



# ***San Leandro Unified School District***

## **GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK**

**The Board of Trustees is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public interest in schools, and to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.**

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2015

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### **Unity of Purpose, Roles and Responsibilities, Norms, Agreements**

**This handbook reflects the governance team's work on creation of a framework for effective governance. This involves ongoing discussions about unity of purpose, roles, norms and coming to agreement on protocols for formal structures that enable the governance team to continue to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits all children.**

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# **San Leandro Unified School District**

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the San Leandro Unified School District is to educate students to achieve and demonstrate academic excellence and become confident, collaborative and competitive in a global society, by utilizing state-of-the-art technologies and innovative teaching strategies within a well-maintained, secure learning environment, in a region rich in heritage and diverse in culture, where we value our traditions while welcoming change.

# **San Leandro Unified School District**

## **District Beliefs**

We believe that:

- all people can learn
- every person has value
- diversity enriches and strengthens our lives
- people have the right to make their own decisions
- individuals are accountable and responsible for their behavior
- helping others helps ourselves
- individuals need to feel safe and secure within their community
- it takes a whole community to raise a child
- respect for self and others is essential
- self-esteem is essential for personal growth
- all individuals have the right to equal access to quality education

# Building An Effective Governance Team

## Unity of Purpose

**School district governance is the act of transforming the needs, wishes, and desires of the community into policies that direct the community's schools.**

There are three dimensions to the effective governance of any organization. They are (1) The actions of an individual; (2) a group coming together to govern; and (3) the performance of governance responsibilities by the group.

In a school district, the Board and Superintendent work together as a governance team. For a governance team to work together effectively, members need to: Maintain a unity of purpose; agree on and govern within appropriate roles; create and sustain a positive governance culture and; create a supportive structure for effective governance.

Effective governance tenets encompass the basic characteristics and behaviors that enable governance team members to effectively create a climate for excellence in a school district and maintain the focus on improved student learning and achievement. (CSBA)

What do we, as a governance team, want to accomplish?  
What do we stand for?

**Unity of Purpose is a common focus, overarching goals, and the values and beliefs governance team members share about children, the district and public education that help them transcend their individual differences to fulfill a greater purpose. (CSBA)**

- Our shared purpose is to have the best learning environment for all students.
- We want to build trust and move the District forward.
- We want to be an effective team.
- We want to understand our individual jobs and collective responsibilities.

- We want to be a team with a common focused direction so we are not a distraction to the District or community but a catalyst for the focused efforts of employees, and the community can see evidence of this focused direction.
- We want to be partners with the staff in positive change.
- We want to oversee the putting together of a first-rate program and first-rate facilities, making sure we continue to improve – never resting on our laurels.
- We want to perpetuate a legacy of positive culture as people come and go.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Mutual agreement on the roles of the Board and Superintendent**

The role of trustees who sit on locally elected school boards is to ensure school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of their communities. Boards fulfill this role by performing five major responsibilities. These five responsibilities are:

1. Setting a direction for the district
2. Establishing an effective and efficient organizational structure for the district
3. Providing support for the Superintendent and staff
4. Ensuring accountability to the public for the performance of the district's schools
5. Providing community leadership and advocacy on behalf of the district and public education

Trustees carry out these responsibilities in each of the following job areas:

- Setting the District's Direction
- Student Learning and Achievement
- Finance
- Facilities
- Human Resources

- Policy
- Judicial Review
- Collective Bargaining
- Community Relations and Advocacy

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. **(See Board Bylaw 9000)**

## **Creating and Sustaining a Positive Governance Team Culture**

**Culture is the positive or negative atmosphere created by the way people in an organization treat each other. Teams have unwritten (implicit) or written (explicit) agreements about how they will behave with each other and others. These behavioral ground rules, often called norms, enable teams to build and maintain a positive culture or shift a negative one.**

### **Governance Norms**

Because the community elects school board members to set and monitor the direction of the school district, and the district superintendent translates all efforts into action, it is vital that the board and superintendent have a respectful and productive working relationship based on trust and open communications.

In addition to meeting the norms below in order to create a positive culture and atmosphere, we agree to act in ways that will help us meet the CSBA Professional Governance Standards.

#### **WE AGREE TO –**

1. Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for all students.
2. Communicate a common vision.
3. Operate openly, with trust and dignity.
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.
7. May periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.
8. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform Board deliberation.

