

# **CHANUTE USD 413 BOARD NORMS and OPERATING PROCEDURES**

In effective school systems, the superintendent and the board function as a “board team.” The school board is the corporate policy making body for the district, and the superintendent and staff provide the leadership to cause board policies to be implemented. Therefore, the Chanute Board of Education and superintendent function as a “board team” to provide open communication to the staff, students, parents, and community members of the district.

The Chanute Board of Education adopts these guidelines and procedures to facilitate clear expectations and smooth operations of the school board, and to effectively communicate these with the board team, staff, and members of the district.

## **Mission Statement:**

*The Mission of Unified School District 413, a unique, indispensable learning community, is to ensure each student pursues a lifetime of personal fulfillment while positively impacting society through a vital system distinguished by:*

- *Educating and nurturing the whole child*
- *Maintaining a variety of diverse learning experiences*
- *Providing engaging & creative educators*
- *Investing in collaborative family & community relationships*
- *Believing unconditionally in unlimited student potential!*

## **District Goals:**

District goals will be established on an annual basis in a special board meeting to take place during July, Special Meeting, before school is back in session.

## **Qualifications of a Good School Board Member (KASB)**

Although legal requirements for board members are few, the qualifications for effective service as a board member are many. A board member should:

- have a broad background of experience and knowledge and a sincere desire to serve the community;
- be visionary, able to understand the forces of societal change, and plan for the future;
- be tolerant and without prejudice, respecting diverse points of view;
- understand education today is complex and simplistic approaches will not meet today's challenges;

- be willing to invest the time and energy required for meetings, phone calls, conversations, visits to schools, professional development seminars, and workshops;
- be responsive to human needs of individuals and groups;
- be willing to be part of a team, supporting group decisions;
- listen for real consensus and not confuse a few vocal constituents with a majority feeling;
- learn and grow as you become more aware of your responsibilities.

It is very important for each board member to work as a team member and cooperate with other board members. Decision making authority is vested in the board of education, not individual members.

## Board Member Expectations

As members of the Chanute Public Schools Board of Education, we will promote the best interests of the school district as a whole, and make decisions that place student learning and the success of all students first by adhering to the following educational and ethical standards:

As a board member, I will strive to:

- ☐ make decisions based on the educational welfare of all children.
- ☐ focus board action on policy making, strategic planning, and
- ☐ selecting/evaluating the superintendent.
- ☐ attend all board meetings and give presenters my full attention.
- ☐ recognize that the role of the board is to govern and oversee the management of the district. I will delegate authority to the superintendent for the day-to-day operations of the district and will not seek to participate in the day-to-day operations.(policy CF)
- ☐ review and evaluate district policies and will work to make desired changes so they will be current and relevant.
- ☐ come to board meetings prepared to discuss and take action on all agenda items. I will review the material in BoardBook and follow established procedures(in this document) to obtain additional information prior to each board meeting.
- ☐ work to avoid surprises and will give the superintendent or board president notification of my concerns prior to the board meetings, so that the concerns can be properly addressed either prior to or during the meeting.
- ☐ understand that I have the duty to express my views and opinions and ask questions at the board table, and will make a good faith effort to understand the views of others.
- ☐ recognize that the board must make decisions as a whole in public. I will attempt to render decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment and refuse to surrender my independent judgment to individuals or special interest groups.
- ☐ avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and, if such a conflict is unavoidable, I will disclose such interest and remove myself from the discussion and voting on such matters.

- ☐ respect and support the decisions made by the majority of the board.
- ☐ recognize that while I am free to express my personal views, the board president is the spokesperson for the board when directed by the board, and the superintendent is the spokesperson for the district.
- ☐ be respectful and listen to ideas presented to the board at either a meeting or in informal situations, be it from parents, staff, students, community members, other board members, or other stakeholders. I will listen and then refer any person to appropriate school personnel.
- ☐ exercise caution when communicating between and among board members including electronic communication, and will abide by the Kansas Open Meetings Act ("KOMA").
- ☐ respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law, including executive session discussions.
- ☐ stay informed about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information; for example, those sponsored by the Kansas Association of School Boards ("KASB") and the National School Boards Association ("NSBA").
- ☐ take no private action that will compromise the board, the administration, or the district.
- ☐ refrain from using my board position for personal or partisan gain.
- ☐ support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as district staff and protect district personnel in the proper performance of their duties.
- ☐ review and revise Board Norms & Operating Procedures annually at the beginning of each fiscal year.

