

**Idaho School Boards Association
Summer Leadership Institute, 2016**

SCHOOL BOARD MEETINGS: A Function of School Board Governance

How Do School Board Meetings Fit

1. With the Eight Characteristics of Highly Effective Schools?

All Eight Characteristics. Since Board meetings are:

1. The place where the work of the governing board takes place, and
2. The place where the Board's work officially recorded and approved through written minutes,

Board meetings should reflect considerations, decisions, and other actions that are aligned with all Eight Characteristics. (See 8 Characteristics handout in packet).

2. With Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA) Professional Standards?

All Six ISBA Standards. The work of the school board takes place within the legal structure of Board meetings. Consequently, the work reflected in each of the following standards actually takes place within official Board meetings, special meetings, and work sessions. Relevant considerations, communications, and decisions are articulated and approved via Board meeting minutes.

ISBA Professional Standards for Board Members

1 - Vision & Mission	4 - Accountability
2 - Continuous Improvement	5 - Community Engagement
3 - Advocacy	6 - Board Operations and Training

3. Idaho Code

- I.C. 33-510: Discusses some of the requirements pertaining to regular and annual school board meetings
- I.C. 74-201: Requires that policy formation be done in public meetings
- I.C. 74-203: Requires that all public agency governing body meetings be public
- I.C. 74-201 et seq.: Further details on the requirements pertaining to open meetings

Defining School Board Meetings

Tips for Getting the Most Out of Board Meetings

- **Develop a month-at-a-glance agenda calendar for the school year.**
Developing a monthly agenda calendar in advance for the school year takes away some of the stress and time out of the board meeting planning and preparation processes. Special reports to the state have annual due dates. Some topics need to be addressed on an annual basis. These items can be mapped out ahead of time to help with the planning process. See the sample calendar in your packet.
- **Follow a cyclical process.** Treat board meetings as a process. The end of a monthly board meeting begins the preparation for the next month's agenda and planning processes.
- **Follow district policies and legal requirements.** Identify and understand all district policies relevant to the structure, organization, legal requirements, etc., required for Board meetings.
- **No Surprises!** When issues of concern are brewing, do not spring them on each other at a public meeting.
 - Let the superintendent know ahead of time in order for him/her to be prepared to address issues as they come up.
 - If you have significant questions about items for action on the agenda, consider talking with the superintendent ahead of time.
 - At the same time, the superintendent should not be springing surprises (unless its great news!) on the Board for the first time either at their public meeting.
- **Plan carefully.** Recognize that careful planning of the Board meeting tends to result in a smoother meeting for all.
 - Develop a written protocol, aligned with relevant policies that outline basic steps to guide the monthly process.
 - Follow the protocol!
 - Consistency on the Board's part provides transparency and predictability for employees and the public.

Governance Challenges

- Accountability
- Participation
- Predictability
- Transparency