

BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT OPERATING AGREEMENTS

A. Purpose of Agreement

The School Board of Directors is the Policy making body for Springfield Public Schools. To effectively meet the system's challenges the School Board of Directors must function with the Superintendent as a cohesive leadership team. To ensure unity in purpose and clarity in process; effective group agreements must be in place. The following are the group agreements for the Springfield School Board of Directors and Superintendent.

B. Board Member Job Description

1. Work as a team to set the long-term direction of Springfield Public Schools with a clear vision, mission statement, measurable goals, and priorities.
2. Focus on policymaking, policy-review, planning, and evaluation.
3. Manage Board processes including Board-Superintendent Operating agreements and participating in an annual self-assessment of the Board's performance.
4. Set priorities for Board professional development annually, pursuing continuous improvement through regular board work sessions and OSBA professional development activities.
5. Supervise the hiring, performance evaluation, and other personnel management processes related to the Superintendent.
6. Work with the Superintendent as a team, recognizing that the Superintendent is the Board's advisor.
7. Respect the Superintendent's responsibility to manage the day-to-day operations of the District and to direct employees in District and school matters.
8. Maintain effective two-way communication with students, staff, and the public. This will include Board highlights and key items from Board meetings in district communication avenues such as the District website.
9. Be accountable for the financial stewardship of the District, including but not limited to the following responsibilities: serving on the Budget Committee, aligning resources with goals and priorities, setting expectations, monitoring progress, officially adopting the Budget, and accepting the annual Budget report.
10. Deliberate and make decisions in accordance with public meeting law. Foster a positive Board environment; encouraging debate, different points of view, and listening, doing so with care and respect.
11. Understand that as an individual, a Board member has no authority. It is when acting as a body that a majority of the Board has influence
12. Board members will adhere to standards of ethical conduct and professionalism. They will also maintain confidentiality according to the Oregon Revised Statute standards, particularly in executive session and administrative function sessions, including when interacting with staff, elected officials, and the community.

C. Role of Board Leadership: Board Chair/Vice Chair

1. Manage the Board's process; convene meetings; develop the Board agenda with the Superintendent, seeking Board member input; and execute documents, as appropriate.
2. Serve as the authorized spokesperson for the Board with regard to Board policy, process, and decisions. The Chair may delegate this responsibility to other Board members and/or the Superintendent.
3. Communicate with individual Board Members concerns shared with the Chair by other Board members regarding issues agreed to in the Operating Agreement.
4. Facilitate the orientation of new Board Members.
5. Assist the Superintendent in communicating important information to the full Board. Keep Board members apprised of information exchanged with the Superintendent.
6. The Vice Chair will perform these duties when the Chair is not available.

D. Role of the Superintendent

1. Manage the day-to-day operations of the District.
2. Work as a team with Board Members.
3. Work with the Board to establish a clear vision for the District and affirm it annually.
4. Collaborate with the Board to set annual District goals.
5. Work with the Chair and Vice Chair to effectively bring information and issues to the Board to facilitate proactive, data-driven decisions on policy and budget/revenue issues.
6. Facilitate and direct communication between the central office staff and the Board that will require more than 20 minutes of staff time or when confidential by nature.
7. Provide regular communications to the Board. This may include: scheduling information for activities and events, as well as notice, follow-up or resolution of issues.

E. Meeting Operations and Decision Making

1. Respect the scheduled starting and ending times for meetings. Executive sessions and work sessions will end no later than 10 minutes before Board meetings. The Vice Chair will assist the Board Chair with keeping on schedule.
2. Attend and be fully engaged with a minimal distraction from cell phones, etc. at regularly scheduled Board meetings unless prevented by sickness or an unavoidable cause.
3. Cooperate in scheduling special meetings and/or work sessions for planning and training purposes.
4. Prepare for Board meetings by completing the following:
 - a. Read the complete Board packet prior to the meeting. Board Packets will be provided via email or posted online no later than the Friday prior to a Board meeting. A hard copy may also be picked up at the District Office on the Friday afternoon prior to a meeting.
 - b. Ask questions you may have regarding the information in the Board Packet of the Superintendent or members of the Executive Team prior to the day of the meeting if possible.
 - c. If after you have asked questions you intend to pull an item from the consent agenda, please notify the Board Chair and/or Superintendent before the meeting.
 - d. Be clear in communication with the Superintendent and Board Chair prior to the meeting to avoid surprises at Board meetings.