(Board Bylaw 9005)

## Board Governance Protocols

**The Board's effectiveness is enhanced through the establishment of structure and protocols that define how board members and the superintendent will operate within the team. Protocols explicitly define governance principals, mutually agreed upon expectations, and specific processes under which the team will operate and assist its effectiveness. There are general protocols and those that are specific for the Board and the Superintendent.**

### Supportive Structures and Processes Developing Protocols

Effective teams discuss and agree on the formal structures and processes used by the superintendent and the board in their functioning as a team – how the board will operate, how members agree they will do business in order to govern effectively.

~CSBA

Process for establishing protocols ...

There is a three-step process recommended for creating protocols for the board:

First: Identify the Issue:

Simply naming the issue is sufficient in most cases. For example: Staff/Board communication – process for board member site visits – bringing up new ideas – obtaining additional information – handling concerns or complaints from staff or community – agenda structure and planning – how to handle complex community issues, using e-mail to communicate, etc.

### Second: Clarify the Issue:

Here it is important to agree on the problem the protocol is intended to solve, or in a more positive manner, to agree on what the protocol is intended to do and why it is important. At this point it is often helpful to define the parameters for the protocol: any rules or regulations that must be followed, beliefs or values that must be honored, pitfalls that should be avoided, etc.

### Third: Write the Protocol:

Writing the specific language of a protocol in a way that the board can agree to is extremely important. Protocols ought not be adopted with majority/minority votes (3-2) since the entire board is expected to operate within the protocol scope.

### Monitor, Evaluate and Review:

After agreeing on a set of protocols, governance teams should determine when and how protocols will be monitored, evaluated and reviewed. (For example, the governance team may agree to review all protocols annually at a governance workshop, or whenever a new member joins the team.)

## **Leadership Responsibility and Roles of the Board**

The only authority to direct actions rests with the full Board sitting at the Board table. A majority vote sets such direction. Individuals can request action by bringing up a new idea and will explain their interest in a particular course of action. When a majority of the Board, sitting in a formal meeting, requests action, that request should be made in the context of the intended results, not the methods used to achieve those results.

Board Policies of the District relate to the role and responsibility of the Board collectively and Board members individually. "No individual member of the Board, by virtue of holding office, shall exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools; nor as an individual, command the services of any employee." Board members are to channel their requests and/or concerns directly to the Superintendent.

Trustees will direct all requests to the superintendent. The superintendent will inform the Board regarding the implications of the request for staff capacity and work load.

Board members will read the information provided to them and commit to ongoing professional development and training.

Meetings of the Board are held in public, but are not open-forum town hall meetings. Meetings will be conducted in such a way as to allow the public to provide input in the time allotted to ensure that multiple voices of the community inform Board deliberations; however, when the Board deliberates, it will be a time for the Trustees to

listen and learn from each other, taking public input into consideration without re-engaging the public.

The Board will consistently abide by its formal processes so that all persons are treated fairly and equally. The Board will review its policies, bylaws and protocols relating to Board meeting management, revising or reaffirming them as appropriate.

Each trustee respects the right of other trustees to vote “no” on an issue; however, the trustees agree, as a courtesy to the team, to explain the reason for the “no” vote either during deliberation or before casting the vote.

When there is no conflict of interest that requires abstention, Board members have a duty to vote on all issues.

When an individual Board member requests information, that information will be provided to all Board members. An individual Board member will, insofar as possible, work to let the Superintendent and staff know ahead of time when a request for information will be made in public so the staff can be prepared to provide an answer. Individual Board members will self-monitor to ensure one person’s request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve District goals.

The Board and Superintendent commit to providing all the information at their disposal that relates to the running of the District. When Board members have questions regarding the Board Packet, the individual Board member will channel said questions to the Superintendent, at least 24 hours prior to a Board meeting.

Board members will hold to the highest level of conduct, including emphasizing the positive when in public places or situations. Whenever appropriate, when responding to phone calls, emails, or visits from staff or community members, each Board member will channel concerns or complaints from such individuals to the Superintendent or appropriate staff member for action.

Board members will keep confidential information confidential at all times.

As the norm, the Superintendent speaks on behalf of the Board. The Board President is authorized to speak on behalf of the Board, when necessary.

