

BOARD HANDBOOK

Board of Education
Provo City School District
Effective January 2025

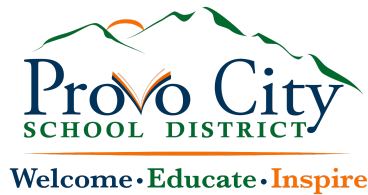


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Introduction

This Board of Education Handbook has been created to compile, in one place, the norms, guidelines and responsibilities of the Provo City School District Board of Education. This will serve as a tool to help new and current board members in their duties as members of the board.

District Strategic Plan

See the full strategic plan [here](#).

Mission

Welcome, Educate, Inspire

Vision

The Provo City School District is a vibrant learning environment where all students become lifelong learners and engaged community members.

Core Values

- **Belonging:** Creating a welcoming and supportive environment where differences are valued and everyone feels respected and included.
- **Growth:** Striving for academic rigor, innovative teaching methods, and continuous improvement to foster student success and achievement.
- **Empowerment:** Providing tools, resources, and opportunities to build confidence, develop capacity, and achieve greatness.
- **Creativity:** Encouraging innovation, curiosity, imagination, and critical thinking.
- **Community:** Establishing strong partnerships between schools, families, and the broader community to enhance educational experiences and address needs of students effectively.

Priorities

Priority 1: Academic Achievement

- Goal 1: Increase the percentage of students achieving proficiency in core subjects (M/LA/S) by 15% within 5 academic years
- Goal 2: Increase the percentage of students who meet college & career readiness benchmarks (ACT+18, Graduation, Adv Courses) by 5% within 5 academic years

Priority 2: Wellness and Safety

- Goal 1: Increase the number of students and families who feel that our schools and district provide welcoming and supportive environments as measured by climate and stakeholder feedback surveys.
- Goal 2: Reduce the number of major offenses tied to bullying, harassment,

discrimination, school safety, and physical aggression to 4% or lower across all student groups by 2030.

- Goal 3: Decrease the number of students who are chronically absent.

Priority 3: Stewardship of Resources

- Goal 1: Increase the retention of high quality teachers between years 5 and 15 by 15% over 5 years
- Goal 2: Improve communication about decision-making, resource allocation, and facilities management by 15% over 5 years as measured by specific survey data.

Legal Status, Responsibilities, and Norms

Legal Status

The Utah State Legislature assigns to each locally elected board of education control of the public schools in its district. Therefore, the Provo City School District is a political subdivision of the state and derives its powers from the state constitution and acts of the legislature.

Responsibilities

The board has all powers assigned to it by law and regulation to meet its statutory responsibilities as defined in [53G-4-402](#). It may perform all of the following duties, as well as others legally prescribed and permitted:

- Keep confidential all issues discussed in executive sessions, including legal action, negotiations, personnel, real estate, and school security details. ([See Open Meetings Handbook provided by Utah School Boards Association](#))
- Avoid conflicts of interest or the seeking of inappropriate advantage as a result of serving on the board. [Policy 1630](#)
- Refrain from promoting an individual agenda; rather, study issues and make decisions that are in the best interest of the district as a whole.
- Endeavor to be on time and attend all board meetings, having prepared ahead of time by carefully studying posted board documents. During board meetings listen to all information and viewpoints.
- Guard the public trust by spending district/school funds to benefit all children.
 - Understand the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent, business administrator, and staff.
 - Understand that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.
 - Participate in professional development and commit the time and effort necessary to be an informed and effective leader.

Norms

The Members of the Board of Education agree to abide by the following norms, both as they

govern the conduct of Board meetings and as they govern the actions of individual Board Members.

Board Members Will:

- Keep learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
- Be considerate of other board members by not dominating “air time” in the meetings and refraining from making combative or argumentative statements.
- Represent the board with dignity and integrity.
- Treat fellow board members with respect and consideration through civil discourse, and honesty, especially when there are disagreements.
- Respect, support, and uphold the final decisions made by the Board of Education as a body, even if in the minority. Maintain this respect when making appearances before external bodies and constituencies.
- Never give instructions or direct persons who report directly or indirectly to the superintendent, except for the business administrator.
- Attend all scheduled meetings.

Relationships and Protocols

Appointment of the Superintendent and Business Administrator

The board must appoint a district superintendent and business administrator, as directed by [Utah Law](#). The board expects these appointed officers to work together, with district employees and members of the board, to promote student learning. The board further expects that the business administrator and superintendent will exemplify the highest standards of professional competence and ethical conduct. See Policies [1500](#) and [1520](#).

