

## PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

Board Policies and Bylaws are designed to assist the Governance Team of a school district in implementing the many varied laws, rules, and procedures needed in the operation of a school district. Board Bylaw 9005 provides guidance related to Governance Standards, but many other bylaws and policies provide information related to the interactions of the Governance Team. For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the Board and between the Board, the Superintendent, and the administration, the Saugus Union School District Governance Team (Board Members and Superintendent) is committed collectively and individually to the following operating protocols:

- **Ensure children's interests come first.** The needs, interests and achievement of all the children in our district will be represented, considered, and valued. *(BB 9000)*
- **Clearly state and adhere to District goals.** The Board and Superintendent will work together to establish a vision and set clear goals for the District. The Superintendent and staff will be responsible for the day-to-day program implementation to meet that vision and those goals. The vision and goals will be used as the core of all decisions made by the Governing Board and Superintendent. *(BP 0000, BP 0100, BP 0200)*
- **Exemplify leadership in the governance role.** The governance team (Board and Superintendent) will support District policies, practices and protocols. The Board will continue to review policies for effectiveness and legality. When appropriate, key stakeholders will be included in the development, revision or deletion of policies. *(BB 9005, BB 9311, BB 9312)*
- **Use social media to support District efforts appropriately.** Board members, the Superintendent, and Cabinet members shall use social media tools as outlined in Board Policy. These individuals may express their personal ideas or opinions through use of personal social media, but must explicitly acknowledge that those ideas or opinions are from them as an individual and are not those of the Board or of the District. Board members must always remember that while they are private citizens they are also always viewed by the public as Board members who represent the views of the entire school district they serve. *(BP 4040, BB 9010)*
- **Own the collective decision making process.** The Governance team, as well as all District leadership, will support decisions made by the Board and/or the Superintendent. While Board members may disagree on an issue, they will support the collective decision of the Board. *(BB 9200)*
- **Act as a collective body.** The authority of the Board is founded in the collective and not the individual. An individual Board member shall not take unilateral action or instruct the Superintendent or staff to take unilateral action. Actions include items formally presented on a Board Agenda as well as any directive issued for a program, process, procedure within the District. Direction will be given to the Superintendent by a majority of the Board through formally agendized actions or directives. Staff members shall take direction through the Superintendent. *(BP 2110, BB 9200)*
- **Utilize COO input.** The superintendent is the chief operating officer (COO) of the senior leadership team and should make recommendations, proposals or suggestions on most matters that come before the board. *(BP 2110)*

**PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS** (continued)

- **Follow the chain of command.** While the Board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, each inquiry is to be referred to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issue. Board requests that will likely require considerable time or are sensitive in nature are to be directed to the Superintendent. All personnel complaints and criticisms received by the Board or its individual Board members will be directed to the Superintendent. *(BP 1312.3, BP 2110, BB 9005)*
- **Encourage communication between staff and the Board.** Communication must follow Board Policy and District protocols. The Board President is considered the Board spokesperson and will communicate the adopted position(s) of the Board and other related information on issues to the media and public. The Superintendent shall also have the ability to communicate District information with the media and public. In addition, the Superintendent will strive to anticipate issues which may become important or are sensitive to our school district and communicate those directly to the Board. *(BP 2110, BB 9010)*
- **Consult the Board President or Superintendent on issues.** Board members who wish to place an item on the agenda will communicate that desire to the Board President and/or the Superintendent in advance of the meeting in which they wish to discuss the issue. Board members will prepare for meetings in advance and will make every effort to ask questions and seek clarification from the Superintendent and/or Cabinet members in advance of the meetings to ensure the necessary responses are made and shared with all Board members. *(BB 9121, BB 9320, BB 9322)*
- **Conduct efficient and effective meetings.** Board meetings will be conducted in an organized and efficient manner to ensure that district business is completed while still preserving the right of the public to participate. Board members will avoid language and actions that may be considered derogatory to fellow Board members, members of the Cabinet, and other District stakeholders. Board members should consider the comments of all speakers/presenters but should avoid attempting to resolve a complaint in an impromptu manner during the meeting. Board members may refer the issue to the Superintendent who will direct the appropriate staff to address the concern. The Board recognizes that meetings should be utilized for rendering action on issues agendized by the District. Board members will engage in discussion relevant to the issues but will endeavor to avoid repetitive discussions that do not contribute new information or further understanding of the issue. *(BB 9323, BB 9323.2)*
- **Address agenda issues.** During a Board meeting, Board members will only discuss agenda items. Board members will avoid directly addressing individual audience members or groups during public comment, during Board comments, or during discussions on agendized issues. If additional information is needed during discussions or public comments, the Board member will ask the Board President to request the information from the Superintendent. *(BP 1312.3, BB 9323, BB 9323.2)*
- **Keep closed session information confidential.** We will adhere to The Brown Act standards regarding all Open and Closed session items. Closed session topics and discussion will be strictly confidential. *(BB 9011, BB 9321)*
- **Avoid use of electronic communication during meetings.** Board members, the Superintendent, and Cabinet members will follow established law pertaining to in-meeting communications and refrain from use of cellphones, text messages, social media, and/or emails. Emergency phone messages will be the exception to this protocol. *(BP 4040, BB 9012)*

**PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS** (continued)

- **Conduct a self-assessment/evaluation and Superintendent evaluation annually.** The board will conduct an annual self-evaluation of its performance. The self-evaluation will be a collective reflection of the Boards areas of strength and/or success as well as a reflection of areas of growth and/or need. The Board will also regularly evaluate the Superintendent in implementation of his/her goals. *(BP 2140, BB 9400)*