## **The Board’s Relationship with the Superintendent**

The Board will commit to work through and with the Superintendent on issues regarding the running of the District. The Board and Superintendent are expected to protect confidential information. The Superintendent will inform the Board as soon as possible of:

1. serious safety concerns

2. serious disciplinary action
3. serious / unexpected personnel changes
4. legal or liability concerns
5. notable achievements

It is the Superintendent's responsibility to organize the staff in the manner that best serves the needs of the District. As a professional courtesy, the Superintendent shall provide appropriate notice to the Board in advance of action being taken.

All conflicts between the Superintendent and the Board will be handled in Closed Session, before the Board, with the Board and Superintendent always being in attendance. Individual conflicts will be addressed privately between those who hold the conflict and will not involve the Board as a whole or part.

The board designates the superintendent as the official spokesperson for the district. The superintendent will inform the board, as appropriate, regarding media coverage for certain events and issues.

In all matters, the Board and Superintendent are expected to protect confidential information.

## **The Board's Role and Relationship with the Staff and Community**

The Board assumes that the Management Team members who present to the Board are speaking as representatives of the Superintendent, and, as such, the Superintendent is responsible for all presentations to the Board. Additionally, the Superintendent has the right and the responsibility to interrupt, if necessary, the presentation of a staff member to clarify any issues that he/she believes appropriate..

Staff members are directed to channel any requests made by individual Board members directly to the Superintendent. Such a direction does not imply, to either the staff or to individual Board members, a censoring of any private and informal conversations. The imperative is that a staff member is not placed in a position, by a Board member, to provide any information (beyond the information that would be provided to any regular community member) and/or complete any duty as requested. Staff members are directed to relay requests from Board member to the Superintendent to ensure that appropriate information is provided to all Board members.

When individually visiting schools or departments, as a professional courtesy, Board members are encouraged to notify the Superintendent that they will be visiting a school or department, and may provide input to the Superintendent on issues or concerns that may arise from such a visit.

When a complaint is made to the Board, the members are encouraged to listen carefully, remembering that only one side of the story is being presented. Trustees will then direct the complainant to the staff most appropriate and able to help them resolve their concern, making sure the person understands the appropriate order of who to contact (teacher, then principal, then District staff) and is aware of any formal forms or policies that might assist them (e.g., written complaint form).

In responding to concerns or when a complaint is made to a Board member, the member is encouraged to:

Listen carefully, remembering that only one side of the story is being presented;

Direct the complainant to the staff most appropriate and able to help them resolve the concern;

Make sure the person understands the appropriate order of whom to contact (teacher, then principal, then District Staff) and is aware of any formal forms or policies that might assist them (i.e. written complaint form);

As soon as possible, inform the superintendent.

## **Board Meetings and the Agenda**

Meetings of the Board are held in public, but are not open-forum town hall meetings.

The Board/Superintendent Team is symbolically recognized, in the Public Board Meeting, with the Board and Superintendent working together on the Dias. The Superintendent will serve as a direct resource to the Board President by sitting next to the President. The Superintendent will determine the best placement of staff reporting to the Board.

The design of the Board agenda will follow the historical structure utilized by the Board. The design of the agenda may only be altered, with approval of the Board.

The superintendent, with the support of staff, will create each Board Agenda. Board members may request items to be placed on the agenda. Any item may be placed on the Board agenda by a Board member. Board members requesting to place an item on the agenda must follow Board policy and submit a written request 9 days prior to the scheduled Board meeting.

The Board President and Vice President will meet with the Superintendent to discuss the contents of the agenda and the process that will be followed at the meeting, in advance of the Board Meeting.

Board meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month unless otherwise noted in the Board calendar. Each Board meeting will begin with

Closed Session at 6:00 pm. The Regular Public Meeting will begin at 7 pm. Study Sessions may be scheduled and shall be scheduled at the discretion of the Board. Special meetings may be called by the Board President or a majority of the Board (GC 54956).

When Board members have questions regarding the Board Packet, the individual Board member will channel said questions to the Superintendent, at least 24 hours prior to the Board meeting.

When an individual Board member requests information, that information will be provided to all Board members. An individual Board member will, insofar as possible, work to let the Superintendent and staff know ahead of time when a request for information will be made in public so the staff can be prepared to provide an answer. Individual Board members will self-monitor to ensure one person's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve District Goals.

Each trustee has the obligation, in serving the community, to vote on each item presented to the Board. Abstention from voting must only take place when required by law, due to a potential conflict of interest and shall be proclaimed by the Board member. Board members have a duty to vote on all issues.