Board’s Relationship with the Superintendent

The board expects the superintendent to discharge all of his or her [statutory duties](#), to consult with the board about school operations and problems in timely, accurate, and appropriate ways, and to provide data to the board so that data-driven decisions can be made. The board delegates executive powers to the superintendent and relies on his or her expertise in matters of district administration and educational best practices. The board holds the superintendent responsible for administering its policies, executing board decisions, and achieving board goals. The superintendent is accountable to the board for his or her performance. The board will evaluate the superintendent each year, including but not limited to, criteria such as student achievement and meeting board goals. The board will refrain from evaluating either formally, or informally, staff other than the superintendent and business administrator. [See Policy 1515](#).

Board’s Relationship with the Business Administrator

The board expects the business administrator to discharge his or her [statutory duties](#) and to keep

accurate records of all district revenues and expenditures, all meetings of the board, and all legal and fiscal obligations of the board. The board relies on the business administrator for advice and expertise on financial matters affecting the operation of the schools. The board holds the business administrator responsible for ensuring the accuracy, integrity, and timely communication of such information to the board and superintendent. The business administrator is accountable to the board for his or her performance. The board will evaluate the business administrator each year. [See Policy 1535](#).

Individual Board Member relationships with the Superintendent and the Business Administrator

While an open, collaborative, and warm relationship should be cultivated between board members and the superintendent and business administrator, no individual board member should attempt to direct the superintendent or business administrator. The entire board or a majority, working through the board president, is welcome to bring matters of concern to the superintendent or business administrator and expect some form of follow-up.

Board relationships with other board members

The board expects other board members to discharge his or her [statutory duties](#) and strive to function with a sense of unity and common purpose. The board expects other board members to discharge his or her statutory duties and strive to function with a sense of unity and common purpose. Board members are expected to treat each other with civility and respect regardless of disagreement or differing opinions.

Board members will understand, according to [open meeting laws](#), when it is appropriate to have 4 or more members (defined as a “quorum”) in group settings. Board members should be careful in emails and texts to share information but not discuss anything because discussions belong in the public when there are more than 3 board members.

Board relationships with the public

The public are valued partners with the district, schools, and teachers in the education of children. The board commits to communicating effectively with the public, recognizing that some items and topics have elements of confidentiality. Students, parents, and patrons will be dealt with courteously and with a demeanor of helpfulness, professional decorum, responsiveness, and an effort to resolve problems, as directed by [policy 7510](#). As a general standard, the Board discourages anonymous communication. All parties involved in public communication are expected to behave in a civil, problem-solving manner.

When the full board receives an email, generally the board member who resides in the patron’s area is responsible for the initial response, responding as an individual and not as the voice of the board. All board members are also welcome to respond, as an individual, once the initial response has been sent. However, it is also recommended to first evaluate if it would be more appropriate for the superintendent or other district leadership to respond to the email.

All Other District Staff

It is not appropriate for members of the Board to direct district staff. As noted above, the superintendent and business administrator report directly to the board. All other district employees have supervisors who are ultimately directed by the superintendent and/or the business administrator. The board shall, as a representation of four or more members of like mind, run their concerns regarding certain individuals or departments through the superintendent, who may ask the board for clarifications, and then proceed accordingly.

Election of Board Officers

The board must elect a president and vice president, known as “board leadership,” whose terms of office are two years, and until successors are elected. **See Policies [1107](#) and [1108](#).**

Recent practice has been that the president and vice-president will come from opposite sides of the city, i.e. the President is from the east side of the city, and the vice president is from the west side (or vice versa). It would be uncommon for either leadership position to be held by a newly elected (first-time) board member.

Role of Board President and Vice President

The board president and vice president hold the same voting rights as other board members; however, they are entrusted with the following discretionary responsibilities, which they will manage together:

- Assume the role of running board meetings utilizing Robert’s Rules of Order, including being among the first or last to speak to an issue, and calling upon other board members to speak.
 - Manage the board’s process by convening meetings, developing the board agenda with the superintendent, business administrator, and with board member input, and executing documents as appropriate.
 - Lead the board through the agenda in an orderly, fair, and timely manner.
 - Foster unity, harmony, and open communications within the board.
 - Facilitate the orientation of new board members.
 - Ensure fair “air time” is provided for each board member in discussions.
 - Assist the superintendent in communicating important information to the full board and keep members apprised of information exchanged with the superintendent.
 - Have regularly scheduled meetings with the superintendent to facilitate communication.
- [See Policy 1115.](#)**

Agenda Development

The board president, board vice president, superintendent, and business administrator should develop board meeting agendas collaboratively. Any board member may request that a topic be

placed on an upcoming meeting agenda by contacting the board president or vice president. The current practice includes but is not limited to, adding requests to the [Requested Agenda Item Tracking Sheet](#). In general, the scheduling of topics is at the discretion of board leadership, but if three or more board members join in requesting that a topic be placed on the agenda, that request will be accommodated at an appropriate time.

