



School Board Member Handbook

In order to provide the necessary and appropriate leadership for the Rantoul City Schools #137, the board of education, both collectively and individually is committed to governing as a professional board of directors. This means a commitment to the principles and procedures of professional governance, the sharing of a common understanding of board policies, practices, procedures, and principles, a focus on continuous learning and improvement, and a willingness to serve as a model of effective leadership to students, staff and the community.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a document that includes the board's procedures and principles for the benefit of current and future members of the Rantoul City Schools #137 board of education. The board of education and superintendent periodically review and discuss pertinent sections of this handbook to refresh their knowledge and practices. A significant component of new school board orientation is to peruse the handbook.

Special thanks to Benjamin School District 25 for sharing the original source material in our efforts to educate and communicate with the community. Updates will continually be made to ensure the handbook is current and relevant.

Please note, the board is expected to be aware of and comply with all board policies, not only those referenced specifically in this document.

Revised: May 7, 2025

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Guiding Framework for RCS

Mission and Guiding Principles

The district's mission and guiding principles were developed by the district's Social Equity Working Group, a collaboration between administration, faculty, and staff and adopted by the Board of Education. (June 2021)

Our Mission

- Rantoul City Schools exists to build a stronger community by educating our students.

Guiding Principles

To fulfill our mission, RCS will:

- Collaborate with the community, families, and other stakeholders.
- Encourage students who are critical thinkers, leaders, and global navigators, grounded in equity and cultural understanding,
- Provide a school environment where all learners feel free to embrace challenges and practice resilience,
- Ensure students' individual needs are met,
- Combat social and racial inequities, and
- Expect excellence from all learners and stakeholders both in the classroom and throughout our school community.

Core Values/Beliefs (We believe that...)

The following core values/beliefs (within specific categories) were "common" Core Values/Beliefs conveyed by attendees at the Rantoul City SD 137 "Goal-Setting Workshop." (May 16, 2024)

Students and Learning (We believe that...)

- A safe and engaging environment is necessary for learning.
- All students deserve to learn.
- All students deserve high-quality learning standards and resources.

Teachers and Teaching (We believe that...)

- All staff should be supported and held accountable.
- Students and staff deserve to be safe.
- Teaching should empower the academic and social-emotional growth of all students.

Responsibility of the Schools to the Community and the Community to the Schools (We believe that ...)

- Schools should be welcoming.
- Trusting and collaborative relationships are built through effective communication.
- We are partners in education.

District Improvement Plan Priority Areas

The following Priority Areas were developed by attendees at the Rantoul City SD 137 "Goal-Setting Workshop." (May 16, 2024)

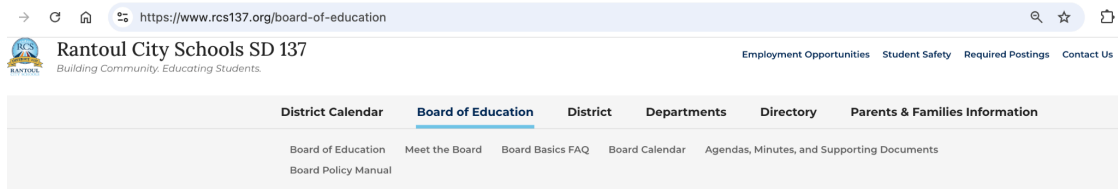
- Student Achievement / Curriculum
- School Climate / Behavior
- School Safety
- Community-District Relation
- Programs / Services

RANTOUL CITY SCHOOLS EXISTS TO BUILD A STRONGER COMMUNITY BY EDUCATING OUR STUDENTS.

Board Information

Board Website

- Generally, all board information including agendas, minutes, supporting documents, board member contact information, board meeting calendar, and board policy manual are accessible on board website at <https://www.rcs137.org/board-of-education>



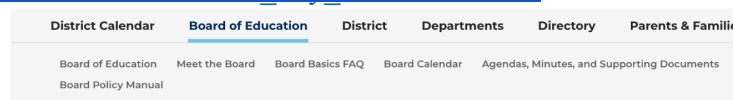
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Access Board Policies

Board policies reference throughout this document are subject to change per board action. The most current copy of board policies is posted on the RCS website.

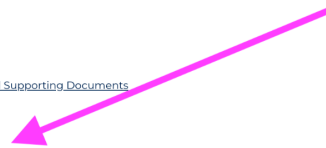
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BoardBooks

BoardBooks is the host website for board agendas. When a board member is logged into BoardBooks they are able to access board packets and board archives, including public and confidential documents.

Most district documents that are required by law to be posted are also found on BoardBooks in the documents section. This includes annual audits, budgets, the district's report cards, and collective bargaining agreements.

Link: <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/2431>

[Home](#)
Secure Page for Rantoul City Schools

Rantoul City Schools Public View

Rantoul City Schools Meetings

Meeting	Meeting Location	Details
April 17, 2025 at 6:00 PM - Regular Board Meeting Meeting Type: Regular This meeting will be held at Pleasant Acres Elementary School / PreK Center located at 1625 Short Street, Rantoul, IL. At 5:30 PM, the public is invited to attend the dedication of the new PreK Center and tour the new addition. The regular meeting will begin at 6:00 PM. This meeting will not be streamed live. Following this meeting, a recording of the meeting is posted to YouTube and via the RCS website. Recorded Video	Pleasant Acres Elementary School / PreK Center 1625 Short Street Rantoul, IL 61866 map it	Agenda Projector
March 31, 2025 at 1:00 PM - Special Board Meeting Meeting Type: Special All meetings are held in the Robert D. Little Board Room at 1 Aviation Center Drive, Rantoul, IL unless otherwise stated. All regular meetings are streamed live by joining via Zoom Webinar (linked below). Following regular meetings, a recording of the meeting is posted to YouTube and via the RCS website. Streaming Recorded Video	Robert D. Little Board Room 1 Aviation Center Drive Rantoul, IL 61866 map it	Agenda Minutes

Stores (Archived, Saved, Cached, etc.)

Although these Stores (Archived, Saved, Cached, etc.) are believed to be free of any virus or other defect that might infect a computer system in to which it is opened, it is the responsibility of the user to ensure that it is virus free and no responsibility is accepted by Rantoul City Schools or BoardBook or Sparq Data Solutions in any way.

Documents

- Annual Audit Report
- Annual Financial Report
- Annual School District Report Card
- Annual Statement of Affairs
- Budget Documents
- Collective Bargaining Agreements
- EIS Administrator and Teacher Salary and Benefits Report
- Health and Immunization
- IMRF Compensation Disclosure
- Other Required Documents
- Vendors over \$25,000

Obligation to Govern Effectively

The “Foundational Principles of Effective Governance” have served as the Illinois Association of School Boards’ primary document to explain the role of school board members in their district. These six principles are the cornerstone of IASB’s beliefs about the governance process.

Supporting these principles are certain rights and responsibilities. These include the “**Code of Conduct**,” a document that states 12 standards for ethical and effective behavior for all school board members. Coinciding with these responsibilities are the “**School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations**.” Combined, these documents form the basic tenets of School Board Governance.

Foundational Principles of Effective Governance (IASB)

As the corporate entity charged by law with governing a school district, each school board sits in trust for its entire community. The obligation to govern effectively imposes some fundamental duties on the board:

1. The Board Clarifies the District Purpose

As its primary task, the board continually defines, articulates and re-defines district ends to answer the recurring question — who gets what benefits for how much? Effective ends development requires attention to at least two key concerns: student learning and organizational effectiveness.

- Ends express the benefits the school district system with clarity of purpose and a clear direction. A school board rarely creates district ends; rather, it most often detects them through listening and observing.
- Ends reflect the district’s purpose, direction, priorities and desired outcomes and are recorded in statements of core values/beliefs, mission, vision and goals.
- In effective school districts, every part of the organization is aligned with the ends articulated by the school board in written board policy.
- Well-crafted ends enable the school board to effectively and efficiently monitor district performance and assess organizational success (Principle 5).

2. The Board Connects With the Community

The school board engages in an ongoing two-way conversation with the entire community. This conversation enables the board to hear and understand the community’s educational aspirations and desires, to serve effectively as an advocate for district improvement and to inform the community of the district’s performance.

- Effective communication is essential to create trust and support among the community, board, superintendent and staff.
- The school board must be aggressive in reaching out to the community – the district’s owners – to engage people in conversations about education and the public good. In contrast, people who bring customer concerns to board members should be appropriately directed to the superintendent and staff.
- A board in touch with community-wide concerns and values will serve the broad public good rather than being overly influenced by special interests.

3. The Board Employs a Superintendent

The board employs and evaluates one person — the superintendent — and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy.

- An effective school board develops and maintains a productive relationship with the superintendent.
- The employment relationship consists of mutual respect and a clear understanding of respective roles, responsibilities and expectations. This relationship should be grounded in a thoughtfully crafted employment contract and job description; procedures for communications and ongoing assessment; and reliance on written policy.
- Although the board is legally required to approve all employment contracts, the board delegates authority to the superintendent to select and evaluate all district staff within the standards established in written board policy.

4. The Board Delegates Authority

The board delegates authority to the superintendent to manage the district and provide leadership for the staff. Such authority is communicated through written board policies that designate district ends and define operating parameters.

- Ultimately, the school board is responsible for everything, yet must recognize that everything depends upon a capable and competent staff.
- “Delegates authority to” means empowering the superintendent and staff to pursue board ends single mindedly and without hesitation. A board that does (or re-does) staff work disempowers the staff. High levels of superintendent and staff accountability require high levels of delegation.
- Delegation is difficult for anyone accustomed to direct action. However, to appropriately stay focused on the big picture and avoid confusing the staff, members of the school board must discipline themselves to trust their superintendent and staff and not involve themselves in day-to-day operations.

5. The Board Monitors Performance

The board constantly monitors progress toward district ends and compliance with written board policies using data as the basis for assessment.

- A School board that pursues its ends through the delegation of authority has a moral obligation to itself and the community to determine whether that authority is being used as intended.
- Unless the board is clear about what it wants, there is no valid way to measure progress and compliance.
- A distinction should be made between monitoring data (used by the board for accountability) and management data (used by the staff for operations).
- The constructive use of data is a skill that must be learned. The board should have some understanding of data, but will typically require guidance from the staff.

6. The Board Takes Responsibility for Itself

The board, collectively and individually, takes full responsibility for board activity and behavior – the work it chooses to do and how it chooses to do the work. Individual board members are obligated to express their opinions and respect others’ opinions; however, board members understand the importance of the board ultimately speaking with one clear voice.

- The school board’s role as trustee for the community is unique and essential to both the district and community.
- While the board must operate within legal parameters, good governance requires the board to be responsible for itself, its processes and contributions. Board deliberations and actions are limited to board work, not staff work.

- The board seeks continuity of leadership, even as it experiences turnover in membership. The board accomplishes this by using written board policies to guide board operations, by providing thorough orientation and training for all members, and by nurturing a positive and inviting board culture.

