Roles & Responsibilities

For School Board Members & Superintendents

Advocates for Alaska's Youth

association of ALASKA school boards

October 2025

AREA	SCHOOL BOARD	SUPERINTENDENT
General	Governs the district, identifies a vision, hires the superintendent, establishes expectations, attends professional development opportunities, and evaluates self and the superintendent.	Manages the district, advises the Board, is executive of the district, the Board's sole employee through contractual relationship, attends professional development opportunities, participates in evaluation of the Board.
Meetings	Meets regularly to conduct district business in public.	Assists the board chair with preparation of agenda, and subsequent preparation of board meeting packet. Serves as a resource during meetings.
Policy	Serves as the elected policy-making body, reviews recommendations from the Superintendent, debates and adopts.	Ensures policies are current, recommends and implements policy.
Budget & Finance	Adopts and monitors the budget, responsible for audit adoption.	Prepares, administers and monitors the budget and audit, ensures budget compliance.
Curriculum	Establishes criteria, approves and monitors curriculum and assessments.	Recommends, oversees efforts, evaluates curriculum and assessments.
Personnel	Establishes criteria, considers recommendations, handles grievance appeals as appropriate.	Interviews, recommends, hires, and evaluates. Promotes and implements staff training, adjudicates grievances.
Student Learning	Adopts policies promoting a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students.	Implements policy, writes procedures, makes recommendations regarding student services.
Facilities	Adopts policies for the care and control of facilities.	Implements policy, creates rules and regulations pursuant to policy.
Community Engagement	Serves as a liaison between the schools and the community.	Builds positive relationships with stakeholders and maintains stakeholder communications throughout the district.
Planning & Growth	Establishes the vision for the school district.	Leads the process from vision to implementation.

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Superintendent–Board Relationship

THE BOARD Governs

1. Responsible for the general control and direction of education in the district.
2. Works collaboratively with the superintendent for the good of the district and for student achievement.
3. Establishes the process and criteria for the recruitment, interview, and selection of the superintendent.
4. Defines and approves the superintendent's contract provisions.
5. Provides the superintendent with performance goals and expectations for evaluation.
6. Conducts a formal evaluation of the superintendent at least once annually.
7. Demonstrates trust and respect for the superintendent's professional judgment and their right to express opinions that may differ from those of the board.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Manages

1. Serves as the district's chief educational advisor in all efforts of the board to fulfill its governance role.
2. Works collaboratively with the board for the good of the district and for student achievement.
3. Holds a valid superintendent's certificate and maintains certification, or is a qualified chief school administrator.
4. Provides the board with the necessary information and materials to support informed decision-making.
5. Supports the board in policy development and revision.
6. Initiates a strategic planning process that engages the board and community to guide the district to success.
7. Demonstrates trust and respect for board members and acknowledges their right to hold differing perspectives.

Meetings

THE BOARD In charge of

1. Meets only in officially called meetings to conduct district business in compliance with the Open Meetings Act.
2. Adopts and follows board policies for agenda development, meeting conduct, and public comment.
3. The board president works with the superintendent to develop the agenda for board meetings.
4. The board as a whole identifies for the superintendent the information needed for informed decision-making.
5. Ensures executive sessions are conducted appropriately and in compliance with the law.
6. Reviews board meeting materials and comes prepared to participate in board meetings.
7. Notifies the superintendent of potential issues and questions before the meeting (no surprises).
8. Follows the adopted rules of order during meetings.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Serves as a resource to the board

1. Ensures board meetings meet the requirements of the law, including notice postings and the maintenance of meeting records.
2. Supports the board in implementing board bylaws for agenda development, meeting conduct and public comment.
3. Works with the board president in developing the agenda.
4. Acts as the primary advisor to the board in decision-making.
5. Advises the board on the Open Meetings Act and the legalities of entering into executive session.
6. Provides sufficient information for decision-making in advance of the meeting. Notifies the board of emerging issues or concerns before the meeting (no surprises).
7. Implements board decisions and directives established at meetings.

