

Beaverton School District School Board Handbook

1 OREGON ETHICS LAWS

Important notes:

- See “A Guide for Public Officials” for details on accepting gifts and avoiding conflicts of interest.
- Board Members must not discuss Board business in a quorum outside of a publicly-noticed meeting. Please see OSBA’s “Public Meetings Law, Board Meetings, and Executive Sessions” for detailed guidance.
- The Board must follow limitations for Executive Sessions. Allowable topics for discussion are labor negotiations; employment or dismissal of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent; real property transactions; litigation; Superintendent performance; or student expulsion/medical records.

2 BOARD MEMBER ORIENTATION

2.1 WELCOME

The Board Chair ensures that each new Board Member receives an in-person overview of their new responsibilities.

As a Board, we have learned that Board Members are most successful when they are:

- Honest – upfront, trustworthy
- Deliberate – inclusive, thoughtful, measured
- Collaborative –engaged, positive, respectful
- Prepared – informed, strategic

2.2 STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

The Board Chair and Superintendent coordinate the introduction of new Board Members to District leaders including: Deputy Superintendents, Chief Financial Officer, Human Resource Officer, Chief Information Officer, and Communications Officer. Board Members will also have the opportunity to tour District facilities such as Central Office, Maintenance, and Transportation. We recommend that new Board Members also meet with each principal and Executive Administrator for the schools in their zone.

2.3 LOGISTICS

Each Board Member receives a District email address for Board-use only. The District will take a photo of the Board Member for public use and will gather personal contact information for private District use.

3 SCHOOL BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 DIRECT

The School Board is the policy-making body of our District. It is responsible for providing an education program for students living within the District boundaries. To accomplish its role, the Board:

- Employs and evaluates the Superintendent
- Determines the long range direction and vision of the District as detailed in the Strategic Plan
- Establishes policies that direct instructional and support programs
- Adopts the Annual Budget
- Calls elections on bond and other funding proposals
- Ensures that Board policies and priorities are implemented
- Communicates and engages with the community
- Advocates for education with local and state leaders
- Recognizes staff and community contributions
- Approves large contracts and agreements including those with employee groups

3.2 LISTEN

The School Board hears public comments in the following ways:

- School Board Business Meetings occur monthly and include a time for public participation when members of the public can address the Board. A Board Member or District representative will follow up soon after the meeting.
- District Listening Sessions are typically more informal question and answer sessions. Board Members regularly attend these meetings.
- Budget Listening Sessions are open forums where people can learn about the budget and provide an opportunity for people to explain and advocate for their budget priorities.
- Board Members attend PTO meetings and other District events to hear community interests.
- Advisory Committees provide input on Board-requested topics
- Board Members are available by phone or email if a community member needs to communicate outside of a public meeting.

3.3 HELP

As a Board of elected volunteers, we are committed to providing Beaverton students with a world-class education.

We understand that community members may have questions about our public school system. We encourage people to look for clarification as close to the source as possible.

Board Members can also assist.

- We help people connect with District personnel to find answers to questions about District practices.
- We listen to concerns about District policies and budgets.

- We assist in advocating for change at the local and state level
- We encourage community members to bring questions to the Board Member who lives near their school. Although we are volunteers, we respond in a timely manner.

If people have a District-wide concern, they can email us at: School_Board@beaverton.k12.or.us

3.4 WORK TOGETHER

The Board and the Superintendent work together closely and have different roles and responsibilities.

- The Board sets policies; the Superintendent interprets and implements the policies.
- The Superintendent recommends the capital and operating budgets, and the Board adopts the final budgets.
- Using the Board-allocated funds, the Superintendent hires and assigns personnel and provides for their professional development.
- The Board approves large contracts and the Superintendent monitors the provision of goods and services required under contracts.

4 BOARD MEETINGS

4.1 AGENDA PLANNING

The Board Chair works with the Superintendent and Vice-Chair to develop efficient agendas; they use input from other Board Members and staff. A majority of Board Members can add an item to ~~the~~ *a future agenda, thus ensuring proper public notice and adequate Board preparation*. The Board Chair and Superintendent identify the objectives for each agenda item and the associated time requirements. The Board Chair ensures agendas that allow the Board to consider and discuss important issues *with sufficient time to make* ~~at a meeting before the District requires~~ a decision.

4.2 DECISION-MAKING PROTOCOL

The Board governs as a legal entity and makes decisions only as a quorum of the Board at properly-noticed meetings. Board Members recognize that individual members have no authority to take individual action.