School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations (IASB)

This is a summary of the rights and treatment that all board members are entitled to expect as members of the school board. These rights are limited to the board's legal operating authority and should not be interpreted to extend an individual's authority as a board member. The school board recognizes that good governance operations depend on each board member being able to expect the following in a manner consistent with board policy:

On joining the School Board ...

1. A thorough orientation to the board, including the board's governing process — the work the board chooses to do and how the board chooses to do the work.
2. A thorough orientation to the District's operations, finance and structures.
3. Access to the District's School Board Policy Manual, the board's regular meeting minutes for the past year, material explaining the board's roles and responsibilities and other information that might facilitate a better understanding of District operations.

Before a meeting ...

1. Notification of board meetings and receipt of meeting agendas at the same time that other board members receive theirs and consistent with board policy.
2. An opportunity to propose the addition of pertinent items to the agenda.
3. The timely receipt of information before each meeting that will enable the board member to make informed decisions.

During a meeting ...

1. Board meetings that start on time stay on task and end at a reasonable time.
2. Unless restricted by board policy, the opportunity to question the appropriateness of any item on the agenda, to request the removal of an item from a consent agenda for independent consideration and to propose changes before the agenda is approved.
3. The opportunity to make and second motions regarding agenda items and to move to defer action on any agenda item or to enter into closed session as allowed by law.
4. An opportunity to request the justification, alternatives and consequences for items presented for a decision and to participate in full and free discussion before voting.
5. The opportunity to express opinions during a board meeting without interruption and ridicule, as well as civil and respectful treatment by all other school board members and staff members.
6. The opportunity to speak candidly during a legally called closed session without concern for being repeated or confidentialities being breached after the meeting.
7. The opportunity to remind other board members of policy and legal responsibilities, including those imposed by the Open Meetings Act, without fear of reprisal. This includes the ability to suggest that the board or an officer, whichever is appropriate according to board policy, consult with the board attorney about the legality of a current or planned action or procedure.
8. The opportunity to request that a roll call vote be taken and, when a voice vote is taken, the opportunity to request that the minutes reflect an individual's vote.
9. The opportunity to suggest the correction of any inaccuracies in the minutes before their approval while recognizing that minutes are not a meeting transcript.
10. The opportunity to participate in the process of selecting officers when the board reorganizes at an open meeting.

11. The opportunity to participate in all policy making functions including suggesting changes to board processes.

In general ...

1. Similar opportunities afforded other members of the board including the opportunity to have expenses reimbursed pursuant to board policy for attending non-District meetings and educational opportunities.
2. A professional relationship with the superintendent in which both parties respect each other.
3. The receipt of timely, accurate responses from the superintendent to reasonable inquiries.
4. The opportunity to express personal opinions and viewpoints provided no attempt is made to undermine board action, misrepresent the majority board opinion, or otherwise violate board policy or this “School Board Member Opportunities and Expectations.”
5. The opportunity to participate in regular board self-evaluations.
6. Access to relevant data pertaining to district and board performance.

The items listed are not generally legally enforceable. Instead, they are items that will enable an individual to fulfill his or her duties and responsibilities as a school board member.

Illinois Association of School Boards. 2921 Baker Drive, Springfield, Illinois 62703-5929 Phone: 217/528-9688 ~ Fax: 217/528-2831

School Board Governance Basics

2:10 School District Governance

The District is governed by a School Board consisting of seven members. The Board's powers and duties include the authority to adopt, enforce, and monitor all policies for the management and governance of the District's schools.

Official action by the Board may only occur at a duly called and legally conducted meeting. Except as otherwise provided by the Open Meetings Act, a quorum must be physically present at the meeting.

As stated in the Board member oath of office prescribed by the School Code, a Board member has no legal authority as an individual.

2:20 Powers and Duties of the School Board; Indemnification

The major powers and duties of the School Board include, but are not limited to:

1. Organizing the Board after each consolidated election by electing officers and establishing its regular meeting schedule and, thereafter, taking action during lawfully called meetings to faithfully fulfill the Board's responsibilities in accordance with State and federal law.
2. Formulating, adopting, and modifying Board policies, at its sole discretion, subject only to mandatory collective bargaining agreements and State and federal law.
3. Employing a Superintendent including determining whether an employee has willfully or negligently failed to report an instance of suspected child abuse or neglect as required by [325 ILCS 5/](#), and other personnel, making employment decisions, dismissing personnel, and establishing an equal employment opportunity policy that prohibits unlawful discrimination.
4. Directing, through policy, the Superintendent, in his or her charge of the District's administration.
5. Approving the annual budget, tax levies, major expenditures, payment of obligations, annual audit, and other aspects of the District's financial operation; and making available a statement of financial affairs as provided in State law.
6. Entering contracts in accordance with applicable federal and State law, including using the public bidding procedure when required.
7. Providing, constructing, controlling, and maintaining adequate physical facilities; making school buildings available for use as civil defense shelters; and establishing a resource conservation policy.
8. Establishing an equal educational opportunities policy that prohibits unlawful discrimination.
9. Approving the curriculum, textbooks, and educational services.
10. Evaluating the educational program and approving School Improvement Plans.
11. Presenting the District report card and School report card(s) to parents/guardians and the community; these documents report District, School and student performance.
12. Establishing and supporting student behavior policies designed to maintain an environment conducive to learning, including deciding individual student suspension or expulsion cases brought before it.
13. Establishing attendance units within the District and assigning students to the schools.
14. Establishing the school year.
15. Requiring a moment of silence to recognize veterans during any type of school event held at a District school on November 11.
16. Providing student transportation services pursuant to State law.
17. Entering into joint agreements with other boards to establish cooperative educational programs or provide educational facilities.
18. Complying with requirements in the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act (ANCRA). Specifically, each individual Board member must, if an allegation is raised to the member during an open or closed Board meeting that a student is an abused child as defined in ANCRA, direct or cause the

Board to direct the Superintendent or other equivalent school administrator to comply with ANCRA's requirements concerning the reporting of child abuse.

19. Notifying the State Superintendent of Education promptly and in writing of the name of a licensed teacher who was convicted of a felony, along with the conviction and the name and location of the court where the conviction occurred.
20. Notifying the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) of the State of Ill. Board of Trustees promptly and in writing when it learns that a teacher as defined in the Ill. Pension Code was convicted of a felony, along with the name and location of the court where the conviction occurred, and the case number assigned by that court to the conviction.
21. Communicating the schools' activities and operations to the community and representing the needs and desires of the community in educational matters.

Indemnification

To the extent allowed by law, the Board shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless School Board members, employees, volunteer personnel (pursuant to [105 ILCS 5/10-22.34](#), [10-22.34a](#) and [10-22.34b](#)), mentors of certified staff (pursuant to [105 ILCS 5/2-3.53a](#), [2-3.53b](#), and [105 ILCS 5/21A-5](#) et seq.), and student teachers who, in the course of discharging their official duties imposed or authorized by law, are sued as parties in a legal proceeding. Nothing herein, however, shall be construed as obligating the Board to defend, indemnify, or hold harmless any person who engages in criminal activity, official misconduct, fraud, intentional or willful and wanton misconduct, or acts beyond the authority properly vested in the individual.

Traits of Effective Board Members

Effective board members have a number of traits in common, yet it is important to realize that these characteristics are not acquired immediately.

Knowledge and experience are not adequate. Board members must be willing to learn and be open to new knowledge. In addition, an effective board member has a commitment to all children of the district. It is important that the board members possess courage and a conviction of the importance of public education. They must be committed to fulfilling their responsibilities in areas of board work. Members must also have the ability and willingness to make decisions and must have a commitment to the democratic process.

In addition, an effective board member must have time and energy to commit to the work of the board, the ability to accept the will of the majority, respect for education as a profession and the ability to communicate well with others.

An effective board member makes every attempt to attend all board meetings and prepares for meetings by reading and analyzing the agenda and support information. Effective board members avoid springing surprises at board meetings, abide by board policies and rules, and hold off making personal decisions until all the evidence has been provided and board discussion is completed. An effective board member strives to foster unity and harmony among the board and differentiates between problems that require board action and those which should be solved by administration. This board member supports the superintendent's or administrator's authority, shares responsibility for board decisions, accepts and evaluates criticism and advice objectively, avoids personality conflicts and improves personal boardsmanship qualities. Responsible board members are more effective board members. They listen to their constituents but, as individuals, respect the corporate authority and responsibility of the board.

Iowa Association of School Boards Member Handbook

Becoming a School Board Member

2:30 School District Elections

School District elections are non-partisan, governed by the general election laws of the State, and include the election of School Board members, various public policy propositions, and advisory questions. Board members are elected at the consolidated election held on the first Tuesday in April in odd-numbered years. If, however, that date conflicts with the celebration of Passover, the consolidated election is postponed to the first Tuesday following the last day of Passover. The canvass of votes is conducted by the election authority within 21 days after the election.

The Board, by proper resolution, may cause to be placed on the ballot: (a) public policy referendum according to [Article 28 of the Election Code](#), or (b) advisory questions of public policy according to [Section 9-1.5 of the School Code](#).

The Board Secretary serves as the local election official. He or she receives petitions for the submission of a public question to referenda and forwards them to the proper election officer.

2:40 Board Member Qualifications

A School Board member must be, on the date of election or appointment, a United States citizen, at least 18 years of age, a resident of Illinois and the District for at least one year immediately preceding the election, and a registered voter.

Reasons making an individual ineligible for Board membership include holding an incompatible office, certain types of State or federal employment, and conviction of an infamous crime. A child sex offender, as defined in State law, is ineligible for School Board membership.

2:50 Board Member Term of Office

The term of office for a School Board member begins immediately after both of the following occur:

1. The election authority canvasses the votes and declares the winner(s); this occurs within 21 days after the consolidated election held on the first Tuesday in April in odd-numbered years.
2. The successful candidate takes the oath of office as provided in Board policy 2:80, Board Member Oath and Conduct.

The term ends 4 years later when the successor assumes office.

2:60 Board Member Removal from Office

If a majority of the School Board determines that a Board member has willfully failed to perform his or her official duties, it may request the Regional Superintendent to remove such member from office.

2:70 Vacancies on the School Board - Filling Vacancies

Vacancy

Elective office of a School Board member becomes vacant before the term's expiration when any of the following occurs:

1. Death of the incumbent,
2. Resignation in writing filed with the Secretary of the Board,

3. Legal disability,
4. Conviction of a felony, bribery, perjury, or other infamous crime or of any offense involving a violation of official oath or of a violent crime against a child,
5. Removal from office,
6. The decision of a competent tribunal declaring his or her election void,
7. Ceasing to be an inhabitant of the District or a particular area from which he or she was elected, if the residential requirements contained in the School Code are violated,
8. An illegal conflict of interest, or
9. Acceptance of a second public office that is incompatible with Board membership.