Requests for information

Requests made by board members for a significant amount of information are communicated to the superintendent by the board president and/or vice president so that staff workload can be monitored. Be aware of diminishing resources and time when requesting action or information from staff. Assess whether a majority of the board desires particular information from staff before making the request. When appropriate, the superintendent keeps board leadership informed of information requests from board members to staff.

Complaints from the community

When a board member receives an informal complaint, they should listen carefully. A single board member may respond to the patron only as an individual. The board member should direct the person to solve the problem by communicating with the individuals at the level (teacher, principal, district, etc.) where the problem originated before escalating to the next appropriate level. Formal complaints must be put in writing and signed by the complainant. These are heard by the superintendent or designee. Complainants from the community may appeal the Superintendent's decisions to the school board. Please see the organization chart for the hierarchy of the district, located on pages 18-19 at the end of this handbook.

Complaints from district employees

When a board member receives an informal complaint, they should listen carefully. A single board member may respond to the employee only as an individual. The board member should direct the person to solve the problem by communicating with the individuals at the level (teacher, principal, district, etc.) where the problem originated before escalating to the next appropriate level. Formal complaints must be handled according to district policy. See [Policy 5285](#).

Individuals/Groups Seeking an Audience with the Board during public meetings

Such requests will be granted or denied by board leadership. Individuals and groups seeking to promote a business opportunity or a political point of view will usually be denied the opportunity for a formal presentation. However, such individuals/groups may speak to the board in the public comment portion of the scheduled business meetings. See [Policy 1430](#)

Professional Development

The board supports targeted, relevant professional development throughout the district, and

recognizes that such growth opportunities are essential for the improvement of both individual and institutional effectiveness. The board models this commitment toward professional development by attending school board specific professional development, such as Utah School Boards Association events, National School Boards Association events, and other enrichment activities agreed to by the board. Professional Development is easiest to support when it is aligned and consistent with the accomplishment of district goals and strategic plan.

Costs of attending professional development opportunities will be weighed against budgetary perspectives, location, time away from normal duties, and any number of additional concerns.

Board Meetings

A board meeting is a formal gathering where the board of education discusses and votes on important issues that affect the school and community. The board makes decisions on policy, budgets, curriculum, and other critical issues. The board ensures policies and procedures are followed and provides a forum for community members to give public input to the board. Board meetings are not public meetings, but are meetings held in public. All meetings are open to the public except when those matters as prescribed by law are discussed.

Other meetings attended within the school district, as a board member (PTA, Community Council, etc.), are opportunities for board members to listen, learn, and participate only when called on to do so.

Study Sessions

The purpose of study sessions is to discuss agenda items in depth prior to business meetings. Topics could include but are not limited to policy, facilities, planning of all types, budgeting priorities, etc. Study sessions are meetings held in public, but do not include public comment nor does the board enact votes for the purpose of establishing approved actions.

Each study session begins with a member of the board reading the following statement to help keep the board focused on the goals of the strategic plan:

The Provo City School District is a vibrant learning environment where all students become lifelong learners and engaged community members.

We are committed to our mission to Welcome, Educate, & Inspire.

Our work is guided by our CORE VALUES: Belonging, Growth, Empowerment, Creativity, and Community, while staying focused on our PRIORITIES of, Academic Achievement, Wellness & Safety, and Stewardship of Resources.

Executive Sessions

Executive sessions are “closed” meetings for the board and may include the superintendent, business administrator, and others as needed depending on the purpose of the meeting. Closed

meetings are defined by state law and can only be held when discussing specific issues. [See USB Open Meeting Handbook](#). The content of executive sessions is expected to be confidential. No attendee should divulge the elements of the discussion, nor the sentiments expressed by any person in attendance. Upon convening an executive session, the following statement is read to remind board members of the serious nature and confidentiality required of executive sessions:

“Please remember that all information in this meeting is confidential and should not be discussed elsewhere. Failure to comply with the open meeting law may result in invalidating board action. In addition, any board member who knowingly or intentionally violates any of the closed meeting requirements, or who intentionally discloses records of a closed meeting with the knowledge that such disclosure is prohibited, can be found guilty of a class B misdemeanor.”