As School Board President:

- ☐ I understand that there are additional responsibilities and time commitment when serving as president.
- ☐ I will work closely with the superintendent to develop both short and long term plans for board business, including the agenda development.
- ☐ I will serve as the spokesperson for the board when dealing with the media and other public communications when directed by the board.
- ☐ I will advise persons addressing the board to follow established guidelines. I will ensure that all board members are given an opportunity to express their views.
- ☐ I will work toward building consensus among all board members.
- ☐ I will work with respective board members as conflict arises between board members or between board members and the superintendent.
- ☐ I will follow rules of order as outlined in policy BCBF, to the extent that it does not conflict with board policy.

# Board Meetings

## Regular meetings

- The board shall meet at least once each month.
- Regular attendance at board meetings is expected and shall be a high priority.
- During the month of July of each year, the board shall adopt a resolution specifying the regular hour of commencement of board meetings as well as the day of the week and the week of the month of such meetings.
  - Such resolution also shall specify the alternative date and time of any meeting if the regular meeting date occurs on a Sunday, a legal holiday, or on a holiday specified by the board.
  - Such resolution also shall specify the regular meeting place of the board and may specify that any regular meeting may be adjourned to another time and place.
- If the board cancels a regularly-scheduled meeting because of an emergency, within 24 hours of such cancellation, the board shall establish and give notice of the new meeting date and time.
- Special meetings may be called at any time by the president of the board or by joint action of any three members of the board.
  - Unless waived, written notice, stating the time and place of any special meeting and the purpose for which it is called shall be given to each member of the board at least two days in advance of the special meeting, and no business other than that stated in the notice shall be transacted at such meeting.
- A majority of the full membership of the board (four members) shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting any business of the school district.
- A passage of any motion or resolution requires the affirmative vote of the majority of the full membership of the board.
- Any member who abstains from voting shall be counted as having voted against the motion or resolution.
- If a member announces a conflict of interest with regard to the issue, the member shall leave the meeting until the voting on the issue is concluded and, thereby, shall not be counted as having voted.

## Developing the board meeting agenda

- Agendas are created by the superintendent and board president and are presented to the board no later than 72 hours preceding the regularly scheduled meeting. (Policy BCBD)
- Any board member may provide a written or verbal request to the superintendent or board president to have an item placed on the agenda. The request will be discussed at the next agenda planning session, assuming the request is received prior to such session, and may be added at the discretion of the board president.

## **Board member conduct during meetings**

Board members will maintain professional and courteous behavior throughout the meeting and demonstrate respect to fellow board members and public participants by:

- Commenting solely on the business under deliberation and not extraneous matters.
- Directing requests for documentation or reports at the board table to the superintendent and not to the presenter. A majority of the board members must concur that the information is needed before the superintendent will be responsible to gather and distribute it. The board and the superintendent will agree on a reasonable timeframe for the requested material to be provided to all board members.
- At no time should board members direct comments or questions to members of the audience. Those questions should be directed to the Superintendent or Board Clerk.
- Seeking solutions and reasonable compromises or consensus when there are differences of opinions.
- Setting electronic devices in a non-audible mode.
- Directing attention to the presenter and business at hand.
- Trying to eliminate surprises. Board members should inform the superintendent or board president of any pertinent knowledge of an agenda item prior to the meeting. Emergency situations warrant exceptions.

## **Persons addressing the board**

- Audience participation at board meetings is limited to any portion of the meeting designated as "Open Forum", if such portion is included on the agenda for a given meeting. At all other times during a board meeting, the audience shall not enter into discussion or debate on matters being considered by the board, unless recognized by the presiding officer.
- Patrons wishing to speak to the board regarding an agenda item for that meeting, need to contact the board clerk by 4:30 p.m. on Monday preceding the regular meeting with their request and the nature of the comments or concerns they wish to share. If the person has a concern or complaint on another matter, no request to address the Board during public comments shall be granted by the Board President or designee until all the steps outlined in BOE Policy KN (Complaint) have been completed and verification has been received by the Board President from the superintendent or designee.
- At regular meetings, the board president may allot no more than 30 minutes during Open Forum to hear persons who desire to make comments to the board. Each patron may have up to five minutes, at the board president's discretion, to address the board with comments or concerns.

- No student or staff names or references to school employees or identifiable groups of employees shall be discussed during this time. Delegations of several persons addressing the same issue are encouraged to appoint one person to present their views to the board.
- Taping, videotaping, and photographing are permitted in an area designated by the board and in such a manner as to not disrupt the dignity and function of the board meeting. Taping, videotaping, and photographing of individuals or groups that are being recognized will be allowed outside the designated area during any Recognitions portion of the meeting. If the meeting is being disrupted, the board may direct all taping, videotaping, or photography to cease. Following the same guidelines as in policy BCBJ.