Filling Vacancies

Whenever a vacancy occurs, the remaining members shall notify the Regional Superintendent of Schools of that vacancy within five days after its occurrence and shall fill the vacancy until the next regular board election, at which election a successor shall be elected to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. However, if the vacancy occurs with less than 868 days remaining in the term or less than 88 days before the next regularly scheduled election, the person so appointed shall serve the remainder of the unexpired term, and no election to fill the vacancy shall be held. Members appointed by the remaining members of the Board to fill vacancies shall meet any residential requirements as specified in the School Code. The Board shall fill the vacancy within 60 days after it occurred by a public vote at a meeting of the Board.

Immediately following a vacancy on the Board, the Board will publicize it and accept résumés from District residents who are interested in filling the vacancy. After reviewing the applications, the Board may invite the prospective candidates for personal interviews to be conducted during duly scheduled closed meetings.

2:80 Board Member Oath and Conduct

Each School Board member, before taking his or her seat on the Board, shall take the following oath of office:

I, (name), do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of member of the Board of Education (or Board of School Directors, as the case may be) of Rantoul City Schools, in accordance with the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Illinois, and the laws of the State of Illinois, to the best of my ability.

I further swear (or affirm) that:

I shall respect taxpayer interests by serving as a faithful protector of the School District's assets;

I shall encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow Board members and others who seek a hearing before the Board, while respecting the privacy of students and employees;

I shall recognize that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a public Board meeting;

I shall abide by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels;

As part of the Board of Education, I shall accept the responsibility for my role in the equitable and quality education of every student in the School District;

I shall foster with the Board extensive participation of the community, formulate goals, define outcomes, and set the course for Rantoul City Schools;

RANTOUL CITY SCHOOLS EXISTS TO BUILD A STRONGER COMMUNITY BY EDUCATING OUR STUDENTS.

I shall assist in establishing a structure and an environment designed to ensure all students have the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework;

I shall strive to ensure a continuous assessment of student achievement and all conditions affecting the education of our children, in compliance with State law;

I shall serve as education's key advocate on behalf of students and our community's school (or schools) to advance the vision for Rantoul City Schools; and

I shall strive to work together with the District Superintendent to lead the School District toward fulfilling the vision the Board has created, fostering excellence for every student in the areas of academic skills, knowledge, citizenship, and personal development.

The Board President will administer the oath in an open Board meeting; in the absence of the President, the Vice President will administer the oath. If neither is available, the Board member with the longest service on the Board will administer the oath.

The Board adopts the Illinois Association of School Boards' Code of Conduct for Members of School Boards. A copy of the Code shall be displayed in the regular Board meeting room.

2:80-E Exhibit - Board Member Code of Conduct

As a member of my local School Board, I will do my utmost to represent the public interest in education by adhering to the following standards and principles:

1. I will represent all School District constituents honestly and equally and refuse to surrender my responsibilities to special interest or partisan political groups.
2. I will avoid any conflict of interest or the appearance of impropriety which could result from my position, and will not use my Board membership for personal gain or publicity.
3. I will recognize that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a Board meeting.
4. I will take no private action that might compromise the Board or administration and will respect the confidentiality of privileged information.
5. I will abide by majority decisions of the Board, while retaining the right to seek changes in such decisions through ethical and constructive channels.
6. I will encourage and respect the free expression of opinion by my fellow Board members and will participate in Board discussions in an open, honest and respectful manner, honoring differences of opinion or perspective.
7. I will prepare for, attend and actively participate in School Board meetings.
8. I will be sufficiently informed about and prepared to act on the specific issues before the Board, and remain reasonably knowledgeable about local, State, national, and global education issues.
9. I will respectfully listen to those who communicate with the Board, seeking to understand their views, while recognizing my responsibility to represent the interests of the entire community.
10. I will strive for a positive working relationship with the Superintendent, respecting the Superintendent's authority to advise the Board, implement Board policy, and administer the District.
11. I will model continuous learning and work to ensure good governance by taking advantage of Board member development opportunities, such as those sponsored by my State and national school board associations, and encourage my fellow Board members to do the same.
12. I will strive to keep my Board focused on its primary work of clarifying the District purpose, direction and goals, and monitoring District performance.

2:100 Board Member Conflict of Interest

No School Board member shall: (1) have a beneficial interest directly or indirectly in any contract, work, or business of the District unless permitted by State or federal law; or (2) solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to agreements or contracts with the District. Situations in which the interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value must comply with State law and Board policy 2:105, Ethics and Gift Ban.

Board members must annually file a Statement of Economic Interests as required by the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act. Each Board member is responsible for filing the statement with the county clerk of the county in which the District's main office is located by May 1.

Federal and State Grant Awards

No Board member shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by a federal award or State award governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) ([30 ILCS 708/](#)) if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. A conflict of interest arises when a Board member or any of the following individuals has a financial or other interest in or a tangible benefit from the entity selected for the contract:

1. A member of the Board member's immediate family;
2. The Board member's partner; or
3. An entity that employs or is about to employ the Board member or one of the individuals listed in one or two above.

2:110 Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers

The School Board officers are: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. These officers are elected or appointed by the Board at its organizational meeting.

President

The Board elects a President from its members for a two-year term. The duties of the President are to:

1. Preside at all meetings;
2. Focus the Board meeting agendas on appropriate content;
3. Make all Board committee appointments, unless specifically stated otherwise;
4. Attend and observe any Board committee meeting at his or her discretion;
5. Represent the Board on other boards or agencies;
6. Sign official District documents requiring the President's signature, including Board minutes and Certificate of Tax Levy;
7. Call special meetings of the Board;
8. Serve as the head of the public body for purposes of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) and Freedom of Information Act;
9. Ensure that a quorum of the Board is physically present at all Board meetings, except as otherwise provided by OMA;
10. Administer the oath of office to new Board members;
11. Serve as or appoint the Board's official spokesperson to the media;
12. Except when the Board President is the subject of a complaint of sexual harassment, a witness, or otherwise conflicted, appoint a qualified outside investigator to conduct an independent review of allegations of sexual harassment made against a Board member by another Board member or elected official; and

13. Ensure that all fingerprint-based criminal history records information checks, screenings, and sexual misconduct related employment history reviews (EHRs) required by State law and policy 5:30, Hiring Process and Criteria, are completed for the Superintendent.

The President is permitted to participate in all Board meetings in a manner equal to all other Board members, including the ability to make and second motions.

The Vice President fills a vacancy in the Presidency.

Vice President

The Board elects a Vice President from its members for a two-year term. The Vice President performs the duties of the President if:

1. The office of President is vacant;
2. The President is absent; or
3. The President is unable to perform the office's duties.

A vacancy in the Vice Presidency is filled by a special Board election.

Secretary

The Board elects a Secretary for a two-year term. The Secretary may be, but is not required to be, a Board member. The Secretary may receive reasonable compensation as determined by the Board before appointment. However, if the Secretary is a Board member, the compensation shall not exceed \$500 per year, as fixed by the Board at least 180 days before the beginning of the term. The duties of the Secretary are to:

1. Keep minutes for all Board meetings, and keep the verbatim record for all closed Board meetings;
2. Mail meeting notification and agenda to news media who have officially requested copies;
3. Keep records of the Board's official acts, and sign them, along with the President, before submitting them to the Treasurer at such times as the Treasurer may require;
4. Report to the Treasurer on or before July 7, annually, such information as the Treasurer is required to include in the Treasurer's report to the Regional Superintendent;
5. Act as the local election official for the District;
6. Arrange public inspection of the budget before adoption;
7. Publish required notices;
8. Sign official District documents requiring the Secretary's signature; and
9. Maintain Board policy and such other official documents as directed by the Board.

The Secretary may delegate some or all of these duties, except when State law prohibits the delegation. The Board appoints a secretary pro tempore, who may or may not be a Board member, if the Secretary is absent from any meeting or refuses to perform the duties of the office. A permanent vacancy in the office of Secretary is filled by special Board election.

Recording Secretary

The Board may appoint a Recording Secretary who is a staff member. The Recording Secretary shall:

1. Assist the Secretary by taking the minutes for all open Board meetings;
2. Assemble Board meeting material and provide it, along with prior meeting minutes, to Board members before the next meeting; and
3. Perform the Secretary's duties, as assigned, except when State law prohibits the delegation.

In addition, the Recording Secretary or Superintendent receives notification from Board members who desire to attend a Board meeting by video or audio means.

Treasurer

The Treasurer of the Board shall be either a member of the Board who serves a one-year term or a non-Board member who serves at the Board's pleasure. A Treasurer who is a Board member may not be compensated. A Treasurer who is not a Board member may be compensated provided it is established before the appointment. The Treasurer must:

1. Be at least 21 years old;
2. Not be a member of the County Board of School Trustees; and
3. Have a financial background or related experience, or 12 credit hours of college-level accounting.

The Treasurer shall:

1. Furnish a bond, which shall be approved by a majority of the full Board;
2. Maintain custody of school funds;
3. Maintain records of school funds and balances;
4. Prepare a monthly reconciliation report for the Superintendent and Board; and
5. Receive, hold, and expend District funds only upon the order of the Board.

A vacancy in the Treasurer's office is filled by Board appointment.

Board Established Operational Protocols

The following was developed by the RCS Board of Education on April 1, 2023 in collaboration with the Illinois Association of School Boards.

Placing items on the agenda

- The Board President, Vice President, and Superintendent will confer to generate the board agenda used for an upcoming board meeting. This agenda-generating meeting will occur the Thursday immediately preceding the board meeting where the agenda will be utilized.
 - A board member desiring to have an item considered as an agenda item should contact the Board President or Vice President after reflecting on the connection of the desired agenda item and the agenda-qualifying criteria [i.e., how the topic focuses on the primary work of clarifying the district purpose, direction and goals, and monitoring district performance (Item 12 of the Code of Conduct)].
 - A board member desiring to have an item considered as an agenda item should contact the Board President or Vice President and submit an email or written communicate specifying the desired agenda item one (1) week prior to the board meeting where the agenda will be utilized.
 - The item will be placed on the upcoming board meeting agenda under the agenda heading of “New Business” with the requesting board member explaining the relevance of the requested topic to the agenda-qualifying criteria (Item 12 of the Code of Conduct) used for agenda placement (at the appropriate time on the agenda).
 - Consensus of the majority will determine advancement and inclusion of the requested agenda item as an action item on the agenda for the meeting next month (or a specified, subsequent meeting).

Asking questions about the agenda

- Contact the Superintendent regarding a question on the agenda for an upcoming meeting.

Communicating with members

- Adhere to the Open Meetings Act.

Communicating with staff

- [In the capacity of a board member] Contact the Superintendent who will reply accordingly.

Communicating with the media

- The Board President serves as the spokesperson for the board with the media.
- The Superintendent serves as the spokesperson for the district with media.
 - Matters involving safety, personnel, and controversial issues will warrant dialogue between the Board President and Superintendent prior to any communication being issued to the media.

Communicating with the public

- The Board President serves as the spokesperson for the board with the public.
- The Superintendent serves as the spokesperson for the district with the public.
 - Matters involving safety, personnel, and controversial issues will warrant dialogue between the Board President and Superintendent prior to any communication being issued to the public.