Business Meetings

Business Meetings are generally held the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month to conduct the business of the board. The format of the business meeting agenda usually includes:

- Welcome and Roll Call
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Opening Remarks from a board member
- Employee Recognition
- Report(s) from a School or Department
- Public Comment
- Action on Business Items
- Approval of Consent Calendar
- Business Administrator Report
- Student Board Members Report
- Board Member Round Table
- Superintendent Report
- Adjournment

Robert’s Rules of Order

To maintain order in Provo City School District Board of Education meetings we have adopted an informal use of [Robert’s Rules of Order](#).

Opening Remarks

An assigned board member will provide remarks to open the business meeting, lasting no longer than 2 minutes. Remarks can include a reflection, a prayer, or welcoming words related to education.

Board Member Round Table

Each board member can elect to provide a report on their specific committee assignments or recent activity in their official capacity. Reports should be no longer than 3 minutes in length. This is an opportunity to make a positive statement about board member duties.

Calendaring of Board Meetings

The listing of meetings for a given calendar year will be approved by the board in December or January, annually. Throughout the year, business meetings are generally held on the second and fourth Tuesday afternoon/evening of the month. The term “Board Meeting” could include an executive session, study session, and business meeting:

January

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Board Meeting 4th Tuesday evening

February

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Board Meeting 4th Tuesday evening

March

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Last Friday of the Month, All Day Meeting

April

Board Meeting (custom placed depending on Spring Break)

May

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Board Meeting 4th Tuesday evening

June

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Board Meeting 4th Tuesday evening

July

No meetings, usually

August

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Board Meeting 4th Tuesday evening

September

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening

Last Friday of the Month, All Day Meeting

October

Board Meeting, 2nd Tuesday evening
Board meeting 4th Tuesday evening
November
Board Meeting, might be 2nd or 3rd Tuesday depending on Election Canvas
December
Board Meeting 2nd Tuesday evening

Hearings

Hearings may be held from time to time. Some hearings are required as part of the Truth in Taxation process and the Bonding process. State laws have been established and must be followed for hearings related to [Truth in Taxation](#) and Bonding. (Please see [Utah Code 59-2-919](#) for more information).

Other hearings may occur less formally as needed, as directed by the board.

Quorum

A “quorum” for a business meeting is defined as at least four (4) board members present.

Electronic Meetings

[Policy 1420](#) permits board meetings via electronic communication.

All Day Meeting

All Day Meetings are usually held 2 times per year, once in late September or early October, and in mid-March to mid-April. The meeting may or may not be in addition to the established 2 meetings per month.

The September meeting can focus on the annual audit report and state assessment scores. The Winter-Spring meeting usually comes after the end of the legislative session, and most often focuses on budget development based on the latest information regarding likely state allocations for the coming year.

All Day Meetings can best be described as extended study sessions. They are public meetings and could have a media presence. Agendas are developed well in advance and may consume the better part of a full day, usually a Friday. Business meetings and executive sessions can be added to the meeting as needed.

Public Comment in Board Meetings

[Policy 1430](#) governs the topic of public comment in board meetings.

USBA activities, events, and conferences

The Provo City School District Board of Education is a member of the Utah School Boards Association. USBA holds training and assorted events throughout the year. An annual conference

is also held in January at the Little America Hotel in SLC. This conference includes keynote speakers, business of the USBA (including the election of officers), business of the UHSAA (including the election of board member regional representatives), and several breakout sessions.

Board members and senior administrators are best served by having conversations about how information gleaned from a conference might be viable in the district.

NSBA

The National School Boards Association holds an annual conference somewhere in the nation each Spring. The board may choose to attend, depending on the location and/or cost of attending.

UHSAA

Provo City School District is a member of the [Utah High Schools Activities Association](#). Generally speaking, the board and senior administration do not have much involvement with the UHSAA, with the high schools mainly being the direct points of contact with the association. There are times, however, when the board may need to contribute information on preferences to UHSAA that will supersede school-level contributions. For example, the UHSAA may request information from boards/superintendents regarding revised classifications or the adjustment of league memberships.