- e. Make it a goal to make no new proposals on the night that the Board is scheduled to make a decision or take action.
 - f. Items for discussion should be brought first to the Board Chair or Superintendent to be placed on the agenda by Monday the week prior to a scheduled Board meeting.
5. Board meeting discussions should be thorough yet concise and pertinent to the issues on the agenda.
 6. Cast a vote on all matters except when a conflict of interest arises.
 7. Uphold decisions that have been made by the Board.

F. Communication

1. Communicate openly and honestly.
2. Respect differences and listen well and for positive intent.
3. Operate as representatives and make decisions in the best interest of the whole District. Consider research, best practices, evaluative data and public input in making mindful and purposeful decisions. Being mindful of the needs of ALL the children in our District and the interests of our collective community.
4. Focus on the situation, issue, or behavior- not the person.
5. When a Board Member receives an informal complaint, listen carefully and empathetically. Direct the person to solve the problem at the lowest level.
 - a. Please talk with the teacher.
 - b. Please talk with the principal.
 - c. Please talk with the Superintendent.
6. Formal complaints must be forwarded to the Superintendent; the Superintendent or designee hears these. Complainants may appeal the Superintendent's decision to the School Board.
7. If a complainant is unwilling to speak to the Superintendent, a Board member may share the issue and the source of the complaint/concern/criticism of the District with the Superintendent. The Superintendent will keep the Board informant "source" confidential at the request of a Board member but every effort should be made to encourage trust and open communication. This is the best hope for full understanding and resolution.
8. Community Communication with the entire Board via Email: When the entire Board receives communication from a community member, the Board Chair will respond. A "footnote" statement will be added to the bottom of the response so that patrons understand that it is the practice of the Board that the Board Chair will respond on behalf of the Board. The footnote will read as follows:

"To assure that Board conversations and deliberations do not occur through email, the Board Chair will respond on behalf of the Board. School Board Members only deliberate when gathered as a quorum as outlined in the Public Meeting Law. All Board members will receive the response given by the Board Chair."

9. When a single Board member receives a communication from a member of the public he/she may respond to that patron as an individual Board member. The Board member may elect to forward the email and his/her response to the Board Chair or full Board if he/she wishes.

10. When a concern or problem arises with an individual Board Member, communicate first with the Board Member. If the issue is not resolved, communicate with the Board Chair and finally with the Superintendent if necessary.
11. To increase transparency in district operations and Board oversight, the Superintendent should be included in meetings between a Board Member and key stakeholders.
12. When possible and appropriate, responses to public questions should be included in Superintendent-Board updates.

G. Board or Superintendent Committees

Board Committees: The committee chair is responsible for implementing the charge of the Board. The committee chair will provide regular updates of committee progress to the Board. External communication of committee progress is the responsibility of the committee chair – the committee chair will provide advanced copies to the Board and the Superintendent of any external communication 36 hours before release.

Superintendent Committees: Board members may be asked to serve on a Superintendent or District committee. The Board member is a representative of the Board to staff, student, parent and community members. Board members serving on a committee should temper their participation, mindful of their position as an elected official. Board members serving on a committee are to respect the role of the committee chair and refrain from initiating a new direction for the committee or initiating formal community input except when requested by the committee chair. The Board representative on a Superintendent or District committee will assist the Superintendent in reporting committee progress to the Board. Voting rights will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

SPRINGFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT 19
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