Visiting the campus

- Follow District/building security procedures.
- [When visiting a campus in the capacity of a parent] Initiate advance communication with the Superintendent prior to a campus visit.

Responding to concerns

- *GENERAL CONCERNS*
 - Listen to the concern of the citizen.
 - Inform the citizen of the applicable board policy [i.e., Chain of Command].
 - Based on the severity of the concern, relay the concern to the Superintendent.
- *EMAIL/TEXT*
 - Reply to acknowledge receipt of the email/text.

- Forward the email/text to the Superintendent.
- The Superintendent will reply to the citizen.
- Board members will be informed of the general issue (with anonymity of all involved parties, including the board member who received the email/text) and the outcome/resolution (per the reply of the Superintendent).
 - A board member must NOT “Reply All” to the communicate of the Superintendent (lest an Open Meetings Act violation is committed).

Orienting new members

- The Superintendent will confer with each new board member.
- Each new board member will be presented with details for all mandated training requirements.
- Each new board member will receive access to all board policies.
- Each new board member will undergo a review of board processes/procedures.
- A Superintendent conference will occur with any new member.

Conducting closed sessions

- What is discussed/shared in closed session stays in closed session.

2:140 Communications To and From the Board

The School Board welcomes communications from staff members, parents/guardians, students, and community members. Individuals may submit questions or communications for the School Board’s consideration to the Superintendent or may use the electronic link to the Board’s email address(es) posted on the District’s website.

The Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Ensure that the home page for the District's website contains an active electronic link to the email address(es) for the School Board, and
2. During the Board’s regular meetings, report for the Board’s consideration all questions or communications submitted through the active electronic link along with the status of the District’s response in the Board meeting packet.

If contacted individually, Board members will refer the person to the appropriate level of authority, except in unusual situations. Board members' questions or communications to staff or about programs will be channeled through the Superintendent's office. Board members will not take individual action that might compromise the Board or District. There is no expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Board or its members, whether sent by letter, email, or other means.

Board Member Use of Electronic Communications

For purposes of this section, *electronic communications* includes, without limitation, electronic mail, electronic chat, instant messaging, texting, and any form of social networking. Electronic communications among a majority or more of a Board-quorum shall not be used for the purpose of discussing District business. Electronic communications among Board members shall be limited to: (1) disseminating information, and (2) messages not involving deliberation, debate, or decision-making. The following list contains examples of permissible electronic communications:

- Agenda item suggestions
- Reminders regarding meeting times, dates, and places
- Board meeting agendas or information concerning agenda items
- Individual emails to community members, subject to the other limitations in this policy

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act and the Oath of Office taken by Board members, individual Board members will not (a) reply to an email on behalf of the entire Board, or (b) engage in the discussion of District business through electronic communications with a majority of a Board-quorum.

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2:140-E Exhibit - Guidance for Board Member Communications, Including Email Use

The Open Meetings Act (OMA) requires the School Board to discuss District business only at a properly noticed Board meeting. [5 ILCS 120/](#). Other than during a Board meeting, a majority or more of a Board-quorum may not engage in contemporaneous interactive communication, whether in person or electronically, to discuss District business. This *Guidance* assumes a Board has seven members and covers issues arising from Board policy 2:140, *Communications To and From the Board*.

Communications Between or Among Board Members and/or the Superintendent Outside of a Properly Noticed Board Meeting

1. The Superintendent or designee is permitted to email information to Board members. For example, the Superintendent may email Board meeting agendas and supporting information to Board members. When responding to a single Board member's request, the Superintendent should copy all other Board members and include a *do not reply/forward* alert to the group, such as: **"BOARD MEMBER ALERT: This email is in response to a request. Do not reply or forward to the group but only to the sender."**
2. Board members are permitted to discuss any matter except District business with each other, whether in person or by telephone or email, regardless of the number of members participating in the discussion. For example, they may discuss league sports, work, or current events.
3. Board members are permitted to provide information to each other, whether in person or by telephone or email, that is non-deliberative and non-substantive. Examples of this type of communication include scheduling meetings and confirming receipt of information.
4. A Board member is not permitted to discuss District business with more than one other Board member at a time, whether in person or by telephone or email. Stated another way, a Board member may discuss District business in person or by telephone or email with only one other Board member at a time. However, a Board member should not facilitate interactive communication by discussing District business in a series of visits with, or telephone calls or emails to, Board members individually.
5. A Board member should include a *do not reply/forward* alert when emailing a message concerning District business to more than one other Board member. The following is an example of such an alert: **"BOARD MEMBER ALERT: This email is not for interactive discussion purposes. The recipient should not reply to it or forward it to any other individual."**
6. Board members should not forward email received from another Board member.

When Must the Electronic Communications Sent or Received by Individual Board Members Be Disclosed Pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request?

An electronic communication must be disclosed if it is a *public record* as defined by FOIA, unless a specific exemption applies. A public record is any recorded information "pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of any public body." [5 ILCS 140/2](#). Email sent or received by an individual Board member may be, depending on the content and circumstances, subject to disclosure as a *public record* (unless a FOIA exemption is applicable).

If a Board member uses a District-provided device or email address to discuss public business, the email is subject to disclosure under FOIA, barring an applicable exemption. If a Board member uses a private device and email address, the communication is subject to FOIA if it satisfies this test:

First, the communication pertains to the transaction of public business, and

Second, the communication was: (1) prepared by a public body, (2) prepared for a public body, (3) used by a public body, (4) received by a public body, (5) possessed by a public body, and/or (6) controlled by a public body.

This test is from the appellate court decision in *City of Champaign v. Madigan*, 992 N.E.2d 629 (Ill.App.4th 2013).

The following *examples* describe FOIA's treatment of electronic communications:

1. If an electronic communication does not pertain to public business, it is not a public record and is not subject to a FOIA request.
2. An electronic communication pertaining to public business that is:
 - a. Sent and/or received by an individual Board member using a personal electronic device and personal email address while he or she is at home or work **would not be a public record**. Individual Board members, alone, cannot conduct school District business. As stated earlier, emails among a majority or more of a Board-quorum violate OMA and, thus, are subject to disclosure during proceedings to enforce OMA.
 - b. Sent and/or received by an individual Board member on a District-issued device or District-issued email address **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is under the control of the District.
 - c. Received by an individual Board member on a personal electronic device and then forwarded by the Board member to a District-owned device or server **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is under the control of the District.
 - d. Received by an individual Board member using a personal electronic device and personal email address, and then forwarded by the Board member to enough members to constitute a majority or more of a Board-quorum **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is in the District's possession.
 - e. Either sent to or from a Board member's personal electronic device during a Board meeting **will be a public record** and subject to FOIA. The electronic communication is in the District's possession because Board members were functioning collectively as a public body.

The District's Freedom of Information Officer and/or Board Attorney will help determine when a specific communication must be disclosed pursuant to a FOIA request.

When Must Electronic Communications Be Retained?

Email that qualifies under FOIA as a *public record* will need to be stored pursuant to the Local Records Act (LRA), only if it is evidence of the District's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities or contains informational data appropriate for preservation. [50 ILCS 205/](#). An example is any email from a Board officer concerning a decision made in his or her capacity as an officer. If a Board member uses his or her personal email, he or she must copy this type of email to the appropriate District office where it will be stored. If made available, Board members should use their email accounts provided by the District and the District will automatically store the official record messages. The District will delete these official record messages as provided in an applicable, approved **retention schedule**. Of course, email pertaining to public business that is sent or received by a Board Member using a District-issued device or email address will be subject to FOIA, even if the email does not need to be retained under the LRA.

Important: Do not destroy any email concerning a topic that is being litigated without obtaining the Board attorney's direction. In federal lawsuits, there is an automatic discovery of virtually all types of electronically created or stored data that might be relevant. Attorneys will generally notify their clients at the beginning of a legal proceeding not to destroy any electronic records that might be relevant. This is referred to as a *litigation hold*. For more discussion of a litigation hold, see 2:250-AP2, *Protocols for Record Preservation and Development of Retention Schedules*. In addition, any person who knowingly with the intent to defraud any party destroys, removes, or conceals any public record commits a Class 4 felony. [50 ILCS 205/4](#).

Board Superintendent Relationship

2:130 Board-Superintendent Relationship

The School Board directs, through policy, the Superintendent in his or her charge of the administration of the District by delegating its authority to operate the District and provide leadership to staff. The Board employs and evaluates the Superintendent and holds him or her responsible for the operation of the District in accordance with Board policies and State and federal law.

The Board-Superintendent relationship is based on mutual respect for their complementary roles. The relationship requires clear communication of expectations regarding the duties and responsibilities of both the Board and Superintendent.

The Board considers the recommendations of the Superintendent as the District's Chief Executive Officer. The Board adopts policies necessary to provide general direction for the District and to encourage achievement of District goals. The Superintendent develops plans, programs, and procedures needed to implement the policies and directs the District's operations.

Board/Superintendent Communications

The following was developed by the RCS Board of Education on April 1, 2023 in collaboration with the Illinois Association of School Boards.

This board expects:

1. To receive regular communication from the superintendent every week via email.
2. To be notified as soon as possible for:
 - a. School emergency (lockdown, fire, etc.)
 - b. Bus accident
 - c. Student emergency (arrest, significant injury, death)
 - “Significant injury” is defined as a potential, legally-compromising matter that could negatively impact the Board/district.
 - d. Staff emergency (arrest, significant injury, death)
 - “Significant injury” is defined as a potential, legally-compromising matter that could negatively impact the Board/district.
3. To receive board packets and supporting documentation at least 48 hours before the scheduled board meeting.
4. To receive regular monthly expenditure reports.
5. That all board members will receive the same information.
 - One member’s request for additional information results in all members receiving or having the same access to the information. (“One gets, all get.”)
6. That board members will treat each other and staff with respect.
7. That the superintendent and staff will treat all board members with respect.
8. That reasonable requests for additional information will be satisfied in a timely manner.
9. That there will be no surprises among board members or among governance team members. No one gets surprised at any time – in the meeting or between meetings. The truth of no surprises is respect for all participants and the process.

This superintendent expects:

1. Requests for additions to the agenda will go to the Board President and the Board Vice President, and will be received at least seven (7) calendar days before the meeting. The board of the whole will agree to put an item on a future agenda before significant staff time is expended.
2. That direction is only given at board meetings when a majority of the board agrees to give direction.

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3. That board members will be respectful toward staff and be respectful of staff's time.
4. That board members will read all board packets and supporting documentation before the board meeting.
5. That board members will contact the Superintendent with questions about agenda items or supporting materials at least 24 hours before the scheduled board meeting.
6. That there will be no surprises among board members or among governance team members. No one gets surprised at any time – in the meeting or between meetings. The truth of no surprises is respect for all participants and the process.

Evaluation of the Superintendent

The Superintendent's contract is performance-based, linked to student performance and academic improvement of the schools within RCS as required by Section 10-23.8 of the Illinois School Code. The Superintendent shall meet the goals enumerated in Attachment A, incorporated herein by reference, and any other goals agreed to by the parties and amended hereto during the term of the Contract.

