

2111 BOARD OPERATING PRINCIPLES

We believe that the welfare of our community, state, and nation is directly impacted by our educational system. We believe that each child should receive the best possible education relative to his or her abilities, interests, and potentialities. To this end, we believe that Board decisions regarding complex problems of organization, curricular offerings, and financial support should be made in terms of what is best for the student and by extension, the community, state, and nation.

In order to assure maximum efforts toward this goal, the Board believes high ethical standards on the part of all Board members must be maintained in all personal and public activities. The following Operating Principles serve to guide individual board member interaction as we carry out the duties and responsibilities of board members, as well as to provide information to the public concerning the duties and responsibilities of the Board of Education as a collective whole.

I. Educational Advocate

Vision:

Students are prepared to make positive contributions to society and thrive in an ever changing world.

Mission Statement:

Every student, every day, a success! In educating students, we teach hearts as well as minds.

Student Commitments:

Within the school district of Grand Island

- Every student will be taught to read, write, and communicate effectively; solve problems; acquire and apply knowledge; and demonstrate mastery through performance to the best of the student's abilities;
- Every student will be treated with fairness and dignity;
- Every student will be honored for their unique qualities and backgrounds;
- Every student will experience a sense of belonging, contribution, and success; and
- Every student will develop responsibility and show respect for others as well as oneself.

II. Process for Addressing Public and Board Issues

Public

Statement: We will encourage the public to use the chain of command to address concerns in the following manner:

- A. Listen to the individual's concern.
- B. Explain that the board and administrative team have established a process for handling concerns starting with the immediate person responsible.
 1. Encourage the person to follow the established chain of command. Ask if he or she has discussed the issue with the person immediately responsible (for example, a teacher or coach).
 2. If so, ask if he or she has discussed the issue with the supervisor of the individual (for example, the Principal or Activities Director).
 3. If so, ask if he or she has discussed the issue with the Superintendent.
 4. Assure the person that the Superintendent will be informed of a significant complaint. However, affirm the chain of command procedure must be followed.
- C. Significant complaints will be reported to the Superintendent by the board member.

Board Member

Statement: We believe as an individual board member we have no individual power, and our power comes from being a part of a group of nine. When concerns are raised, there is a proper protocol to follow in response to the concern. The protocol is as follows:

- A. The Superintendent will be notified of issues that are causing concern for the board member, including individual or collected board concerns regarding staff or district operations.
- B. The Superintendent will be the recipient of appropriate information regarding issues needing investigation (i.e., names of people making complaints, specific instances regarding the complaint, etc.).

- C. If we have concerns about another board member:
 - The concern should first be shared personally with the board member.
 - If a resolution is not reached between the two board members, concerns will be directed to the Board President.
 - There may be times the resolution will require a discussion with the entire Board of Education in an Executive Session.

III. Meeting Format

Statement: We will conduct our meetings in accordance with the Nebraska Open Meeting Laws and in an orderly fashion.

Board Meetings

- A. Board meeting agendas will be developed cooperatively with the Board President, Vice-President, and Superintendent after receiving committee input. An individual board member may request that an item be added to the agenda.
- B. Issues will be presented as an informational item without a vote occurring to allow for full consideration and thought by board members.
 - 1. The vote on the issue will follow in the next month's meeting.
 - 2. There may be instances when an issue must be presented and voted on at the same monthly meeting.
- C. Executive Session will be used ONLY as necessary and consistent with Nebraska Open Meeting Laws.
- D. We welcome input from the public during the scheduled Public Forum period of each board meeting. Patrons are requested to complete the "Request to address the Board" form and follow guidelines included on the form. The form is posted outside the doors to the boardroom.
 - Each individual addressing the board will be allowed 5 minutes. The Board of Education has the prerogative to limit speaking to 3 minutes when there are three or more patrons to allow speakers an opportunity to address the Board in a timely manner.
 - We will not engage in dialogue with patrons presenting to the Board
 - The Board president and superintendent will identify staff to follow-up on information requested from patrons
 - The Board president may share a statement on behalf of the Board when addressing a major issue in the district
- E. Each board meeting during the academic year will have a portion of the meeting devoted to a segment on student success within the district.
- F. We will maintain a student board member program.