Items Requiring Board Approval or Votes

- Approval of policies
- Approval of purchases of \$50,000 and above
- Student travel in the continental U.S. greater than 425 miles away per [Policy 4006](#) and related procedures
- Resolutions regarding specific issues (i.e., Bonding, Truth in Taxation)
- Approval of employee group contracts
- Calendaring items
- All other board-level items brought forward by the superintendent

Items Requiring Superintendent Approval

- Approval of procedures
- Approval of purchases of \$10,000 to \$50,000
- Student travel in the continental U.S. less than 425 miles away per Policy [4006](#) and related Procedures
- All other management and personnel items under the purview of the superintendent

Items Requiring Business Administrator Approval

- Grants, generally
- Items \$10,000-50,000
- Contracts

- MOUs

Graduation Ceremonies

Board members participate yearly in graduation ceremonies of Provo High School, Timpview High School, Independence High School, Provo Adult Education graduation, and Fall Graduation.

A designated board member will be assigned to speak. Speeches by board members should last no longer than 3-5 minutes. At the conclusion of the speech, the board member should accept the graduates on behalf of the Board of Education using the following language:

“Superintendent _____, and Principal _____, as a duly elected Board Member of Provo City School District, and by the authority vested in me by the Utah State Board of Education and the Utah State Legislature, I certify that the _____ High School, class of _____ have completed the requirements for graduation and should be awarded their high school diplomas. I now declare the Class of _____ is graduated and entitled to all of the honor and privileges their diplomas represent.”

Attorney Services

The district retains the services of three legal firms:

- Fabian VanCott, Joan Andrews, Attorney (general counsel, special education, personnel, contracts)
- Seiler, Anderson, Fife & Marshall, Derek Marshall, Attorney (general counsel, student issues, Title IX, local real estate issues, contracts)
- Gilmore & Bell, Randall Larson, Attorney (bond counsel).

Generally speaking, contact with attorneys goes through the superintendent and/or the business administrator. Payment for attorney services is handled by the superintendent, business administrator, or other respective department in the district that needs the specific attorney services. If the board is considering termination (or discipline) of the business administrator or superintendent, the board president is authorized to contact the attorney on behalf of the board.

Compensation and Benefits for Board Members

The following items, in bullet form, outline the main [Compensation and Benefits for Board Members](#) in Provo City School District

- A monthly salary of \$480.00 and an extra \$120.00 for board leadership
- Benefits (Health, Dental, Vision) for self and immediate family members
- Stipend (monthly) for cell phone/internet

District Financial Summary

Budget Process (very summarized)

- Establish assumptions and parameters for the upcoming fiscal year (October through January)
- Establish district-wide goals for the upcoming year (October through January) • Determine department goals (December through January)
- Meet with departments and develop budget detail (February through April) • board budget presentation (May)
- Budget approval and adoption (June)

The board must adopt a budget before June 22. The superintendent must present the board the budget no later than June 1. The budget must be available for public inspection at least ten days before adoption. Notice of a budget hearing must be posted at least seven days before the budget hearing and adoption of the budget. Truth in taxation requires several additional public notices. Budget development begins with board goals and is developed with the aid of the executive council and their respective departments.

Property taxes

School districts can assess six different property tax levies.

Levy	Maximum Rate
Basic	Set by Legislature
Board Local	.002500
Voted Local	.002000
Capital Local	.003000
Judgment	Sufficient to repay
Debt	Sufficient to repay

- **Basic** - set by the legislature, proceeds go to the state to help fund the weighted pupil unit
- **Board Local** - requires board approval (truth in taxation applies)
- **Voted local** - requires vocal voter approval, district is at maximum voter approved level
- **Capital local** - requires board approval (truth in taxation applies)
- **Judgment** - sufficient to pay for a successful property tax appeal requiring repayment

- **Debt** - sufficient to repay, requires local voter approval

Certified Tax Rate and Truth in Taxation

Each year a school district board of education decides the property taxes they will levy. If the combined total rate of the board local, voted, and capital levies for the new budget year exceeds the prior year, the board must go through the [truth in taxation](#) process (a public hearing and notification) before it can adopt the budget. This vote would typically take place in August but must take place before Sept 1st. See Truth In Taxation requirements [HERE](#).