Goals and Indicators of Student Performance and Academic Improvement

In accordance with 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8 annually, the Superintendent, with the assistance of his administrative team, shall

- Goal 1. Evaluate student performance, including but not limited to, student performance on standardized tests, successful completion of the curriculum, and attendance and drop-out rates;
- Goal 2. Review the curriculum and instructional services;
- Goal 3: Review school finances; and
- Goal 4: Report to the school board on his findings as to the (a) student performance and (b) his recommendations, if any, for curriculum or instructional changes as a result of his evaluation of student performance.

The presentation of the report(s) shall demonstrate the Superintendent's accomplishment of the goals, by indicators, subject to the restrictions and limitations (if any) of each goal shall constitute the achievement of the goals of student performance and academic improvement as required by Section 10-23.8 of the Illinois School Code.

Timeline for Completion

<i>December Board Meeting</i>	-Superintendent will place his evaluation on the Board Agenda.
<i>By January 15</i>	-Superintendent will provide the Board with his evidence of completion / self-assessment
<i>January Board Meeting</i>	-Board will evaluate the superintendent.
<i>No later than February 1</i>	-Board will evaluate the Superintendent's performance and a written evaluation of that performance shall be given to the Superintendent. Such annual evaluations shall also include a determination of the Superintendent's attainment of the goals related to student performance and academic improvement of the schools within the district. After such evaluation, the parties shall schedule a meeting to review the evaluation and determine, if necessary, any modifications to which they may then jointly agree regarding the terms and conditions of the continued future employment of the Superintendent.

RCS 137 board approved superintendent evaluation process.

Board Member Development

2:120 Board Member Development

The School Board desires that its individual members learn, understand, and practice effective governance principles. The Board is responsible for Board member orientation and development. Board members have an equal opportunity to attend State and national meetings designed to familiarize members with public school issues, governance, and legislation.

The Board President and/or Superintendent shall provide all Board members with information regarding pertinent education materials, publications, and notices of training or development.

Mandatory Board Member Training

Each Board member is responsible for his or her own compliance with the mandatory training laws that are described below:

1. Each Board member elected or appointed to fill a vacancy of at least one year's duration must complete at least four hours of professional development and leadership training in: (1) education and labor law; (2) financial oversight and accountability; (3) fiduciary responsibilities; (4) trauma-informed practices for students and staff; and (5) improving student outcomes, within the first year of his or her first term.
2. Each Board member must complete training on the Open Meetings Act (OMA) no later than 90 days after taking the oath of office for the first time. After completing the training, each Board member must file a copy of the certificate of completion with the Board. Training on OMA is only required once.
3. Each Board member must complete a training program on evaluations under the Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) before participating in a vote on a tenured teacher's dismissal using the optional alternative evaluation dismissal process. This dismissal process is available after the District's PERA implementation date.

The Superintendent or designee shall post on the District website the names of all Board members who have completed the professional development leadership training described in number 1, above.

Professional Development; Adverse Consequences of School Exclusion; Student Behavior

The Board President or Superintendent, or their designees, shall make reasonable efforts to provide ongoing professional development to Board members about the requirements of [105 ILCS 5/10-22.6](#) and [105 ILCS 5/10-20.14](#), adverse consequences of school exclusion and justice-system involvement, effective classroom management strategies, culturally responsive discipline, trauma-responsive learning environments, appropriate and available supportive services for the promotion of student attendance and engagement, and developmentally appropriate disciplinary methods that promote positive and healthy school climates.

Board Self-Evaluation

The Board will conduct periodic self-evaluations with the goal of continuous improvement.

New Board Member Orientation

The orientation process for newly elected or appointed Board members includes:

1. The Board President or Superintendent, or their designees, shall give each new Board member a copy of or online access to the Board Policy Manual, the Board's regular meeting minutes for the past year, and other helpful information including material describing the District and explaining the Board's roles and responsibilities.

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2. The Board President or designee shall schedule one or more special Board meetings, or schedule time during regular meetings, for Board members to become acquainted and to review Board processes and procedures.
3. The Board President may request a veteran Board member to mentor a new member.
4. All new members are encouraged to attend workshops for new members conducted by the Illinois Association of School Boards.

Candidates

The Superintendent or designee shall invite all current candidates for the office of Board member to attend: (1) Board meetings, except that this invitation shall not extend to any closed meetings, and (2) pre-election workshops for candidates.

2:125 Board Member Compensation; Expenses

Board Member Compensation Prohibited

School Board members provide volunteer service to the community and may not receive compensation for services, except that a Board member serving as the Board Secretary may be paid an amount up to the statutory limit if the Board so provides.

Roll Call Vote

All Board member expense requests for travel, meals, and/or lodging must be approved by roll call vote at an open meeting of the Board.

Regulation of School District Expenses

The Board regulates the reimbursement of all travel, meal, and lodging expenses in the District by resolution. No later than approval of the annual budget and when necessary, the Superintendent will recommend a maximum allowable reimbursement amount for expenses to be included in the resolution. The recommended amount should be based upon the District's budget and other financial considerations.

Money shall not be advanced or reimbursed, or purchase orders issued for: (1) the expenses of any person except the Board member, (2) anyone's personal expenses, or (3) entertainment expenses. Entertainment includes, but is not limited to, shows, amusements, theaters, circuses, sporting events, or any other place of public or private entertainment or amusement, unless the entertainment is ancillary to the purpose of the program or event.

Exceeding the Maximum Allowable Reimbursement Amount(s)

All requests for expense advancements, reimbursements, and/or purchase orders that exceed the maximum allowable reimbursement amount set by the Board may only be approved by it when:

1. The Board's resolution to regulate expenses allows for such approval;
2. An emergency or other extraordinary circumstance exists; and
3. The request is approved by a roll call vote at an open Board meeting.

Advancements

The Board may advance to its members actual and necessary expenses to be incurred while attending:

1. Meetings sponsored by the Illinois State Board of Education or by the Regional Superintendent of Schools;

2. County or regional meetings and the annual meeting sponsored by any school board association complying with [Article 23](#) of the School Code; and
3. Meetings sponsored by a national organization in the field of public school education.

Expense advancement requests must be submitted to the Superintendent or designee on the Board's standardized estimated expense approval form. After spending expense advancements, Board members must use the Board's standardized expense reimbursement form and submit to the Superintendent: (a) the itemized, signed advancement voucher that was issued, and (b) the amount of actual expenses by attaching receipts. A Board member must return to the District any portion of an expense advancement not used. If an expense advancement is not requested, expense reimbursements may be issued by the Board to its members for the activities listed in numbers one through three, above, along with registration fees or tuition for a course(s) that allowed compliance with the mandatory trainings described in policy 2:120, Board Member Development, other professional development opportunities that are encouraged by the School Code, and other training provided by one of the entities described in the above list (see the **Reimbursements and Purchase Orders** subhead, below). Expense advancements and vouchers shall be presented to the Board in its regular bill process.

Reimbursements and Purchase Orders

Expense reimbursement is not guaranteed and, when possible, Board members should seek pre-approval of expenses by providing an estimation of expenses on the Board's standardized estimated expense approval form, except in situations when the expense is diminutive. When pre-approval is not sought, Board members must seek reimbursement on the Board's standardized expense reimbursement form. Expense reimbursements and purchase orders shall be presented to the Board in its regular bill process.

Credit and Procurement Cards

Credit and procurement cards shall not be issued to Board members.

Standardized Expense Form(s) Required

All requests for expense advancement, reimbursement, and/or purchase orders in the District must be submitted on the appropriate itemized, signed standardized form(s). The form(s) must show the following information:

1. The amount of the estimated or actual expense, with attached receipts for actual incurred expenses.
2. The name and office of the Board member who is requesting the expense advancement or reimbursement. Receipts from group functions must include the names, offices, and job titles of all participants.
3. The date(s) of the official business on which the expense advancement or reimbursement will be or was expended.
4. The nature of the official business conducted when the expense advancement or reimbursement will be or was expended.

Types of Official Business for Expense Advancements, Reimbursements, and Purchase Orders

1. Registration. When possible, registration fees will be paid by the District in advance.
2. Travel. The least expensive method of travel will be used, providing that no hardship will be caused to the Board member. Board members will be reimbursed for:
 - a. Air travel at the coach or economy class commercial airline rate. First class or business class air travel will be reimbursed only if emergency circumstances warrant. The emergency circumstances must be explained on the expense form and Board approval of the additional expense is required. Fees for the first checked bag will be reimbursed. Copies of airline tickets and baggage receipts must be attached to the expense form.

- b. Rail or bus travel at actual cost. Rail or bus travel costs may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Copies of tickets must be attached to the expense form to substantiate amounts.
 - c. Use of personal automobiles at the standard mileage rate approved by the Internal Revenue Service for income tax purposes. The reimbursement may not exceed the cost of coach airfare. Mileage for use of personal automobiles in trips to and from transportation terminals will also be reimbursed. Toll charges and parking costs will be reimbursed.
 - d. Automobile rental costs when the vehicle's use is warranted. The circumstances for such use must be explained on the expense form.
 - e. Taxis, airport limousines, ride sharing or other local transportation costs.
3. Meals. Meals charged to the School District should represent mid-fare selections for the hotel/meeting facility or general area, consistent with the maximum allowable reimbursement amount set by the Board. Tips are included with meal charges. Expense forms must explain the meal charges incurred. Alcoholic beverages will not be reimbursed.
 4. Lodging. Board members should request conference rate or mid-fare room accommodations. A single room rate will be reimbursed. Board members should pay personal expenses at checkout. If that is impossible, deductions for the charges should be made on the expense form.
 5. Miscellaneous Expenses. Board members may seek reimbursement for other expenses incurred while attending a meeting sponsored by organizations described herein by fully describing the expenses on the expense form, attaching receipts.

Additional Requirements for Travel Expenses Charged to Federal and State Grants

All Board member expenses for travel charged to a federal grant or State grant governed by the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act ([30 ILCS 708/](#)) must comply with Board policy 5:60, Expenses, and its implementing procedures. Travel expenses include costs for transportation, lodging, meals, and related items.

2:150 Committees

The School Board may establish committees to assist with the Board's governance function and, in some situations, to comply with State law requirements. These committees are known as Board committees and report directly to the Board. Committee members may include both Board members and non-Board members depending on the committee's purpose. The Board President makes all Board committee appointments unless specifically stated otherwise. Board committee meetings shall comply with the Open Meetings Act. A Board committee may not take final action on behalf of the Board - it may only make recommendations to the Board.

Special Board Committees

A special committee may be created for specific purposes or to investigate special issues. A special committee is automatically dissolved after presenting its final report to the Board or at the Board's discretion.