Each trustee respects the right of other trustees to vote "no" on an issue; however, the trustees agree, as a courtesy to the team, to explain the reason for the "no" vote either during deliberation or before casting the vote.

The governance team will strive for brevity in deliberations, keeping remarks brief and to the point so that all opinions can be expressed and meetings can be efficient.

## **The Ongoing Implementation of Board Approved Protocols**

A Board workshop on the Board governance protocols and the Board Governance Handbook will be scheduled in January after each Board election and when a new Board member is appointed to fill a vacancy to review governance team agreements and processes.

## **Evaluation of the Superintendent**

The Board will annually complete a written evaluation of the Superintendent according to the timeline and requirements in the superintendent's contract.

The evaluation instrument should be designed to bring about the collective view of the Board, as a whole. Thus, minimally the evaluation should reflect the majority view of the Board as a whole.

# Appendix

**BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT  
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

# CLARIFYING BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT ROLES

*Effective teams value and respect their essential functions, reach mutual agreement on the roles of the board and superintendent, and strive to operate within them.*

There are important distinctions to be made between the board's role and that of the superintendent and staff. Boards and superintendents 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 "trustees are the representatives of the people, elected to ensure a community's schools educate the community's children 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, through decisions reached at board meetings. Individual board members do not have the authority to direct the superintendent, unless otherwise agreed to by the board and superintendent.

The responsibility of the school board is not to run the schools, but to see that the schools are well run. When a board member inadvertently takes over the staff role, he is in essence vacating his board seat and effectively undercutting his ability to govern. He is forfeiting his ability to hold the superintendent responsible (or the way the board's policy direction is translated into action by the professional staff.

Using the role clarification concepts presented in the Venn diagram define district specific issues related to role definition between the Board and the Superintendent.

Develop statements of:

- An "Effective Trustee is ..."
- What the Board needs from the Superintendent
- What the Superintendent needs from the Board
- What "Effective Governance means to us ..1."

# SCHOOL BOARD'S SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the general board/superintendent relationship framework, school boards have these specific responsibilities:

- To delegate to the superintendent responsibility for all administrative functions except those specifically reserved through board policy for the board chairperson. Those reserved areas might include conducting board meetings and public hearings, approving the agenda and minutes and other activities incidental to, and associated with serving as presiding officer of the board.
- To support the superintendent fully in all decisions that conform to professional standards and board policy.
- To hold the superintendent responsible for the administration of the school district through regular constructive written and oral evaluations of the superintendent's work. Effective evaluation is an ongoing communications effort and should align with the district vision and be linked to the goals and established by the board with the assistance of the superintendent.
- To provide the superintendent with a comprehensive employment contract.
- To give the superintendent the benefit of the board's counsel in matters related to individual board members' expertise and familiarity with the local school system and community interest.
- To interpret the desires of the community to the superintendent.
- To hold all board meetings with the superintendent or a designee present.
- To consult with the superintendent on all matters, as they arise, that concern the school system and on which the board may take action.
- To develop a plan for board/superintendent communications.
- To channel communications with school employees that require action through the superintendent and to refer all applications, complaints, and other communication, oral or written, to the superintendent first, to assure that the district processes such communications in an effective and coordinated fashion and is responsible to students and parents.
- To establish a policy on effective management of complaints and take action on matters only after hearing the recommendation of the superintendent.
- To provide the superintendent with sufficient administrative help.

# FORGING AN EFFECTIVE BOARD/NEW SUPERINTENDENT WORKING RELATIONSHIP

## ROLE TIPS FOR BOARD MEMBERS

- Understand that the superintendent is practicing a career-a highly complex one for which he or she has prepared with formal training and, in most cases, years of progressively more responsible experience.
- Know your superintendent-his/her likes and dislikes; what he/she expects of you and the rest of the board; and what the superintendent needs.
- Be realistic about what the board and the new superintendent can accomplish – vision the best possible programs, but recognize the realities of resources and culture-think "change management."
- "Step back" from established practices with previous superintendent; "think new team;" communicate disagreements in private; if the issues are severe enough, the entire board should know and a closed session should be held.
- Don't make promises outside the board meeting; the board has only collective authority and judgment-it's a legal and an ethical matter.
- Don't surprise the superintendent at a board meeting with resolutions, problems, or issues-give the superintendent advance notice so he/she can be prepared to provide the best possible response; it's not a game of testing the superintendent's "spontaneous knowledge.'
- Support your superintendent-listen to complaints about the superintendent, but don't "instantaneously" agree with them; if serious enough have the complaint put in writing so the whole board can analyze it; if criticism of superintendent is necessary, make it constructive and criticize the work, not the person.
- Don't become a "complaint receiving department" -communicate with staff through the new superintendent to the greatest extent possible; receive input from staff, but direct input through the superintendent so as to not appear to be circumventing the superintendent which can split the administrative team and undercut-the superintendent's authority and effectiveness.
- Listen to every board member; build common ground within the entire board.
- Respect the legitimate role of the board.