RDAs (Redevelopment Act)

Redevelopment began in Utah in the mid-1960s with the Utah Community Development Act. Its original intent was to fund the revitalization of downtown areas of communities through Tax Increment Financing (TIF). Tax Increment Financing allows the tax dollars collected for a redevelopment project area that are in excess of a "base year" tax amount, to be paid to the redevelopment agency for purposes of "alteration, improvement, modernization, reconstruction, or rehabilitation...of existing structures in a project area" rather than the taxing entities. In other words, the district is not able to collect new taxes on the property improvements in an RDA area until the RDA expires. Originally an RDA area could be established without district approval. Several years ago the law was changed requiring district approval to establish an RDA area. [Policy 1940](#) provides guidelines for the board for RDA agreements.

Bonding Authority

The Board of Education has the authority to authorize the sale of bonds on the open market for purposes of funding capital improvements. Utah State Code [Titles 59](#) and [11](#) outline the legal process and requirements of bonding.

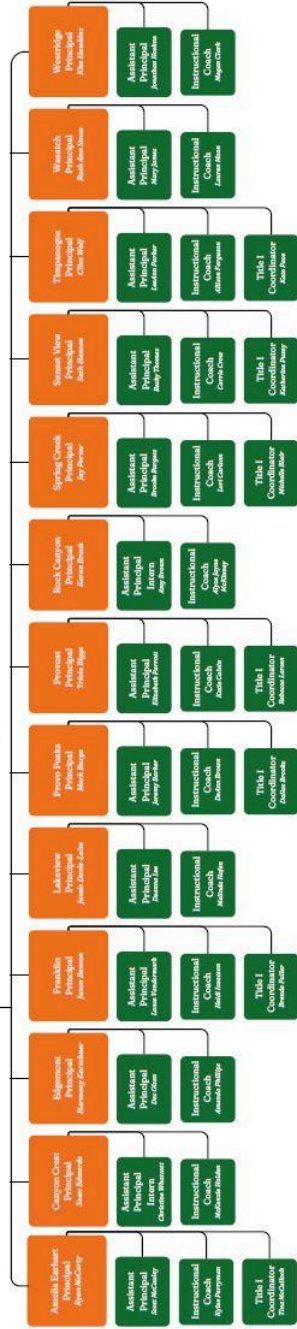
Other Information

The best source of financial overview information is the [Popular Annual Financial Report](#) located on our website. If you have trouble sleeping, the [Annual Comprehensive Financial Report](#) is also located on our website.

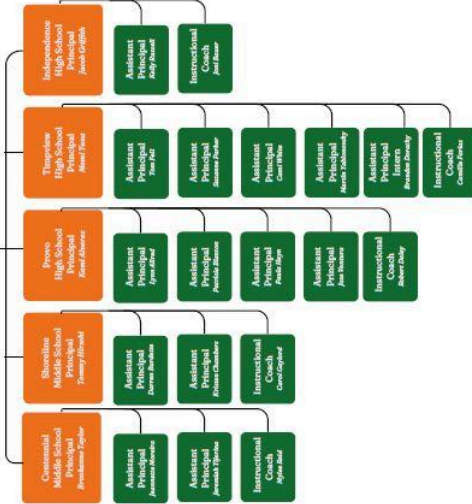




Assistant Superintendent
Elementary Education
Jarod Sites



Assistant Superintendent
Secondary Education
Darrell Jensen



Elementary & Secondary Schools

Technology Help

Technology Support for the Board

The Technology Department can be reached by calling our Help Desk at: 801-374-4878(GURU). Hours are 7:00 am - 4:00 pm Monday-Friday.

You can also create a service ticket by sending an email to: help@provo.edu Please provide as much detail as possible in the email including a description of the problem and your cell phone number.

Good Things to Remember

- There are at least two sides to every story.
- Board members' words carry great weight; choose them carefully.
- Listening to only those who yell loudest does not serve students.
- Respect boundaries.
- Legislators are human too.
- Always ask, "Will it improve student learning?"
- You are only one vote. The board does the work. Once the decision is made, it is the will of the board and you move forward together.
- Come prepared for your meetings.
- Have a sense of humor.
- Don't take yourself too seriously, but remember your work as a board is important to all the children in your district.
- As a new board member, don't hesitate to ask lots of questions, because knowledge is power.
- Take advantage of training opportunities (USBA, NSBA, your own local board) as often as you can.
- Enjoy attending as many of the fun things (programs, plays, musicals, athletic events, etc.) that you have time for---seeing the kids will always remind you of why you are serving on your board.
- Tell your superintendent, district staff, teachers, school administrators, and all employees, "thank you", as often as you can.
- Visit the capitol during the legislative session, especially Fridays, as often as you can!