The Board follows a two-phased approach to decision-making on major issues. The first phase includes *the opportunity for discussion, dialogue, and study*. The second phase involves Board decision. *Depending on the complexity of the issue and requirements for a timely decision, the Board may deliberate a decision at multiple meetings or a single one.*

4.3 PREPARATION

The Board Chair encourages all Board Members to fully participate in the meeting through thoughtful discussion and effective decision-making. The Board Chair or Vice-Chair will contact Board Members prior to the meeting to ensure they have the information to effectively contribute.

Board Members must actively participate in Board meetings with a focus on key policy issues and problem-solving. They should come to meetings with an open mind, and seek to clarify issues by engaging each other's points of view.

Board Members effectively prepare by thoroughly reading the Board Packet materials so that they can ask meaningful questions and consider solutions.

4.4 QUESTIONS TO STAFF

Board Members provide questions and communicate with the Superintendent, Board Chair, and Cabinet members regarding agenda items prior to actual meetings. *Board Members copy the Superintendent and the Board Chair on correspondence.*

Often, Board Members repeat questions at the public meeting to enhance community understanding.

4.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Board Chair ensures that community members who testify at Board meetings are appropriately thanked and provided information about their concern. If needed, the Chair will provide a related public statement and the Board Secretary will send the statement to approved District communication channels.

At the beginning of each Board meeting, the Board Chair will give a statement about how the Board responds to testimony. The Chair will refer to the Board brochure to help the audience understand the Board's role.

The Board Secretary will hand each person testifying at the Board meeting a Board brochure.

4.6 PURPOSEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS

Board Members focus on problem solving by building consensus and making decisions.

Board Members communicate in a polite and respectful manner even though disagreements may occur. Discussions between Board members serve as a model for positive and constructive public dialogue.

Board Members highlight both District successes and opportunities for improvement.

4.7 MEETING RECORDS

The Board Secretary prepares meeting notes. Before the minutes are posted on the District website, the Board reviews and approves them. There is also an audio recording of each meeting.

4.8 ROBERT'S RULES

Beaverton School Board uses the following meeting protocols:

- At the start of the meeting, the Chair calls the meeting to order and asks if there are any changes to the agenda. Any member may introduce a motion to modify the agenda (*remove items or move to a different section*); *the motion will require a second. A member can move an item from the Consent Agenda to an Action item without a second.*

- During discussion, the Board Chair recognizes Board Members and provides them the opportunity to speak.
- A Board Member presents a motion with respect to any item that requires Board action. Another Member must offer a second to move to a vote.
- After a vote, the Chair announces the results.
- *The Board uses the Consent Agenda action item to expedite meeting activities. The Consent Agenda includes decisions that are either routine or have had reasonable time for prior discussion. The Chair will request a single vote on the items in the Consent Agenda.*
- The Chair adjourns the meeting.

4.9 EXECUTIVE SESSION

In special circumstances, the Board will meet in Executive Session. Allowable topics for discussion are labor negotiations; employment or dismissal of a public officer, employee, staff member or individual agent; real property transactions; litigation; Superintendent performance; or student expulsion/medical records.

Members of the public are not permitted to attend an Executive Session.

The news media are permitted to attend, but not report on Executive Session discussion. News media can be excluded from discussion on labor negotiations to discuss bargaining strategies, student expulsion, student medical or education records, or litigation against the District in which the reporter's organization is involved.

Board Members must respect the confidentiality requirement of Board Executive Sessions.

The Board Secretary prepares minutes of the Executive Session. Portions of the minutes that involve confidential matters are not made public; they may be privately reviewed as part of a legal action.

5 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

5.1 BOARD STATEMENTS

The Board Chair speaks on behalf of the Board to the media with regard to Board policy and decisions. Other members should refer media inquiries to the Board Chair for response.

When speaking to the public about matters not yet decided by the Board, Board Members should qualify and clarify their responses as "speaking as one Board Member."

On occasion, a Board Member or District staff may alert the Board Chair of the potential need for a public statement. If directed by the Chair,

1. The Board Member or staff drafts a response/statement that is approved by the Board Chair.
2. The Board Chair ensures appropriate staff and Vice-Chair approves language.
3. The Board Secretary ensures the statement gets published in approved District communication channels.

5.2 EMAIL

A Board Member receiving an e-mail inquiry responds incorporating known District details commonly available on the District website or in Board policy. If the Board Member would like to include other key information in their response, the Board Chair should approve. The Board Member copies the Superintendent on the response.

