then be discussed and voted upon separately.
- *Policy 2:220 - School Board Meeting Procedure*

Speaking with one voice

- We recognize that no Board member or subset of the Board of Education has the authority to act or speak on behalf of the Board without consent of the Board.
- We recognize the relationship between the superintendent and any individual Board members is collegial, is not hierarchical, and is based on mutual respect for our complementary roles.
- We recognize the superintendent is accountable only to the full Board of Education.
- We recognize that individual Board members have the right to disagree with the decision of the Board, but will support the Board in its decision by abiding by the will of the majority.

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Public Comment at Board Meetings

- We recognize Board meetings are conducted in an open public setting and are not meetings of public discussion or engagement with the Board.
- We recognize any person may address the Board during the appointed place on the agenda for all open meetings.
- We recognize the Board president will summarize the procedure for public comment prior to receiving comments from the public.
- We recognize the superintendent is the Board's default designee to coordinate any required response to the public comment and will apprise the Board accordingly.
- *Policy 2:230 - Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings and Petitions to the Board*

Engaging the Community

- We recognize the Board sits in trust for the whole community, and will make continuing efforts to hear and engage the whole community. We will seek venues beyond meetings to effectively engage community members and listen to concerns.
- We will attempt to be in touch with all stakeholders and all segments of the community, not just those who seek us. We will monitor efforts in this area, asking the question, "Which community voices are not part of the Board considerations, and how will those voices be heard?"
- *Policy 8:10 – Connection with the Community*

Board Member Visits to Schools

- We will have equal access and are encouraged to visit all District school facilities.
- We recognize that our presence in a school is a potential disruption to the daily routine. Therefore, all visits will be pre-arranged through the superintendent.
- We may visit the schools of our children as necessary by following the normal parental visit guidelines. There is no need to notify the superintendent for such visits.

Spokespersons for the Board

- We recognize the Board president is the spokesperson for the Board to the media.
- We recognize the superintendent is the spokesperson for the District.
- *Policy 2:142 - Board Member Media Communications*

Meeting with staff

- Board members will include the superintendent in any meeting discussing district business with staff or people who do business with the District.
- *Policy 2:80-E - Board Member Code of Conduct*

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Use of email/texts

- In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Board members will not “reply all” to any district email.
- Board members will be judicious in their use of email and texts and understand that most emails and texts are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and as such can be made public.
- *Policy 2:140 and 2:140-E - Communication To and From the Board*

Continuing Education for Board Members

- We recognize the importance of learning and are committed to overall self-improvement through continuing education and training, including informative Board retreats.
- We are encouraged to participate fully in IASB related activities such as regional dinners, division and state programs, online courses, annual tri-conference of IASB/IASA/IASBO and the NSBA. The superintendent will provide access and make all arrangements.
- We will consult other members to inquire on effective or beneficial learning activities.

In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Board of Education will review this document on an annual basis.

Written: December 2020

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