Policy

THE BOARD is the elected policy-making body

1. Adopts policies that establish a clear framework for district operations, aligned with the board's vision, goals, and intent.
2. Reviews administrative procedures, rules, and regulations to ensure they align with the intent of the board's policy.
3. Maintains a system of regularly evaluating all policies.
4. Ensures the policy manual is accessible to staff, students, and the public.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Advises on and implements policy

1. Drafts written policy and provides the board with the necessary data and information for policy adoption.
2. Implements board-approved policies and promotes awareness of their intent and importance.
3. Develops and implements administrative regulations necessary to enact board policies.
4. Ensures the policy manual is up-to-date and accessible to staff, students, and the public.

Budget & Finance

THE BOARD Adopts and monitors

1. Works with the superintendent to ensure the budget is aligned with district goals and priorities.
2. Approves and monitors annual budget, authorizes budget revisions, and reviews financial reports regularly.
3. Reviews and receives the annual audit report.
4. Encourages public input in the budget development process.
5. Establishes the threshold for spending authority and budget transfer that may occur without board approval.
6. Adopts policies for the accounting of all school funds and for the reporting of fiscal information to the board.
7. Advocates for needed funding on all levels and leads community support for the budget.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Prepares, administers, monitors, audits details

1. Prepares and presents a balanced budget in accordance with the district goals and priorities.
2. Identifies the budget development timeline and process.
3. Cooperates with the auditor by ensuring timely access to staff and financial records.
4. Ensures board, staff, and public are provided with accurate and timely information throughout the budget process.
5. Obtains board approval to transfer funds or make purchases exceeding the threshold set by board policy.
6. Maintains a system to monitor finances and provides regular financial reports to the board.
7. Supports the board as they advocate for needed funding on all levels, and leads community support for the budget.

Curriculum & Instructional Material

THE BOARD Adopts a comprehensive educational program

1. Identifies the educational needs of the students and community, articulates the district's educational philosophy and goals through school board policy.
2. Adopts curriculum and graduation requirements.
3. Determines the educational programs to be offered to the district's students.
4. Approves instructional materials and resources to be used in the district's curriculum.
5. Monitors effectiveness through regular review of student achievement data.
6. Reports to the community on the status of education in the district.
7. Provides for adequate resources within the budget.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Recommends, oversees staff efforts, evaluates, and implements

1. Advises the board on the educational needs of the students, the requirements of DEED, and other directives.
2. Recommends curricula materials and graduation requirements for adoption to board.
3. Recommends policy for the selection of curricula and instructional materials in accordance with state standards.
4. Provides leadership in the continuous development, implementation, and evaluation of the instructional programs.
5. Uses data to drive strategic improvement of the instructional program.
6. Reports to the community on the status of education in the district.
7. Regularly schedules presentations to the board on various segments of the instructional program.

Personnel

THE BOARD Establishes criteria, acts on recommendations

1. Hires and empowers the superintendent to be the educational leader of the district.
2. Holds the superintendent accountable for recruiting, hiring, and evaluating school district employees.
3. Recognizes the board does not have a right to review staff evaluations.
4. Acts on superintendent's personnel recommendations.
5. Serves in a quasi-judicial role, acting impartially in staff terminations and disciplinary hearings.
6. Promotes good working relations with the superintendent and staff by following the district's chain of command.
7. Establishes guidelines and criteria for collective bargaining. Ratifies the final contract.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Interviews, recommends, hires, evaluates, promotes, trains

1. Employed at the will of the board, under terms defined in their contract.
2. Establishes job descriptions for all positions, and procedures for the recruitment, hiring, and assignment of staff.
3. Ensures all staff are effectively trained, supervised, and evaluated.
4. Recommends the employment, promotion, transfer, retirement, or dismissal of all school district staff.
5. Recommends staff disciplinary actions to the board in accordance with board policies and legal requirements.
6. Fosters good working relationships with staff and maintains open lines of communication, serves as the board's liaison with staff.
7. Leads or advises the board and negotiations team during collective bargaining.
8. Supervises, leads, and delegates all employees in the district.
9. Assigns staff to instructional areas and reports such information to the board.

