

ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SCHOOL BOARD OPERATING PROTOCOLS

The school board and superintendent have distinct roles and understanding the role of each is important for high performing school systems. Boards and superintendents must team together to ensure a district has effective leadership. Just as board members should govern and not manage a school district, superintendents should not administer a district in isolation from the representatives whom the public has entrusted with the schools. School board members are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure a community's schools educate the community's students in accordance with the wishes of the local community.

Board members have collective, not individual authority. Authority to make decisions is only granted to the board as a whole. The full board gives direction to the superintendent, most commonly at board meetings. Individual board members do not have the authority to direct the superintendent.

The following question is a useful construct for distinguishing role and responsibilities:

Is this a policy matter or administrative work?

In addition, posing a strategic question to frame the outcomes that are within the board's purview allows the board to give specific direction and the superintendent and staff to execute that decision as directed:

Should we....?

SCHOOL BOARD – GOVERNS (Guides-Directs)	SUPERINTENDENT-MANAGES (Administers-Operates)
· Decides What	· Decides How
· Requests Information	· Seeks and Provides Information
· Considers Issues	· Provides Recommendations
· Creates, Reviews, Adopts Policy	· Recommends, Implements Policy
· Approves & Reviews Plans	· Implements Plans
· Monitors Progress	· Reports Progress
· Contracts with Personnel	· Supervises & Evaluates Personnel
· Approves & Reviews Budget	· Formulates Budget
· Represents Public Interests	· Acts in Public Interest

ROLES OF THE BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT

Successful school systems are the result of strong and effective leadership who acknowledge and respect their roles.

WHAT DO SCHOOL BOARDS DO?

- Work with the community and school board to develop a vision for the schools;
- Establish a structure and create an environment focused on the vision that allows students the opportunity to attain their maximum potential;
- Develop accountability and assessment systems that fosters the highest possible student performance; and
- Engage in advocacy on behalf of students and their schools.

BOARD OPERATING PROTOCOLS

<p>Authority</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • act only at a duly called meeting • not direct staff, other than the superintendent
<p>Meetings</p>	<p>Types (3 or more school board members constitutes a meeting):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular – 2 times a month announced at least 3 days prior • work sessions – in depth review of agenda item, no action • special – retreats, short-notice action items and other topics • emergency – urgent public necessity
<p>Agendas</p>	<p>Placing an item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • chair and superintendent develop agenda • school board members may submit requests in advance • may request to add or change agenda item prior to adoption • requests in advance for an item from a majority of members must be placed on agenda • order may be change depending on circumstance <p>Consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • routine or fully discussed items • one vote, no discussion • requests can be made to withdraw an item from consent for discussion purposes

<p>Meeting/Work Session Conduct</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hold meetings in public • allow public comments at appropriate time • not take action or deliberate on public comments • not allow public comments about individuals • deliberate on current business • keep deliberations to a reasonable length • speak no more than twice on a topic unless allowed otherwise by chair
<p>Voting</p>	<p>We:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are expected to vote • know the chair is expected to vote • know a tie vote defeats the motion • will not abstain unless a conflict has been identified
<p>Closed Session</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only discuss items on agenda and allowable by law • take action in open session
<p>Electronic Participation at Meetings</p>	<p>We know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a quorum must be present • notification for electronic participation is at least one day in advance • must be approved by majority vote of those physically present • may not exceed two meetings per school board member • may fully participate if approved
<p>Officer Selection and Roles</p>	<p>We will or know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • elect a chair and vice chair each January • appoint a superintendent designee • the chair shall call and preside at meetings and sign documents • the vice chair shall act in the absence of the chair
<p>New School Board Members</p>	<p>Transitioning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide an orientation and overview of the school division • distribute operating procedures • receive link to Robert's Rules of Order and other documentation • receive an email account and other supplies

<p>Requests for Information</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requests may be made at a board meeting and information will be made available for all school board members • requests for existing reports or documents made be made and will be distributed to all board members • requests to generate a report or information may only be made if a majority support request • an online portal is available • advisory committees exists and their work is also available
<p>Superintendent Visits</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School board members are encouraged to maintain a relationship with the superintendent • one-on-one meetings will be held on a quarterly basis • telephone calls and visits may also be held to discuss an agenda item for an upcoming meeting
<p>Meeting Preparation</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff will provide supporting information • we will be prepared • notify superintendent as far in advance as possible with questions regarding agenda
<p>Campus Visits</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school board members are encouraged to visit campuses • school board members should notify the principal in advance before visiting a campus • school board members should not enter a classroom unannounced

<p>Communications</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • superintendent will communicate with the board • school board members will keep the superintendent informed • superintendent and chair will meet to develop agendas • superintendent will inform the board in a timely manner • school board members should not speak on behalf of the board without specific approval • school board members shall avoid speaking with staff other than the superintendent without first discussing with the superintendent • staff, other than the superintendent, should avoid speaking with school board members without first discussing with the superintendent • employees shall be given time to speak at regular board meetings • it is encouraged for school board members to attend division activities, community meetings and constituency interaction • school board members shall notify the clerk when participating in any activity as a school board member
<p>City Council</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the chair will designate a city council person to each school board member • school board members should maintain consistent communication with their city council designee • school board members will submit city council member concerns to the superintendent, chair and vice chair • written communication from city council members will be directed to the chair to disseminate • school board members will positively and actively promote the financial needs of the division to city council members • regularly scheduled meetings will be conducted between school board and city council
<p>Email and Social Media</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • email is to be used responsibly and lawfully • the division may be held liable for libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene communication • the division may be held liable for forwarding confidential or copyrighted information • email is subject to the Freedom of information Act (FOIA) • email complaints received will be responded to by the superintendent or chair

<p>Employee Performance (other than superintendent)</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discuss employee concerns with the superintendent and chair • not oversee personnel other than the superintendent
<p>Community and Employee Complaints</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hear community complaints and understand fully • repeat problem to community member • refer community member to superintendent or appropriate staff member according to complaint protocol • remind the community member of due process and chain of command • request permission to use names(s) of complainant • be notified by the superintendent of action and resolution, if appropriate
<p>Media</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The chair is the official spokesperson • school board members who receives a call from media should direct the caller to the chair • school board members may respond to questions related to their personal position but should clearly indicate they are not speaking for the board and only for themselves • school board members speaking to or being contacted by the media should notify the chair and vice chair
<p>Liaison</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school board members will be assigned by the chair to serve as liaisons to schools and advisory committees • school board members shall disseminate current information • school board members shall report campus information to the superintendent when appropriate

<p>Evaluation</p>	<p>We understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the school board and superintendent shall function as a team • the school board will annually conduct a self evaluation • the school board shall develop the evaluation instrument • the instrument will be completed individually and confidentially by the school board and superintendent staff • the chair will compile results • the school board shall meet, with a quorum present, to review and discuss results • the school board shall consider strategies based on the results • a superintendent evaluation instrument shall be developed • the superintendent evaluation instrument is to be completed individually by each school board member • the superintendent's evaluation is conducted annually by the school board in closed session
<p>Review</p>	<p>We will review annually:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards of Conduct • Code of Ethics • Rules of Order and Bylaws • School Board Operating Procedures
<p>Accountability</p>	<p>Whenever a school board member believes that another has violated the operating procedures, it is incumbent on him or her to bring the issue to the member first, then to the chair, who shall immediately investigate the allegation, and if substantiated and not resolved with the member, bring the issue to the full board in closed session.</p>