If an email is sent to all Board Members,

- If the zone is known, the Board Member in the zone of the originator should respond, incorporating known District details commonly available on the District website or in Board policy. If the Board Member would like to include other key information in their response, the Board Chair should approve. The Board Member copies the Superintendent and Board Chair on the response.
- If zone or School District is unknown, the Board Chair will respond and copy the Superintendent.

Board Members recognize that District email is public record. Private email used to conduct District business is also public record.

Board Members are sensitive in their use of email, remembering that decisions are discussed and made with a quorum in public forums.

Board Members avoid using Reply All thereby discouraging online discussion.

5.3 TEXT

Board Members are sensitive in their use of text messaging, remembering that decisions are discussed and made with a quorum in public forums. Board Members use Group Text only for announcement purposes and avoid responding.

5.4 INQUIRIES/COMPLAINTS

When Board Members receive communication that expresses a complaint, the protocol is to:

- Politely respond, communicating understanding of the issue
- Refer the complainant to the appropriate staff member to respond to the complaint
- Copy the superintendent on the communication

6 SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS

Board Members often represent the Board on special assignment. For example, they may serve on a Negotiating Committee, Advisory Committee, Curriculum Team, or Task Force. In that role, they present agreed-upon positions as a Board Representative and communicate activity to the full Board.

7 BOARD SUBCOMMITTEES

Our Board forms subcommittees to advance the Board's annual goals. The Board Chair and Superintendent work together to assign Board Members and District personnel to each subcommittee. District personnel are a resource to the Board Members serving on the subcommittee.

Subcommittees operate according to the following guidelines:

- Subcommittee meetings are publicly noticed. Members of the public are invited to attend.
- Subcommittees research Board work and prepare recommendations for the Board.
- A quorum of school board members may be present at a properly-noticed subcommittee meeting. Subcommittee assignments avoid a regular gathering of a quorum.
- Decision-making is not permitted at subcommittee meetings.
- Subcommittees generally meet monthly. The assigned subcommittee chair will schedule meetings and prepare the agenda.

8 ADVISORY COMMITTEES

The Board has the responsibility and need to make decisions relating to a number of different major educational issues. When citizen input would be of particular value to the Board in making decisions, the Board may appoint an advisory committee.

The composition of these advising committees should represent a cross-section of the community including supportive and non-supportive citizens, high school students and, when appropriate, citizens without students in the school system. The Board strongly encourages interested citizens to apply for appointment to the committee by giving publicity to the establishment of the committee.

Before appointing a committee, the Board prepares a project charge of the purpose and objective for the committee as well as the scope and limitations of its activities.

The following committees currently provide ongoing support to the Beaverton School Board:

- Audit Committee
- Citizen Bond Accountability Committee
- Long-Range Facilities Planning Committee (periodically active)
- Student Advisory Committee
- Community Partnership Teams

9 TASK FORCES

On occasion, the Board requests a joint committee of citizens and staff to prepare recommendations concerning a District issue. These task forces have a specific charge and timeframe in which to work. Currently, the Board receives input from:

- Music Task Force, meeting infrequently to support work completed in Spring, 2014
- Active Students Task Force, continuing work through 2015-16 school year

10 BUDGET PROCESS

Every year, the Beaverton School District works to create a budget that reflects the District's Strategic Plan and complies with negotiated agreements, Federal and State laws, education standards, and School Board policies.

The School Board annually approves the budget process, ensures that we have appropriate membership on the Budget Committee, and articulates the financial goals.

Preparation of the budget involves many steps and months of work by District staff. Once a proposed budget is developed, the Superintendent presents it and the Budget Message to the Budget Committee, which then reviews the proposed budget and receives public comment.

The Budget Committee recommends revisions to the budget, if needed, to accomplish the financial goals and approves a budget for adoption by the School Board. A summary of the approved budget and notice of budget hearing is published in the local newspaper. After the budget hearing and consideration of public testimony, the Board adopts the budget at the June Board Meeting each year.

11 WORK SESSIONS

The Beaverton School Board plans work sessions several times each year. Work sessions provide Board Members the opportunity to spend more time gathering information and discussing District issues. The Board receives scheduled Strategic Plan Reports at Work Sessions.

It is important to note that the Board does not deliberate decisions at Work Sessions. The public is invited to attend.

The Board Secretary prepares meeting notes and posts them on the District website after the Board approves the minutes. There is also an audio recording of each meeting.

12 BOARD LEADERSHIP

At the annual organizing meeting, typically held on July 1, the Board elects a Chair and Vice-Chair. In the event that the current Chair and Vice-Chair leave the Board, the most senior Board Member provides leadership until the elected Board selects officers. The term of office is July 1-June 30.

Any Board Member may nominate an officer.