### **Board response to persons addressing the board**

- Except to ask clarifying questions board members shall not interact with speakers at the Open Forum. (BCBI).
- The board president may direct administration to investigate item(s) and report back to the board and/or the individual citizen.
- Individual board members may also choose to follow up with the speaker outside of the meeting setting.

### **Board member participation in discussion, debate and voting**

- All board members in attendance at a meeting shall vote on all action items unless a conflict of interest applies.
- All board members may make motions, second motions, and enter into debate on all agenda items.
- In case of a tie, the motion fails. The president may bring the item back to the board during a subsequent meeting.
- In case of a less than unanimous vote, the board members will respect the decision and the implementation of the will of the quorum of the board once a decision has been made.
- A majority of the entire board (4 votes) is needed to pass a motion.

## **Board Organization**

- Election of officers
  - An individual board member may decline nomination for any or all offices.
  - The officers shall be a president and a vice president. The president and vice president shall be members of the board. Board officers shall serve for a term of one year or until a successor is elected. Officers are not term limited.

- At the organizational meeting in July, the current board president will ask for board officer nominations. Each office will be voted on separately by the board.
- In the case of a vacancy of the office of president, the vice-president shall succeed to the office of president for the remainder of the term. A vacancy in the office of vice-president of the board shall be filled by a majority vote of the board.
- Role and authority of officers
  - No board member or officer has authority to speak for the board outside the board meeting unless authorized to do so by the board.
  - No individual board member can direct employees in regard to performance of their duties.

## Communication

### Board member communication with each other

- Board members shall abide by the Kansas Open Meetings Act (“KOMA”). KOMA defines a “meeting” as:
  - A gathering or assembly of four or more board members (in person or through use of telephone or any other medium for interactive communication); and
  - It must be for the purpose to discuss business or affairs of the school district or board.
  - Board members should refrain from deliberating board issues outside of official board meetings.
- Social Gatherings
  - Four or more board members may attend the same social event (i.e. football game, wedding) if the purpose is not to discuss school business.
  - Board members should refrain from discussing school business at these events.
- Telephone Calls
  - Four or more board members may not participate in a conference call to discuss board business unless such a call is an official meeting of the board.
  - Four or more board members may not share a common topic of discussion in a series of calls regarding school business with an intent to reach agreement.
- Electronic Communication
  - KOMA also applies to electronic communication between four or more board members.
  - Four or more members may not participate in an interactive discussion via group text or email if the purpose is to discuss school business or affairs.
  - The superintendent or board clerk may initiate group emails or texts to the board.
  - Individual board members may reply directly to the superintendent or clerk but should not “reply all” to the group.
  - If a board member has information he/she would like sent to the entire board, he/she should contact the superintendent or board clerk, who will disseminate

- the information as appropriate.
- Board members should not text or email other board members during board meetings.
  - Board members should keep personal communications (including email) separate from their board communications.
  - Board email should be checked daily.
  - Treat all communication as potentially subject to requests under the Kansas Open Records Act (“KORA”) and the Freedom of Information Act (“FOIA”)

## **Board member communication with the community**

- The board will communicate with the community through board meetings and public hearings.
- Board members are encouraged to interact with the community; however, individual board members cannot speak for the board or in an official capacity outside of the board room unless specifically authorized to do so by the board.
- Board members should not communicate information in the agenda prior to the board meeting which is not part of the public agenda. Because such information is often confidential, in draft form, and/or includes recommendations not subject to disclosure under KORA prior to citation in a board meeting or a board decision on the matter, individual members should not forward such information to any other individual.
- If a board member receives a request for written information, they should refer the request to the board clerk or the Freedom of Information Officer for the district.

## **Board member responses to community or employee contacts**

- The board recognizes that, as elected officials, they will receive requests and comments from constituents which may include students, parents, employees, community members, or other stakeholders.
- The board member should listen to comments/concerns and then, if necessary, refer the individual to the lowest level in the chain of command which can address their concern: teacher, counselor, building administrator, etc.
- The board member should take care to not become individually and personally involved in the issue.
- The board member should notify the superintendent or board president of potentially significant requests or issues.



## **Board member communication with the media**

- The superintendent or his/her designee shall be the spokesperson for the district.
- The board president shall be the spokesperson for the board.
- All board members who are contacted by the media are encouraged to direct them to the superintendent. If the board member chooses to respond, the board member will clarify that the statement is provided in an individual capacity and is not an official statement on behalf of the board.

## **Superintendent communication with board members**

The superintendent or designee will exercise best judgment and discretion to determine what board members need to know based on the specific situation, which will generally include one of three types of communication:

- Not urgent or not in the media – board weekly email update;
- Very important – Email;
- Crisis / Emergency situation – Text message or phone calls.
  - In the case of an emergency or crisis, the superintendent or designee will provide the following six pieces of information: What, Where, When, Who, Action Taken, and if appropriate, Public Statement for board members.
  - Phone calls will be placed in the following order: President, Vice President, and board members.
  - The superintendent or designee will provide updates as needed.