Standing Board Committees

A standing committee is created for an indefinite term although its members will fluctuate. Standing committees are:

1. Board Policy Committee. This committee researches policy issues, and provides information and recommendations to the Board.
2. Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee. This committee assists in the development of student behavior policy and procedure, and provides information and recommendations to the Board. Its members are parents/guardians and teachers, and may include persons whose expertise or experience is needed. The committee reviews such issues as administering medication in the schools, reciprocal reporting between the School District and local law enforcement agencies regarding criminal offenses committed by

students, student discipline, disruptive classroom behavior, school bus safety procedures, and the dissemination of student conduct information.

3. Behavioral Interventions Committee. This committee develops and monitors procedures for using behavioral interventions in accordance with Board policy 7:230, Misconduct by Students with Disabilities, and provides information and recommendations to the Board. At the Board President's discretion, the Parent-Teacher Advisory Committee shall perform the duties assigned to the Behavioral Interventions Committee.

Nothing in this policy limits the authority of the Superintendent or designee to create and use committees that report to him or her or to other staff members.

2:160 Board Attorney

The School Board may retain legal services with one or more attorneys or law firms to be the Board Attorney(s). The Board Attorney represents the Board in its capacity as the governing body for the School District. The Board Attorney serves on a retainer or other fee arrangement as determined in advance. The Board Attorney will provide services as described in the agreement for legal services or as memorialized by an engagement letter. The District will only pay for legal services that are provided in accordance with the agreement for legal services, as memorialized by an engagement letter, or that are otherwise authorized by this policy or a majority of the Board.

The Superintendent, his or her designee, and Board President, are each authorized to confer with and/or seek the legal advice of the Board Attorney. The Board may also authorize a specific Board member to confer with the Board Attorney on its behalf.

The Superintendent may authorize the Board Attorney to represent the District in any legal matter until the Board has an opportunity to be informed of and/or consider the matter.

The Board retains the right to consult with or employ other attorneys and to terminate the service of any attorney.

Board Meetings

2:200 Types of School Board Meetings

General

For all meetings of the School Board and its committees, the Superintendent or designee shall satisfy all notice and posting requirements contained herein as well as in the Open Meetings Act. This shall include mailing meeting notifications to news media that have officially requested them and to others as approved by the Board. Unless otherwise specified, all meetings are held in the District's main office. Board policy 2:220, *School Board Meeting Procedure*, governs meeting quorum requirements.

The Superintendent is designated on behalf of the Board and each Board committee to receive the training on compliance with the Open Meetings Act that is required by Section 1.05(a) of that Act. The Superintendent may identify other employees to receive the training. In addition, each Board member must complete a course of training on the Open Meetings Act as required by Section 1.05(b) or (c) of that Act.

Regular Meetings

The Board announces the time and place for its regular meetings at the beginning of each fiscal year. The Superintendent shall prepare and make available the calendar of regular Board meetings. The regular meeting calendar may be changed with 10 days' notice in accordance with State law.

A meeting agenda shall be posted at the District's main office and the Board's meeting room, or other location where the meeting is to be held, at least 48 hours before the meeting.

Closed Meetings

The Board and Board committees may meet in a closed meeting to consider the following subjects:

The appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees, specific individuals who serve as independent contractors in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or specific volunteers of the public body or legal counsel for the public body, including hearing testimony on a complaint lodged against an employee, a specific individual who serves as an independent contractor in a park, recreational, or educational setting, or a volunteer of the public body or against legal counsel for the public body to determine its validity. However, a meeting to consider an increase in compensation to a specific employee of a public body that is subject to the Local Government Wage Increase Transparency Act may not be closed and shall be open to the public and posted and held in accordance with [the Open Meetings Act]. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(1\)](#).

Collective negotiating matters between the public body and its employees or their representatives, or deliberations concerning salary schedules for one or more classes of employees. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(2\)](#).

The selection of a person to fill a public office, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, including a vacancy in a public office, when the public body is given power to appoint under law or ordinance, or the discipline, performance or removal of the occupant of a public office, when the public body is given power to remove the occupant under law or ordinance. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(3\)](#).

1. Evidence or testimony presented in open hearing, or in closed hearing where specifically authorized by law, to a quasi-adjudicative body, as defined in the Open Meetings Act, provided that the body prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(4\)](#).

2. Evidence or testimony presented to the Board regarding denial of admission to school events or property pursuant to [105 ILCS 5/24-24](#), provided that the Board prepares and makes available for public inspection a written decision setting forth its determinative reasoning. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(4.5\)](#).
3. The purchase or lease of real property for the use of the public body, including meetings held for the purpose of discussing whether a particular parcel should be acquired. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(5\)](#).
4. The setting of a price for sale or lease of property owned by the public body. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(6\)](#).
5. The sale or purchase of securities, investments, or investment contracts. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(7\)](#).
6. Security procedures, school building safety and security, and the use of personnel and equipment to respond to an actual, a threatened, or a reasonably potential danger to the safety of employees, students, staff, the public, or public property. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(8\)](#).
7. Student disciplinary cases. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(9\)](#).
8. The placement of individual students in special education programs and other matters relating to individual students. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(10\)](#).
9. Litigation, when an action against, affecting or on behalf of the particular public body has been filed and is pending before a court or administrative tribunal, or when the public body finds that an action is probable or imminent, in which case the basis for the finding shall be recorded and entered into the minutes of the closed meeting. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(11\)](#).
10. The establishment of reserves or settlement of claims as provided in the Local Governmental and Governmental Employees Tort Immunity Act, if otherwise the disposition of a claim or potential claim might be prejudiced, or the review or discussion of claims, loss or risk management information, records, data, advice or communications from or with respect to any insurer of the public body or any intergovernmental risk management association or self insurance pool of which the public body is a member. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(12\)](#).
11. Self evaluation, practices and procedures or professional ethics, when meeting with a representative of a statewide association of which the public body is a member. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(16\)](#).
12. Discussion of minutes of meetings lawfully closed under the Open Meetings Act, whether for purposes of approval by the body of the minutes or semi-annual review of the minutes as mandated by Section 2.06. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(21\)](#).
13. Meetings between internal or external auditors and governmental audit committees, finance committees, and their equivalents, when the discussion involves internal control weaknesses, identification of potential fraud risk areas, known or suspected frauds, and fraud interviews conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards of the United States of America. [5 ILCS 120/2\(c\)\(29\)](#).

The Board may hold a closed meeting, or close a portion of a meeting, by a majority vote of a quorum, taken at an open meeting. The vote of each Board member present, and the reason for the closed meeting, will be publicly disclosed at the time of the meeting and clearly stated in the motion and the meeting minutes.

A single motion calling for a series of closed meetings may be adopted when such meetings will involve the same particular matters and are scheduled to be held within three months of the vote.

No final Board action will be taken at a closed meeting.

Reconvened or Rescheduled Meetings

A meeting may be rescheduled or reconvened. Public notice of a rescheduled or reconvened meeting shall be given in the same manner as that for a special meeting, except that no public notice is required when the original meeting is open to the public and: (1) is to be reconvened within 24 hours, or (2) an announcement of the time and place of the reconvened meeting was made at the original meeting and there is no change in the agenda.

Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the President or by any three members of the Board by giving notice thereof, in writing, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting to remaining Board members by mail at least 48 hours before the meeting, or by personal service at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Public notice of a special meeting is given by posting a notice at the District's main office at least 48 hours before the meeting and by notifying the news media that have filed a written request for notice. A meeting agenda shall accompany the notice.

All matters discussed by the Board at any special meeting must be related to a subject on the meeting agenda.

Emergency Meetings

Public notice of emergency meetings shall be given as soon as practical, but in any event, before the meeting to news media that have filed a written request for notice.

Posting on the District Website

In addition to the other notices specified in this policy, the Superintendent or designee shall post the following on the District website: (1) the annual schedule of regular meetings, which shall remain posted until the Board approves a new schedule of regular meetings; (2) a public notice of all Board meetings; and (3) the agenda for each meeting which shall remain posted until the meeting is concluded.

2:210 Organizational School Board Meeting

During a March meeting in odd-numbered years, the School Board establishes a date for its organizational meeting to be held sometime after the election authority canvasses the vote, but within 40 days after the consolidated election. The consolidated election is held on the first Tuesday in April of odd-numbered years. If, however, that date conflicts with the celebration of Passover, the consolidated election is postponed to the first Tuesday following the last day of Passover. At the organizational meeting, the following shall occur:

1. Each successful candidate, before taking his or her seat on the Board, shall take the oath of office as provided in Board policy 2:80, *Board Member Oath and Conduct*.
2. The new Board members shall be seated.
3. The Board shall elect its officers, who assume office immediately upon their election.
4. The Board shall fix a time and date for its regular meetings.

2:220 School Board Meeting Procedure

Agenda

The School Board President is responsible for focusing the Board meeting agendas on appropriate content. The Superintendent shall prepare agendas in consultation with the Board President. The President shall designate a portion of the agenda as a consent agenda for those items that usually do not require extensive discussion before Board action. Upon the request of any Board member, an item will be withdrawn from the consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for independent consideration.

Each Board meeting agenda shall contain the general subject matter of any item that will be the subject of final action at the meeting. Items submitted by Board members to the Superintendent or the President shall be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. District residents may suggest inclusions for the agenda. The Board will take final action only on items contained in the posted agenda; items not on the agenda may still be discussed.

The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the agenda, with adequate data and background information, to each Board member at least 48 hours before each meeting, except a meeting held in the event of an emergency. The meeting agenda shall be posted in accordance with Board policy 2:200, *Types of School Board Meetings*.

The Board President shall determine the order of business at regular Board meetings. Upon consent of a majority of members present, the order of business at any meeting may be changed.

Voting Method

Unless otherwise provided by law, when a vote is taken upon any measure before the Board, with a quorum being present, a majority of the votes cast shall determine its outcome. A vote of "abstain" or "present," or a vote other than "yea" or "nay," or a failure to vote, is counted for the purposes of determining whether a quorum is present. A vote of "abstain" or "present," or a vote other than "yea" or "nay," or a failure to vote, however, is not counted in determining whether a measure has been passed by the Board, unless otherwise stated in law. The sequence for casting votes is rotated.

On all questions involving the expenditure of money and on all questions involving the closing of a meeting to the public, a roll call vote shall be taken and entered in the Board's minutes. An individual Board member may request that a roll call vote be taken on any other matter; the President or other presiding officer may approve or deny the request but a denial is subject to being overturned by a majority vote of the members present.

Minutes

The Board Secretary shall keep written minutes of all Board meetings (whether open or closed), which shall be signed by the President and the Secretary. The minutes include:

1. The meeting's date, time, and place;
2. Board members recorded as either present or absent;
3. A summary of the discussion on all matters proposed, deliberated, or decided, and a record of any votes taken;
4. On all matters requiring a roll call vote, a record of who voted "yea" and "nay";
5. If the meeting is adjourned to another date, the time and place of the adjourned meeting;
6. The vote of each member present when a vote is taken to hold a closed meeting or portion of a meeting, and the reason for the closed meeting with a citation to the specific exception contained in the Open Meetings Act (OMA) authorizing the closed meeting;
7. A record of all motions, including individuals making and seconding motions;
8. Upon request by a Board member, a record of how he or she voted on a particular motion; and
9. The type of meeting, including any notices and, if a reconvened meeting, the original meeting's date.