The Board Chair works to ensure the Board follows its own operating agreements and provides training as needed to address issues of non-compliance.

The Board Chair facilitates all meetings in a collaborative, focused and timely manner.

The Chair presides at the first annual Budget Committee Meeting until the Budget Committee has elected a Chair from among its members.

If the Chair is unavailable, or at the request of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chair.

The Chair ensures that Board Members attend important District events such as public forums and District celebrations.

13 ANNUAL RETREAT

The Beaverton School Board conducts an annual summer retreat with the following objectives:

- Build Board unity
- Assess Board performance
- Provide Board training
- Inform annual Board goals

The Board Chair and Vice-Chair jointly plan the retreat. Like Work Sessions, the Board does not deliberate or make decisions at the retreat and the public is welcome.

14 EXPULSION HEARING APPEAL – PROCESS AND PROCEDURES

At a student or their representative's request, the Board can meet for an Expulsion Hearing in Executive Session under ORS 332.061 (1)(a). In the Expulsion Hearing, the Board will evaluate whether there has been a violation of due process, i.e. whether (a) District staff have followed policies and procedures; (b) the student was informed and heard.

The process for a hearing will be as follows:

1. *The Chair will ask the District's representative to present a brief overview of the District's case relating to the student, including the basis for the expulsion. This will be limited to no more than 5 minutes.*

District staff will provide any associated documents to both Board Members and the student's representatives at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.

2. *The Chair will then ask the student and/or the student's representative to present any information they wish regarding the facts of this case. This will be limited to no more than 10 minutes.*

Board Members will consider supporting material from the student's representatives if it is submitted at least 48 hours prior to the hearing.

3. *The Chair will then provide the District's representative an opportunity to present any clarifying information regarding the student's perspective. This will be limited to no more than 5 minutes.*

4. *The Chair will then provide the student and/or the student's representative an opportunity to present any clarifying information regarding the district's perspective. This will be limited to no more than 10 minutes.*

5. *The Chair will provide Board Members the opportunity to ask either District staff or the student and their representatives clarifying questions regarding due process, i.e. whether (a) District staff have followed policies and procedures; (b) the student was informed and heard. This will be limited to no more than 15 minutes.*
6. *After the hearing, the Board will dismiss the parties, staff first and then the student and their representatives. With the Board's legal counsel present, the Board will then deliberate on the issues regarding due process and make a final determination. The Board Chair will write a letter to the student and parents stating the Board's decision which will be one of the following two options.*
 - a. *The Board will uphold the expulsion*
 - b. *The Board will refer the issue back to the Hearings Officer for further consideration.*

15 DISTRICT POLICIES

The Board sets policy for the District and ensures effective policy implementation. The Board recognizes that to guide District activities, policies must reflect community interests and education best practices.

15.1 POLICY REVIEW

The Board Chair and Superintendent regularly discuss which policies to consider for update or re-adoption based on the following priorities:

1. *Required by legislation changes*
2. *Current District issues or Board interests*
3. *Suggested by OSBA to reflect best practices*
4. *Potentially outdated policies*

15.2 POLICY UPDATES

The Board Chair and Superintendent send prioritized policies to the Policy Committee for review and recommendations. At the direction of the Board Chair and Superintendent, the Policy Committee seeks input for specific policies from community members, staff, and Board members.

After a thorough review, the Policy Committee sends proposals to the Board for review and approval.

As part of approval, the Board communicates their interest for receiving updates on policy implementation and communication.

15.3 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Board Chair reviews with the Superintendent requests for reports on how policy is implemented. A report includes:

- *Policy (with most recent adoption date)*
- *Associated AR*
- *History of communication for change in practice*
- *Impacts of policy change, i.e. how has practice changed*

- *Implementation challenges*
- *Recommendations for additional policy changes (additions or deletions)*

16 GRADUATIONS

A highlight for many Board Members is to attend high school graduations. Board Members typically attend the graduation for the high school(s) in their zone and they cover for each other as needed. Please check with the graduation organizer; each high school has a different tradition for attire and will work to accommodate you.

17 ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

See the District website for the following information:

- School Board and Superintendent Operating Agreements
- School Board Meeting Dates
- District Calendar
- District Policies
- Board Member Zones and Contact Information
- Strategic Plan
- Annual Board Goals
- Annual Financial Goals
- Annual Legislative Agenda
- Advisory Committee Charters
- Board Evaluation Procedure (OneDrive)
- Superintendent Evaluation Procedure (OneDrive)
- Board Handbook (OneDrive)
- Department Information

Information about Oregon School Board Association is available at osba.org