## **Board member communication with superintendent**

- Following the guidance outlined below keeps the superintendent informed, promotes efficient use of staff time, communicates to staff that we are on the same team, and keeps all board members informed.
- Board members should channel important questions, concerns, and requests for information directly to the superintendent and not to staff.
- The superintendent will then work with district staff to coordinate an appropriate response and share information, as appropriate, with all board members.

## **Board member building visits**

- Board members are encouraged to attend school events.
- Board members should not give the appearance of evaluating district employees.
- School board members may tour schools as a board team.
- In order to respect school administrators time and minimize the disruption to the learning environment, members will schedule visits with the superintendent stating the intended purpose.

## **Annual board review and establishment of board goals**

- The board will review board goals and establish annual priorities/areas of focus for the board.
- A continuing concern for the board is obtaining necessary knowledge to govern and keep it current. Since little pre-membership training exists for board members, inservice education is the method for gaining that knowledge and skill.
- Educational activities should come from identification of special needs by the board and individual members.
- Annually a trained facilitator from KASB or similar organization will be used to meet with the entire board to conduct a review of board goals and to set new goals.
- Board training: KASB also sponsors a series of workshops each year following the election of new board members. These meetings are tailored to meet the needs of those newly elected board members and are scheduled in convenient meeting places across Kansas
- Annual self evaluation by the board. (policy #)

## **Board member conflicts**

- If a board member has a concern about another board member's performance, he or she should first discuss it with the member at issue.
- If still unsatisfied with the results of the first meeting, the member should then discuss it with the board president.
- If still unsatisfied with the results, or if the concern relates to the board president, then the concern will be taken to the board vice-president.
- At any time in the process, the superintendent may be enlisted to support the process.

## **Board training opportunities and procedures for travel**

- Board members are expected to attend KASB board member training within the first six months of their board term in order to be educated on the diverse issues that they will be facing as a board member.
- Board members are expected to continue their professional training and take advantage of available training or conferences within or outside of the district on an ongoing basis.
- Board members should arrange travel, accommodations, and classes through the board clerk.

- All board members are to comply with the board policy on travel expenditures and submitting travel/training expenses.
- Board members are encouraged to give a summary of training at an upcoming board meeting.

## **Key Roles of the Board**

Establish the district's vision, mission, and goals

- The board shall ensure the development of district vision, mission statement, strategic action plan, annual district goals, and the monthly action plan.
- The board will also approve specific measures of success for each goal.
- Staff will present periodic updates on progress with district goals at board meetings or, as appropriate, provide written reports.
- Development and adoption of the district budget
- In July, the administration will present updated information on budget development.
- In August or September, the board will hold the required budget hearing and formally approve the district budget for the current school year.
- Hiring and evaluation of the superintendent
- The only employee the board is responsible for recruiting and evaluating is the superintendent of schools. All other staff are recruited by the superintendent and presented to the board for approval.
- The superintendent will be evaluated annually.
- The board shall do a mid-year review of progress toward goals, and evaluation of the superintendent's performance in accordance with state law
- The superintendent's evaluation tool shall be selected by the superintendent and the board, and shall meet the state guidelines.
- All board members will have input into the superintendent's evaluation.
- The board officers and superintendent will meet together to complete the final evaluation.
- Outside of the formal evaluation process, if a board member has concerns about the superintendent's professional performance, he or she should:
  - Communicate concerns directly to the superintendent.
  - Communicate with the board officers to address questions and/or concerns.
  - If neither of those addresses the concern, it may be shared with the entire board during an executive session.

## **Development, review, and update of board policy**

- Board policies are developed, reviewed, and updated on a bi-annual basis due to recommendations from KASB or as required in response to legislative and other

governmental actions, judicial rulings, district attorney, and administrative review, or current practice shifts.

- The written policies of the board provide the conceptual and practical framework for administering the school district. Well-written policy ensures compliance with federal and state laws and sets a foundation for fair and efficient school governance.
- New and updated board policies are prepared by KASB's attorneys twice a year.
- New or revised board policies are approved by the voting procedure of the board.
- Review, and update Board Governance and Operating Procedures
- Board Governance and Operating Procedures are updated annually in response to district or board needs.
- New or revised board procedures are approved by a majority of the board.

## **Annual Calendar**

The annual calendar reflects a planned schedule to help the Board of Education meet its responsibilities as outlined by board policy and best practice.(link to document)