Student Learning

THE BOARD

Adopts policies related to admission, attendance, rights and responsibilities, and safety

1. Adopts policies promoting a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students.
2. Promotes a healthy climate for student growth and learning.
3. Sits in a quasi-judicial capacity in matters of elevated student discipline.
4. Includes student voice on the school board and in decision-making.
5. Regularly reviews student achievement data and monitors progress toward goals.

THE SUPERINTENDENT

Implements policy, writes procedures, makes recommendations regarding student services

1. Recommends policies to the board to promote a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students. Implements adopted policies.
2. Ensures or maintains a healthy climate for student growth and learning.
3. Provides information to the board when it needs to act in its quasi-judicial role in the matters of elevated student discipline.
4. Encourages and facilitates student engagement in district decision-making.
5. Ensures the board regularly reviews student achievement data and monitors progress towards goals.

Facilities

THE BOARD Develops policy on use of facilities

1. Adopts policies for the use, operation, and maintenance of district facilities, grounds and equipment.
2. Provides for the care and maintenance of school facilities through budget allocation.
3. Authorizes hiring of architects, engineers, or other consultants for construction and maintenance projects.
4. Collaborates with the municipality on the issuance and sale of bonds to fund construction projects, where applicable.
5. Deliberates school consolidation or closure decisions based on long-term planning and community needs.
6. Approves projects to be submitted for consideration by DEED for construction and/or major maintenance.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Implements policy, writes procedures, makes recommendations

1. Recommends and implements policies for the use and maintenance of district buildings, grounds, and equipment.
2. Oversees daily operations and maintenance of all school facilities, grounds, and equipment to ensure safe, well-maintained learning environments.
3. Coordinates with architects, consultants, and contractors on facility-related projects.
4. Advises the board in school planning, construction, consolidation, or closure.
5. Prepares and submits application to DEED for construction and/or major maintenance projects.

Community Engagement

THE BOARD Serves as a liaison between the schools and the community

1. Maintains awareness of community attitudes, values, and interests.
2. Participates in activities to build good community relationships.
3. Establishes citizen advisory committees, and outlines their responsibilities.
4. Encourages use of established channels for submitting concerns or complaints.
5. Attends community and school functions.
6. Support the district and schools to meaningfully engage families in ways linked to learning.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Builds positive relationships with stakeholders and directs communication

1. Recommends and implements family and community engagement activities.
2. Keeps the community informed about district schools, programs, and initiatives; work with news media.
3. Supports the work of citizen advisory committees.
4. Serves as the liaison with the community to resolve complaints or grievances, making recommendations to the board when needed.
5. Supports opportunities for staff and family engagement at schools.
6. Ensures engagement measures are built into annual accountability structures, and are linked to learning.
7. Develops strong connections with key organizations, community leaders, and government representatives.

Planning & Growth

THE BOARD Establishes the vision for the school district

1. Leads strategic planning process with community input.
2. Develops annual board goals aligned to long-term vision.
3. Monitors district progress toward goals using established benchmarks, including student achievement and school climate data.
4. Participates in board member professional development, including conferences, workshops, training, and professional organizations.
5. Advocates for public education and district needs and local, state, and national levels.
6. Collaborates with community and government entities to strengthen advocacy impact.

THE SUPERINTENDENT Leads the process from vision to implementation

1. Implements strategic and long-range plans.
2. Sets annual superintendent goals aligned with the board goals and long-term vision.
3. Develops measurable objectives; aligns operations with strategic goals.
4. Reports back on progress made on the strategic plan to the school board.
5. Supports board efforts by providing data and testimony at local, state, and national levels.
6. Builds partnerships to enhance district goals.

Notes

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