The minutes shall be submitted to the Board for approval or modification at its next regularly scheduled open meeting. Minutes for open meetings must be approved within 30 days after the meeting or at the second subsequent regular meeting, whichever is later.

Every six months, or as soon after as is practicable, in an open meeting, the Board: (1) reviews minutes from all closed meetings that are currently unavailable for public release, and (2) determines which, if any, no longer require confidential treatment and are available for public inspection. This is also referred to as a *semi-annual review*. The Board may meet in a prior closed session to review the minutes from closed meetings that are currently unavailable for public release, but it reports its determination in open session.

The Board's meeting minutes must be submitted to the Board Treasurer at such times as the Treasurer may require.

The official minutes are in the custody of the Board Secretary. Open meeting minutes are available for inspection during regular office hours within 10 days after the Board's approval; they may be inspected in the District's main office, in the presence of the Secretary, the Superintendent or designee, or any Board member.

Minutes from closed meetings are likewise available, but only if the Board has released them for public inspection, except that Board members may access closed session minutes not yet released for public inspection (1) in the District's administrative offices or their official storage location, and (2) in the presence of the Recording Secretary, the Superintendent or designated administrator, or any elected Board member. The minutes, whether reviewed by members of the public or the Board, shall not be removed from the District's administrative offices or their official storage location except by vote of the Board or by court order.

The Board's open meeting minutes shall be posted on the District website within 10 days after the Board approves them; the minutes will remain posted for at least 60 days.

Verbatim Record of Closed Meetings

The Superintendent, or the Board Secretary when the Superintendent is absent, shall audio record all closed meetings. If neither is present, the Board President or presiding officer shall assume this responsibility. After the closed meeting, the person making the audio recording shall label the recording with the date and store it in a secure location. The Superintendent shall ensure that: (1) an audio recording device and all necessary accompanying items are available to the Board for every closed meeting, and (2) a secure location for storing closed meeting audio recordings is maintained close to the Board's regular meeting location. The secure location will be at the bank of Rantoul safe deposit box. The Board President, Board Secretary, and Superintendent will all have access to the safe deposit box. Two of the three must be present at any time to add or remove items from the safe deposit box. Only the Board President and Board Secretary will possess keys.

After 18 months have passed since being made, the audio recording of a closed meeting is destroyed provided the Board approved: (1) its destruction, and (2) minutes of the particular closed meeting.

Individual Board members may access verbatim recordings in the presence of the Recording Secretary, the Superintendent or designated administrator, or any elected Board member. Access to the verbatim recordings is available at the District's administrative offices or the verbatim recording's official storage location. Requests shall be made to the Superintendent or Board President. While a Board member is listening to a verbatim recording, it shall not be re-recorded or removed from the District's main office or official storage location, except by vote of the Board or by court order.

Before making such requests, Board members should consider whether such requests are germane to their responsibilities, service to District, and/or Oath of Office in policy 2:80, *Board Member Oath and Conduct*. In the interest of encouraging free and open expression by Board members during closed meetings, the recordings of closed meetings should not be used by Board members to confirm or dispute the accuracy of recollections.

Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video Means

A quorum of the Board must be physically present at all Board meetings. A majority of the full membership of the Board constitutes a quorum.

Provided a quorum is physically present, a Board member may attend a meeting by video or audio conference if he or she is prevented from physically attending because of: (1) personal illness or disability, (2) employment or District business, or (3) a family or other emergency. If a member wishes to attend a meeting by video or audio means, he or she must notify the recording secretary or Superintendent at least 24 hours before the meeting unless advance notice is impractical. The recording secretary or Superintendent will inform the Board President and make appropriate arrangements. A Board member who attends a meeting by audio or video means, as provided in this policy, may participate in all aspects of the Board meeting including voting on any item.

No Physical Presence of Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video; Disaster Declaration

The ability of the Board to meet in person with a quorum physically present at its meeting location may be affected by the Governor or the Director of the Ill. Dept. of Public Health issuing a disaster declaration related to a public health emergency. The Board President or, if the office is vacant or the President is absent or unable to perform the office's duties, the Vice President determines that an in-person meeting or a meeting conducted under the **Quorum and Participation by Audio or Video Means** subhead above, is not practical or prudent because of the disaster declaration; if neither the President nor Vice President are present or able to perform this determination, the Superintendent shall serve as the duly authorized designee for purposes of making this determination.

The individual who makes this determination for the Board shall put it in writing, include it on the Board's published notice and agenda for the audio or video meeting and in the meeting minutes, and ensure that the Board meets every OMA requirement for the Board to meet by video or audio conference without the physical presence of a quorum.

Rules of Order

Unless State law or Board-adopted rules apply, the Board President, as the presiding officer, will use the most recent edition of *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised*, as a guide when a question arises concerning procedure.

Broadcasting and Recording Board Meetings

Any person may record or broadcast an open Board meeting. Special requests to facilitate recording or broadcasting an open Board meeting, such as seating, writing surfaces, lighting, and access to electrical power, should be directed to the Superintendent at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Recording meetings shall not distract or disturb Board members, other meeting participants, or members of the public. The Board President may designate a location for recording equipment, may restrict the movements of individuals who are using recording equipment, or may take such other steps as are deemed necessary to preserve decorum and facilitate the meeting.

2:230 Public Participation at School Board Meetings and Petitions to the Board

For a maximum of 60 minutes during each regular and special open meeting of the Board, any person may comment to or ask questions of the School Board (public participation), subject to reasonable constraints established and recorded in this policy's guidelines below. The time limit for public participation at a meeting may be extended upon the majority vote of the Board members at the regular or special meeting.

To preserve sufficient time for the Board to conduct its business, any person appearing before the Board is expected to follow these guidelines:

1. Address the Board only at the appropriate time as indicated on the agenda and when recognized by the Board President. This includes following the directives of the Board President to maintain order and decorum for all.
2. Use a sign-in sheet, if requested.
3. Identify oneself and be brief. Ordinarily, comments shall be limited to 5 minutes. In unusual circumstances, and when an individual has made a request in advance to speak for a longer period of time, the Board President may allow an individual to speak for more than 5 minutes. If multiple individuals wish to address the Board on the same subject, the group is encouraged to appoint a spokesperson.

4. Observe the Board President's decision to shorten public comment to conserve time and give the maximum number of individuals an opportunity to speak.
5. Observe the Board President's decision to determine procedural matters regarding public participation not otherwise covered in Board policy.
6. Conduct oneself with respect and civility toward others and otherwise abide by Board policy, 8:30, Visitors to and Conduct on School Property.

Petitions or written correspondence to the Board shall be presented to the Board in the next regular Board packet.

What YOU Can Do To Get The Most Out Of Your Board Meetings

As an individual member of your board, you're not in control of the board meeting, but there are some things you can do to make the most of them. Here are some tips from your school board colleagues:

- Do your homework. When you get the agenda and back-up materials, read them and be prepared to contribute to the discussion. Plan your questions in advance and jot them down before coming to the meeting.
- If you do not get the information you need, check with the superintendent or your board president before the meeting.
- Try to know in advance what is expected of you. Be prepared to make any presentation expected.
- Organize your papers before arriving at the boardroom. Bring everything you need.
- Arrive on time.
- Keep the board agenda and objectives in mind.
- Don't spring any "surprises" on the board.
- If you're unprepared, don't fake it. If others are obviously unprepared, but are debating the issues anyway, try to cut them off as diplomatically as possible (a motion to table is one method).
- Work to reach agreement on the issues and come to a decision. If the discussion gets bogged down, try to summarize and encourage action.
- Avoid having a hidden agenda – saying one thing and meaning another.
- Avoid espousing personal philosophies at length.
- Don't attack personalities, attack problems.
- Keep your eyes open. If, in mid-sentence (or mid-argument), you realize that everybody around you is either glaring at you, blushing for you, or packing up to go home, take the hint and stop talking.
- Don't dominate discussions.
- Broaden your concerns. No matter what special interest group encouraged your election or appointment, once on the board, you should cast your votes according to your conscience. Vote with the knowledge that, as a board member, you almost always know more sides of an issue than your constituents do.
- Do not debate issues with members of the audience.

National School Boards Association: Becoming A Better Board Member

2:240 Board Policy Development

The School Board governs using written policies. Written policies ensure legal compliance, establish Board processes, articulate District ends, delegate authority, and define operating limits. Board policies also provide the basis for monitoring progress toward District ends.

Policy Development

Anyone may propose new policies, changes to existing policies, or deletion of existing policies. Staff suggestions should be processed through the Superintendent. Suggestions from all others should be made to the Board President or the Superintendent.

A Board Policy Committee will consider all policy suggestions and provide information and recommendations to the Board.

The Superintendent is responsible for: (1) providing relevant policy information and data to the Board, (2) notifying those who will implement or be affected by or required to implement a proposed policy and obtaining their advice and suggestions, and (3) having policy recommendations drafted into written form for Board deliberation. The Superintendent shall seek the counsel of the Board Attorney when appropriate.

Policy Adoption and Dissemination

Policies or policy revisions will not be adopted at the Board meeting at which they are first introduced, except when: (1) appropriate for a consent agenda because no Board discussion is required, or (2) necessary or prudent in order to meet emergency or special conditions or to be legally compliant. Further Board consideration may be given at a subsequent meeting(s) and after opportunity for community input. The adoption of a policy will serve to supersede all previously adopted policies on the same topic.

The Board policies are available for public inspection in the District's main office during regular office hours. Copy requests should be made pursuant to Board policy 2:250, Access to District Public Records.

Board Policy Review and Monitoring

The Board will periodically review its policies for relevancy, monitor its policies for effectiveness, and consider whether any modifications are required. The Board may use an annual policy review and monitoring calendar.

Words Importing Gender

Throughout this policy manual, words importing the masculine and/or feminine gender include all gender neutral/inclusive pronouns.

Superintendent Implementation

The Board will support any reasonable interpretation of Board policy made by the Superintendent. If reasonable minds differ, the Board will review the applicable policy and consider the need for further clarification.

In the absence of Board policy, the Superintendent is authorized to take appropriate action.

Suspension of Policies

The Board, by a majority vote of members present at any meeting, may temporarily suspend a Board policy except those provisions that are controlled by law or contract. The failure to suspend with a specific motion does not invalidate the Board action.

2:250 Access to District Public Records

Full access to the District's public records is available to any person as provided in the Illinois Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), this policy, and implementing procedures. The Superintendent or designee shall: (1) provide the Board with sufficient information and data to permit the Board to monitor the District's compliance with FOIA and this policy, and (2) report any FOIA requests during the Board's regular meetings along with the status of the District's response.

Freedom of Information Officer

The Superintendent shall serve as the District's Freedom of Information Officer and assumes all the duties and powers of that office as provided in FOIA and this policy. The Superintendent may delegate these duties and powers to one or more designees, but the delegation shall not relieve the Superintendent of the responsibility for the action that was delegated.