Board of Education Committees

- A. Standing committees will be established to allow issues to be reviewed in great length, so the regular monthly meetings are run efficiently and timely. The committees are:
 - 1. Personnel
 - 2. Policy Review
 - 3. Facilities and Finance
 - 4. Leading for Learning (Americanism)
- B. The district will establish and maintain additional committees as needed to include Ad hoc committees, task forces, and/or advisory councils or coalitions (see policy 2231). The Board President will ask for interested participants, and provide opportunities for all board members to participate in these additional committees.
- C. Ad hoc committees are formed on an annual basis and may include:
 - 1. Legislative and Greater Nebraska School Association (GNSA)
 - 2. Calendar
 - 3. Grand Island Public Schools Education Foundation
 - 4. Extra Standard
 - 5. Labor Relations
 - 6. Safety

- D. Advisory Councils or Coalitions are formed to assist the Board in carrying out their work by providing expertise and advice in selected areas. These groups do not have any governance responsibilities. Examples are:
 - 1. Public Relations and Partnership Development
 - a. The Board President, Vice President, and two Board Members will serve on the Public Relations and Partnership Development Advisory Council as well as Cabinet Representative, Superintendent, and Community Representatives
 - 2. Parent Advisory Council
 - 3. Key Communicators
 - 4. Teacher Leader Coalition
- E. All board committee agendas and minutes will be posted to an electronic Board Committee folder for all board members to view.
- F. The committees do not have power to take formal action on issues without a full vote of the Board of Education.
- G. Non-committee board members wishing to attend specific committee meetings will make their request through the Superintendent's office.
- H. Board committees will report regularly at Board of Education meetings to ensure that information discussed in committee is made public.
- I. Board Committees will use the GIPS Needs Analysis to guide development of proposals to the Board of Education:
 - 1. What is the identified need?
 - 2. Administrative Rationale for BOE Agenda
 - 3. Proposed Action
 - 4. Data/Research Assessed
 - 5. Stakeholder Group(s) Involved
 - 6. Summary
 - 7. Fiscal Impact
 - 8. Persons Responsible for Implementation
 - 9. Implementation Plan: Monitor/Evaluate – Board Report/Follow-up

Small Group Meetings with the Superintendent and Board Members

- A. Each board member will have an opportunity to meet with the Superintendent and no more than three other board members on a monthly basis. The small group meetings will not violate the Open Meetings law.
- B. The meetings are intended to provide additional detail to board members about issues both negatively and positively impacting Grand Island Public Schools. No decision making will occur in the small group meetings.
- C. Summaries of the small group meetings will be shared with all board members to assure all board members receive the same information.

IV. Strategic Planning Process, Implementation, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Statement:

The Board will annually review, revise, and/or adopt the district's vision, mission, student commitments, theory of action to improve student outcomes, and conduct a Board self-assessment. We will monitor progress toward goals by:

- A. Reviewing progress toward district goals at least quarterly by the full board;
- B. Focusing on increasing student learning and ensuring efficient use of education resources with Board agenda items connected to district goals in the monthly board meeting agenda; and
- C. Reflecting on Board progress using an assessment of operating principles or other tool approved by the Board.

V. Board Leadership

Statement: We believe effective team leadership is important for the positive progress of the Grand Island Public Schools system.