- Respect individual board members for who they each are-they mirror the community.
- Don't "draw too many lines in the sand." Pick your issues. Never draw a line in the sand with people who own the sand box.
- Don't adopt a "trust me" approach. Don't ask board members to give up their only real power: ***to ask questions and to believe they are holding you accountable.***
- Don't confuse legitimate disagreements with disloyalty or lack of confidence in the superintendent.
- Don't approach the board with a "damage control" mentality. If you do, you will get so controlling that the board will believe you are withholding information and hiding things.
- Don't expect too much or too little. Each board has its own culture and will find its own natural balance of activity. Find the balance between your needs and style and the dominant collective needs and styles of the board. And culture shifts as board composition shifts.
- Don't play favorites. Some board members will like you better than others and the feelings will be mutual-keep the feelings to yourself and treat each the same in public.
- Move quickly to solve problems within the board-these problems do not go away and get bigger if unattended. The superintendent is a coach and mentor for the board.

# SUPERINTENDENT'S SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

In keeping with the division of effort, superintendents have these specific responsibilities:

- To serve as the board's chief executive officer and advisor.
- To serve as the school system's educational leader, monitoring student learning and advising the board on recommendations for improvement.
- To assist the board in the development of long-range plans and develop and oversee administrative action plans to implement long-range plans
- To oversee the management of the district, ensuring day-to-day operations are in accordance with board policy.
- To interpret the needs of the school system to the board and the wishes of the board to the school system.
- To be well informed about district programs, activities and events and keep the board well informed about school operations, programs, practices and problems, providing the board with background materials for making the best possible decisions.
- To recommend talented staff for employment and supervise staff throughout the organization. To evaluate personnel performance in accordance with district policy and to keep the board informed about evaluation processes. To assign, transfer and recommend for dismissal, as necessary, any and all employees of the board.
- To direct the preparation of, present and administer an annual budget in keeping with board goals and policies.
- To represent the district well in the school, education and local communities.
- To work with the Board to keep the community informed about board policies, programs and district procedures.
- To see that the board's goals are accomplished and keep the board informed on progress toward the goals.

- To make proactive recommendations for actions to achieve district goals, meet expectations and improve the system's service to the pupils and community
- To present and recommend policy options along with specific recommendations to the board when circumstances require the board to adopt new policies or revise existing policies
- to develop and inform the board of administrative procedures needed to implement board policy.

Many of these duties can be delegated. However, the superintendent is still the person accountable to the board for implementation of board policies and direction for achieving board goals.

# FORGING AN EFFECTIVE BOARD/NEW SUPERINTENDENT WORKING RELATIONSHIP

## ROLE TIPS FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

- Listen to every board member; build common ground within the entire board.
- Respect the legitimate role of the board.
- Don't "draw too many lines in the sand." Pick your issues. Never draw a line in the sand with people who own the sand box.
- Don't adopt a "trust me" approach. Don't ask board members to give up their only real power: to ask questions and to believe they are holding you accountable.
- Don't confuse legitimate disagreements with disloyalty or lack of confidence in the superintendent.
- Don't approach the board with a "damage control" mentality. If you do you will get so controlling that the board will believe you are withholding information and hiding things.
- Don't expect too much or too little. Each board has its own culture and will find its own natural balance of activity. Find the balance between your needs and style and the dominant collective needs and styles of the board. And culture shifts as board composition shifts.
- Don't play favorites. Some board members will like you better than others and the feelings will be mutual--keep the feelings to yourself and treat each the same in public.
- Move quickly to solve problems within the board--these problems do not go away and get bigger if unattended. The superintendent is a coach and mentor of the board.

