



Ashland School District #5

Board – Superintendent Operating Agreement

Purpose:

The Board of Directors is the educational policy making body for the Ashland School District. To effectively meet the system's challenges the School Board and Superintendent must function together as a leadership team. To ensure unity among team members, effective group agreements must be in place. The following are the group agreements for the Board and Superintendent.

Collaborative Governance:

1. Members of the Board and the Superintendent shall work together as a team; modeling lifelong learning and collaboration.
2. Members of the Board and the Superintendent shall mutually respect the others' role in policy/governance and in managing the school district and to direct employees in district and school matters, respectively.
3. Board members shall give careful consideration, listening to all perspectives, to all issues brought to the board by individuals and district leadership.
4. The Board shall make decisions only at properly called meetings. Board members recognize that individual members have no authority to take individual action in policy or district and school administrative matters, unless so authorized by board vote.

Communication Agreements:

1. Board members shall follow the chain-of-command and communicate directly with the Superintendent when a question arises, or a concern or complaint is voiced by a staff member, student, parent or community member.
2. Board Members shall communicate directly with the Superintendent or Board Chair prior to meetings of the board to address questions and concerns about agenda items.
3. When a Board member and/or the Superintendent has an individual concern, they shall communicate one-on-one with any member of the board-superintendent team as appropriate starting at the lowest possible level at the earliest opportunity. Concerns should be escalated to the board chair and/or OSBA for support if not resolved.
4. Support decisions of the majority. Once a decision is made, members will support the decision of the majority.
5. Be mindful that you represent the board in public and that communication should remain positive about the district/board and that no individual board member has the authority to speak for the board without specific approval by the board.

Agreed Upon Communication Protocol:

1. Communication between board members and superintendent will be respectful, timely, honest, direct, and appropriate.
2. Superintendent will communicate to board members regularly through weekly emailed reports when one has not been presented in-person during the same week and through in-person monthly meetings (1:1 or 2:1).
3. Board members should contact superintendent with questions or when topics come up through email, text, or phone. If urgent, text before a cold call to ensure availability. When possible, limit calls/texts to M-F 7AM-8PM.
4. In an emergency the superintendent will limit communication to the Board Chair who will communicate with the board. Detailed communication will follow the incident.
5. The board will use text communication for logistical and informational purposes only and should exercise caution.

Collective Commitments to:

1. Respectful interactions.
2. Learning together.
3. The understanding that we are all human, we WILL make mistakes, should welcome feedback when we do, and use feedback to grow.
4. Filter decisions through the lens of vision, mission, and what is in the best interests of our students.
5. Avoid surprises at board meetings and in board business.
6. Having fun.

2026-2027 Board Expectations of the Superintendent:

1. Provide data to the board members so that data-informed decisions can be made.
2. Distribute appropriate information to all board members.
3. Communicate with board members promptly and effectively.
4. Represent the school district by being visible in the community.
5. Provide follow-up information to board members on concerns and issues they have referred to the Superintendent - close the communication loop.

2026-2027 Superintendent's Expectations of the Board:

1. Integrity of the highest order.
2. Recognition of the superintendent as the educational leader of the school district.
3. An effort to foster unity, harmony and open communications within the board.
4. Arrive at board meeting fully prepared to conduct district business.
5. Willingness to abide by its own rules, policies and code of ethical conduct.
6. Make difficult decisions and commit to share information when appropriate.

Approved by the board on September 10, 2026.