Definition

The District's public records are defined as records, reports, forms, writings, letters, memoranda, books, papers, maps, photographs, microfilms, cards, tapes, recordings, electronic data processing records, electronic communications, recorded information and all other documentary material pertaining to the transaction of public business, regardless of physical form or characteristics, having been prepared by or for, or having been or being used by, received by, in the possession of, or under the control of the School District.

Requesting Records

A request for inspection and/or copies of public records must be made in writing and may be submitted by personal delivery, mail, telefax, or email directed to the District's Freedom of Information Officer. Individuals making a request are not required to state a reason for the request other than to identify when the request is for a commercial purpose or when requesting a fee waiver. The Superintendent or designee shall instruct District employees to immediately forward any request for inspection and copying of a public record to the District's Freedom of Information Officer or designee.

Responding to Requests

The Freedom of Information Officer shall approve all requests for public records unless:

- The requested material does not exist;
- The requested material is exempt from inspection and copying by the Freedom of Information Act; or
- Complying with the request would be unduly burdensome.

Within five business days after receipt of a request for access to a public record, the Freedom of Information Officer shall comply with or deny the request, unless the time for response is extended as specified in Section 3 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer may extend the time for a response for up to five business days from the original due date. If an extension is needed, the Freedom of Information Officer shall: (1) notify the person making the request of the reason for the extension, and (2) either inform the person of the date on which a response will be made, or agree with the person in writing on a compliance period.

The time periods are extended for responding to requests for records made for a commercial purpose, requests by a recurrent requester, or voluminous requests, as those terms are defined in Section 2 of FOIA. The time periods for responding to those requests are governed by Sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.6 of FOIA.

When responding to a request for a record containing both exempt and non-exempt material, the Freedom of Information Officer shall redact exempt material from the record before complying with the request.

Fees

Persons making a request for copies of public records must pay any and all applicable fees. The Freedom of Information Officer shall establish a fee schedule that complies with FOIA and this policy and is subject to the Board's review. The fee schedule shall include copying fees and all other fees to the maximum extent they are permitted by FOIA, including without limitation, search and review fees for responding to a request for a commercial purpose and fees, costs, and personnel hours in connection with responding to a voluminous request.

Copying fees, except when fixed by statute, shall be reasonably calculated to reimburse the District's actual cost for reproducing and certifying public records and for the use, by any person, of its equipment to copy records. In no case shall the copying fees exceed the maximum fees permitted by FOIA. If the District's actual copying costs are equal to or greater than the maximum fees permitted by FOIA, the Freedom of Information Officer is authorized to use FOIA's maximum fees as the District's fees. No copying fees shall be charged for: (1) the first 50 pages of black and white, letter or legal sized copies, or (2) electronic copies other than the actual cost of the recording medium, except if the response is to a voluminous request, as defined in FOIA.

A fee reduction is available if the request qualifies under Section 6 of FOIA. The Freedom of Information Officer shall set the amount of the reduction taking into consideration the amount of material requested and the cost of copying it.

Provision of Copies and Access to Records

A public record that is the subject of an approved access request will be available for inspection or copying at the District's administrative office during regular business hours, unless other arrangements are made by the Freedom of Information Officer.

Many public records are immediately available from the District's website including, but not limited to, the process for requesting a public record. The Freedom of Information Officer shall direct a requester to the District's website if a requested record is available there. If the requester is unable to reasonably access the record online, he or she may resubmit the request for the record, stating his or her inability to reasonably access the record online, and the District shall make the requested record available for inspection and copying as otherwise provided in this policy.

Preserving Public Records

Public records, including email messages, shall be preserved and cataloged if: (1) they are evidence of the District's organization, function, policies, procedures, or activities, (2) they contain informational data appropriate for preservation, (3) their retention is required by State or federal law, or (4) they are subject to a retention request by the Board Attorney (e.g., a litigation hold), District auditor, or other individual authorized by the School Board or State or federal law to make such a request. Unless its retention is required as described in items numbered 3 or 4 above, a public record, as defined by the Illinois Local Records Act, may be destroyed when authorized by the Local Records Commission.

2:260 Uniform Grievance Procedure

A student, parent/guardian, employee, or community member should notify any District Complaint Manager if he or she believes that the School Board, its employees, or its agents has violated his or her rights regarding any one of the following:

1. Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, [42 U.S.C. §12101](#) *et seq.*
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, [29 U.S.C. §791](#) *et seq.*
3. Discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin prohibited by the Illinois Human Rights Act, [775 ILCS 5/](#); Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, [42 U.S.C. §2000d](#) *et seq.*; and/or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, [42 U.S.C. §2000e](#) *et seq.* (see Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*)
4. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, [42 U.S.C. §2000e](#) *et seq.* (see also number 4, above, for discrimination and/or harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin)
5. Sexual harassment prohibited by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act, [5 ILCS 430/70-5\(a\)](#); Illinois Human Rights Act, [775 ILCS 5/](#); and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, [42 U.S.C. §2000e](#) *et seq.* (Title IX sexual harassment complaints are addressed under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*)
6. Illinois Human Rights Act, [775 ILCS 5/](#)
7. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, [42 U.S.C. §2000e](#) *et seq.*
8. Breastfeeding accommodations for students, [105 ILCS 5/10-20.60](#)
9. Bullying, [105 ILCS 5/27-23.7](#)
10. Victims' Economic Security and Safety Act, [820 ILCS 180/](#)
11. Illinois Equal Pay Act of 2003, [820 ILCS 112/](#)
12. Provision of services to homeless students
13. Illinois Whistleblower Act, [740 ILCS 174/](#)
14. Misuse of genetic information prohibited by the Illinois Genetic Information Privacy Act, [410 ILCS 513/](#); and Titles I and II of the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act, [42 U.S.C. §2000ff](#) *et seq.*
15. Employee Credit Privacy Act, [820 ILCS 70/](#).

The Complaint Manager will first attempt to resolve complaints without resorting to this grievance procedure. If a formal complaint is filed under this policy, the Complaint Manager will address the complaint promptly and equitably. A student and/or parent/guardian filing a complaint under this policy may forego any informal suggestions and/or attempts to resolve it and may proceed directly to this grievance procedure. The Complaint Manager will not require a student or parent/guardian complaining of any form of harassment to attempt to resolve allegations directly with the accused (or the accused's parent(s)/guardian(s)); this includes mediation.

Right to Pursue Other Remedies Not Impaired

The right of a person to prompt and equitable resolution of a complaint filed under this policy shall not be impaired by the person's pursuit of other remedies, e.g., criminal complaints, civil actions, etc. Use of this grievance procedure is not a prerequisite to the pursuit of other remedies and use of this grievance procedure does not extend any filing deadline related to the pursuit of other remedies. If a person is pursuing another remedy subject to a complaint under this policy, the District will continue with a simultaneous investigation under this policy.

Deadlines

All deadlines under this policy may be extended by the Complaint Manager as he or she deems appropriate. As used in this policy, *school business days* means days on which the District's main office is open.

Filing a Complaint

A person (hereinafter Complainant) who wishes to avail him or herself of this grievance procedure may do so by filing a complaint with any District Complaint Manager. The Complainant shall not be required to file a complaint with a particular Complaint Manager and may request a Complaint Manager of the same gender. The Complaint Manager may request the Complainant to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint or require a meeting with a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The Complaint Manager shall assist the Complainant as needed.

For any complaint alleging bullying and/or cyberbullying of students, the Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint under Board policy 7:180, *Prevention of and Response to Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

For any complaint alleging sex discrimination that, if true, would implicate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ([20 U.S.C. &1681](#) *et seq.*), the Title IX Coordinator or designee shall process and review the complaint under Board policy 2:265, *Title IX Grievance Procedure*.

For any complaint alleging harassment on the basis of race, color, or national origin, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint under Board policy 2:270, *Discrimination and Harassment on the Basis of Race, Color, and National Origin Prohibited*, in addition to any response required by this policy.

For any complaint alleging sexual harassment or other violation of Board policy 5:20, *Workplace Harassment Prohibited*, the Nondiscrimination Coordinator or a Complaint Manager or designee shall process and review the complaint according to that policy, in addition to any response required by this policy, and shall consider whether an investigation under Board policy 5:120, *Employee Ethics; Code of Professional Conduct; and Conflict of Interest*, should be initiated.

Investigation Process

The Complaint Manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his or her behalf. The Complaint Manager shall ensure both parties have an equal opportunity to present evidence during an investigation. The complaint and identity of the Complainant will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by parent/guardian of the Complainant, or by the Complainant if he or she is 18 years of age or older.

The identity of any student witnesses will not be disclosed except: (1) as required by law, this policy, or any collective bargaining agreement, (2) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (3) as authorized by the parent/guardian of the student witness, or by the student if the student is 18 years of age or older.

The Complaint Manager will inform, at regular intervals, the person(s) filing a complaint under this policy about the status of the investigation. Within 30 school business days after the date the complaint was filed, the Complaint Manager shall file a written report of his or her findings with the Superintendent. The Complaint Manager may extend this timeframe as he or she deems appropriate.

If a complaint contains allegations involving the Superintendent or Board member(s), the written report shall be filed directly with the Board, which will make a decision in accordance with paragraph four of the following section of this policy.

Decision and Appeal

Within five school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's report, the Superintendent shall provide a written decision to the Complainant, the accused, and the Complaint Manager. All decisions shall be based upon the *preponderance of evidence* standard.

Within 10 school business days after receiving the Superintendent's decision, the Complainant or the accused may appeal the decision to the Board by making a written request to the Complaint Manager. The Complaint Manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board.

Within 30 school business days of receipt of the written appeal of the Superintendent's decision, the Board shall affirm, reverse, or amend the Superintendent's decision or direct the Superintendent to gather additional information. The Board may extend this timeframe as the Board deems appropriate. Within five school business days after the Board's decision, the Superintendent shall inform the Complainant and the accused of the Board's action.

For complaints containing allegations involving the Superintendent or Board member(s), within 30 school business days after receiving the Complaint Manager's or outside investigator's report, the Board shall provide its written decision to the Complainant, the accused, and the Complaint Manager. The Board may extend this timeframe as the Board deems appropriate.

This policy shall not be construed to create an independent right to a hearing before the Superintendent or Board. The failure to strictly follow the timelines in this grievance procedure shall not prejudice any party.

Appointing a Nondiscrimination Coordinator and Complaint Managers

The Superintendent shall appoint a Nondiscrimination Coordinator to manage the District's efforts to provide equal opportunity employment and educational opportunities and prohibit the harassment of employees, students, and others.

The Superintendent shall appoint a Title IX Coordinator to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with Title IX.

The Superintendent shall appoint at least one Complaint Manager to administer this policy. If possible, the Superintendent will appoint two Complaint Managers, each of a different gender. The District's Nondiscrimination Coordinator may be appointed as one of the Complaint Managers.

The Superintendent shall insert into this policy and keep current the names, office addresses, email addresses, and telephone numbers of the Nondiscrimination Coordinator and the Complaint Managers.