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

**FOR**

**SCHOOL BOARDS**

# CSBA PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

Public oversight of local government is the foundation of American democracy. Nowhere is this more evident than in our public schools, where local boards of education are entrusted by their diverse communities to uphold the Constitution, protect the public interest in schools, and ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student. To maximize the public's confidence in local government, our local boards must govern responsibly and effectively •

The California Schools Boards Association (CSBA), representing nearly 1,000 local school districts and county boards of education, recognizes there are certain fundamental principles involved in governing responsibly and effectively. These principles - or Professional Governance Standards - reflect consensus among hundreds of board members, superintendents and other educational leaders throughout the state.

These Professional Governance Standards describe the three components vital to effective school governance:

- 1) the attributes of an effective individual trustee,*
- 2) the attributes of an effective governance board, and*
- 3) the specific jobs the board performs in its governance role.*

The intent of these standards is to enhance the public's understanding about the critical responsibilities of local boards and to support boards in their efforts to govern effectively.

# THE INDIVIDUAL TRUSTEE

*In California's public education system, a trustee is a person elected or appointed to serve on a school district or county board of education. Individual trustees bring unique skills, values and beliefs to their board. In order to govern effectively, individual trustees must work with each other and the superintendent to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.*

## **To be effective, an individual trustee:**

- Keeps learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
- Values, supports and advocates for public education.
- Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents and the community.
- Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
- Keeps confidential matters confidential.
- Participates in professional development and commits the time and *energy* necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
- Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.
- Understands that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.

# THE BOARD

*School districts and county offices of education are governed by boards, not by individual trustees. While understanding their separate roles, the board and superintendent work together as a "governance team." This team assumes collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture in order to govern effectively.*

To operate effectively, the board must have a unity of purpose and:

- Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for all students.
- Communicate a common vision.
- Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
- Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
- Govern within board-adopted policies and procedures.
- Take collective responsibility for the board's performance.
- Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.
- Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform board deliberations.

# The Board's Jobs

The primary responsibilities of the board are to set direction for the district, provide a structure by establishing policies, ensure accountability and provide community leadership on behalf of the district and public education. To fulfill these responsibilities, there are a number of specific jobs that effective boards must carry out.

## **Effective Boards:**

- Involve the community, parents, students and staff in developing a common vision for the district focused on learning and achievement and responsive to the needs of all students.
- Adopt, evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the district's vision and goals.
- Maintain accountability for student learning by adopting the district curriculum and monitoring student progress.
- Hire and support the superintendent so that the vision, goals and policies of the district can be implemented.
- Conduct regular and timely evaluations of the superintendent based on the vision, goals and performance of the district, and ensure that the superintendent hold district personnel accountable
- Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the district's vision and goals, and regularly monitor the fiscal health of the district.
- Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.
- Establish a framework for the district's collective bargaining process and adopt responsible agreements.
- Provide community leadership on educational issues and advocate on behalf of students and public education at the local, state and federal levels.

**SUPERINTENDENT  
GOVERNANCE STANDARDS**

# SUPERINTENDENT GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

As a corollary to the CSBA Professional Governance Standards, a team of California superintendents including the ACSA Superintendents Committee and the CSBA Superintendents Advisory Council has developed a set of Superintendent Governance Standards. We highly recommend that these be included as part of the Professional Governance Standards adoption.

## THE SUPERINTENDENT

- Promotes the success of all students and supports the efforts of the Board of Trustees to keep the district focused on learning and achievement.
- Values, advocates and supports public education and all stakeholders.
- Recognizes and respects the differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents and the community- and ensures that the diverse range of views inform board decisions.
- Acts with dignity, treats everyone with civility and respect, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
- Serves as a model for the value of lifelong learning and supports the Board's continuous professional development.
- Works with the Board as a "governance team" and assures collective responsibility for building a unity of purpose, communicating a common vision and creating a positive organizational culture.
- Recognizes that the management team in each district supports the board/superintendent governance relationship.
- Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles, and respects the role of the Board as the representative of the community.
- Understands that authority rests with the Board as a whole; provides guidance to the Board to assist in decision-making; and provides leadership based on the direction of the Board as a whole.

- Communicates openly with trust and integrity including providing all members of the Board with equal access to information, and recognizing the importance of both responsive and anticipatory communications.
- Accepts leadership responsibility and accountability for implementing the vision, goals and policies of the district.

The Governance Handbook was developed in a Board Governance Workshop conducted on March 20, 2015, with the assistance of Wendell Chun, Ed.D., Executive Director of Education Leadership Services. The Governance Handbook was approved by the Board of Trustees on \_\_\_\_\_, 2015