- A. Board President and Board Vice-President Positions

Grand Island Public Schools

- a. The positions of Board President and Board Vice-President shall be elected annually at the January Board of Education meeting.
 - b. Within two days following the November board meeting, the current Board President and Board Vice-President will notify the Board Secretary and the Board of Education of their interest and willingness to be considered for re-election of their positions.
 - c. Board members interested in being considered for Board President or Board Vice-President shall make their intentions known to the Board Secretary and the Board of Education on or before December 1st.
 - d. All board members expressing an interest in the positions will be subject to nomination for office at the January meeting.
 - e. The Board Secretary will facilitate the election process at the January meeting.
- B. The Board President will:
- a. Manage the affairs of the Board of Education and
 - i. Ensure all board members are provided with the same information at approximately the same time on all issues.
 - ii. Ensure all board members are provided the opportunity to represent the Board of Education equally at official school, community, state and national functions.
 - iii. Monitor compliance with Operating Principles.
 - iv. Plan and participate in orientation sessions for new board members.
 - b. Establish the monthly agenda in conjunction with the Board Vice-President and Superintendent
 - c. Assign working board committees annually after the January meeting and after soliciting areas of interests from the board members.
 - d. Monitor compliance with legal requirements to Open Meetings laws.
 - e. Attend stakeholder meetings as determined by the Superintendent.
 - f. Sign documents as legally required and approved by the Board of Education.
 - g. Sign graduation diplomas.
 - h. Serve as ex-officio member of standing committees of the Board, and be available to substitute on any committee with an impending absence.
 - i. Conducts the annual performance evaluation of the Superintendent, compiling and communicating results. (By state statute, conduct two evaluations in the superintendents first year in the district)
 - j. Be the spokesperson for the Board of Education when called upon, including media inquiries.
 - k. Serve on the Labor Relations Committee or designate Board Vice-President.
 - l. Communicate Board of Education annual goals to the public.
- C. Board Vice-President will:
- a. Plan and participate in orientation sessions for new board members.
 - b. Meet monthly with the Board President and Superintendent to plan meeting agendas.
 - c. Serve as Board President in all capacities in the absence of the Board President.
- D. Board Members (including President & Vice-President) will:
- a. Attend all school board meetings.
 - b. Attend and participate in meetings on assigned committees.
 - c. Attend special meetings/functions of the district as requested or required (for example, graduation, specific school programs, etc).
 - d. Represent the Board of Education at official school, community, state and national functions.
 - e. Read and study all necessary documentation prior to discussion on issues or action items.
 - f. Participate in continual professional development and attendance at NASB, NSBA, and other national conferences or meetings as agreed upon by the Board.
 - g. Personally uphold these operating principles, and hold fellow board members accountable.
- E. The Board of Education will:
- a. Hire and evaluate the Superintendent's performance. The Superintendent is the only employee the Board oversees.
 - b. Adopt, review, and revise policy.
 - c. Establish the strategic plan goals for the District.

- d. Establish a budget to reflect/support the strategic plan.
- e. Advocate for public education.
- F. The Board of Education will have the opportunity to participate in professional development:
 - a. Attend one national conference of their choosing for the budget year.
 - b. Attend conferences as presenters as appropriate.
 - c. Attend local, regional, and state BOE conferences.

VI. Board of Education Collaboration

Statement: We will formulate and express decisions as a body of nine speaking with one voice.

- A. We each have the freedom, opportunity, and responsibility to express his or her own beliefs about quality education.
- B. We will listen to diverse opinions. We recognize and appreciate the diverse backgrounds and experiences of other board team members which lend themselves to unique individual perspectives on issues.
- C. We must maintain the appropriate balance between being a board member and a parent, spouse, employee, or friend by not utilizing our positions as board members to influence decisions on a personal level.
- D. We will be governed by the same rules that apply to all Grand Island Public Schools district staff with regards to access to and utilization of Grand Island Public Schools district resources. (such as technology agreement)
- E. We will not utilize our position to gain access to confidential information that is not made available to all board members or is not necessary for the board member to have to complete their duties.
- F. While we all have a personal point of view, our decisions will be based on the best interests of students.
- G. We will engage only in designated meetings and not in “meetings before the meetings” or “meetings after the meetings”.
- H. We will channel personal requests for information through the Superintendent’s office.

I have read this policy and will adhere to statements of ethics and the Board Operating principles.

Board Member

Date

Policy Adopted: 10-5-00
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