NWABSD Board Retreat

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 1:30 PM
District Office Boardroom, 744 Third Ave., Kotzebue, AK 99752

1.	**1:30 PM WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**	**Presenter:** Margaret Hansen, Board President
2.	**1:40 PM BOARD ORIENTATION**	**Presenter:** Katie Oliver, AASB
3.	**4:15 PM WRAP UP & BOARD COMMENTS**	**Presenter:** Margaret Hansen, Board President

NORTHWEST ARCTIC BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ambler · Buckland · Deering · Kiana · Kivalina · Kobuk · Kotzebue · Noatak · Noorvik · Selawik · Shungnak
PO Box 51 · Kotzebue, Alaska 99752 · Phone (907) 442-1800

BOARD OF EDUCATION RETREAT
AGENDA – OCTOBER 14-16, 2026

Location: District Office Board Room
Microsoft Teams
CALL-IN: **(833)682-3239** TOLL FREE

Wednesday, October 14, 2026 MTG CODE: 566 841 592#	
1:30 PM	Welcome & Opening Remarks *Margaret Hansen, Board President*
1:40 PM	Board Orientation *Katie Oliver, AASB*
4:15 PM	Wrap-up & Board Comments *Margaret Hansen, Board President*

Thursday, October 15, 2026 MTG CODE: 451 305 222# ATC LOCATION ALL DAY	
9:00 AM	Opening Remarks & Schedule Review *Margaret Hansen, Board President*
9:15 AM	NWABSD Programs Overview Director Presentations
11:00 AM	Complaint Process & Grievances *Michael Caulfield, JDO*
12:00 PM	LUNCH at ATC
1:30 PM	School Climate and Connectedness Survey Results *Claudia Pleşa, SCCS Presenter*
4:15 PM	Wrap-up & Board Comments *Margaret Hansen, Board President*

Friday, October 16, 2026 MTG CODE: 774 575 599#	
8:00 AM	Opening & Schedule Review *Margaret Hansen, Board President*
8:15 AM	Budget Overview *General Fund*
10:00 AM	Legislative Update & Priorities *Reggie Joule, Christine Hess, & John Walsh, Lobbyists*
11:00 AM	Strategic Plan Update *Administration & Board Members*
11:30 AM	Lunch on your own
1:00 PM	Child Care Center Walk-Through *ICC Board & NWABSD Board*
1:30 PM	Board Member Overview: teams, email, BoardBooks, phishing, benefits, etc. *Terri Walker*
4:00 PM	Board Comments & Closing *Margaret Hansen, Board President*

MISSION: To provide a learning environment that inspires and challenges students and employees to excel
VISION: To graduate all students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for a successful future

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

Notes


Advocates for Alaska's Youth
association of
ALASKA
school boards

Northwest Arctic Borough School District

Roles & Responsibilities
School Board Orientation

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

Provided by the Association of Alaska School Boards

Katie Oliver, Associate Executive Director

School Board Training

Wednesday, October 14, 2026

School board members in attendance earn five (5) Boardsmanship Points, which are applied toward their Boardsmanship level in AASB's Carl Rose Boardsmanship Award Program.

Our Agreements

- In every chair, a leader.
- We are responsible for our experience.
- Take care of yourself; take care of each other.
- Value our time together.

Our Time Together

- Setting the Groundwork
- School Board Roles & Responsibilities
- School Board Norms
- Goal Setting
    - Quick Review - Board Improvement Goals (August 2026)
    - Strategic Planning Next Steps
- Closing

Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards

1. Commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction, and define clear goals toward that vision.

2. Have strong shared beliefs about what is possible for students and their ability to learn.

3. Spend less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to support student achievement.

4. Have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and communicate to inform and engage.

5. Embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.

6. Align and sustain financial resources to meet district goals.

7. Lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.

8. Take part in team development and board training to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts.



Key Roles of the School Board

Community Liaison

Adopts a vision, mission, and district goals through the ***Strategic Plan*** and reports out on the status of them.



Hires and ***evaluates*** a superintendent.



Adopts and approves ***policies*** for governance of the district.



Reviews then approves the ***annual budget*** and ensures necessary funding for the district's strategic plan.



Approves recommended ***curriculum*** based on standards, goals, and policies.

Roles & Responsibilities

For School Board Members & Superintendents

In your small groups, read through your chapters. Consider and discuss the following questions as they apply to your chapters:

1. What stands out? Which responsibilities seem particularly important, and why?

2. How are we doing? Where is our board carrying out these responsibilities effectively?

3. Does anything seem unclear? What questions do we have about how these responsibilities look in practice?

Chapter	**Notes**
Superintendent - Board Relationship	

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Meetings	
Policy	
Budget & Finance	

Chapter	Notes
Curriculum & Instructional Materials	
Personnel	
Community Engagement	

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School Board Norms

School board norms are collaboratively developed and mutually agreed upon expectations that provide commitments and guidance to board members. The Board's norms supplement its policies and bylaws. The creation of board norms helps to cultivate interpersonal development and appropriate board decorum, as well as communicate board accountability to the public.

Governance Norms

The Board agrees to:

- ☐ Engage in decision-making with a "Students First" mindset and keep student achievement as the main focus of board decision-making.
- ☐ Lead as a united team with the superintendent, each in our respective roles with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
- ☐ Base decisions on facts, data, policy, and strategic goals.
- ☐ Remain focused on our work as a board and not micromanage the superintendent in the day-to-day operations of the district.
- ☐ Engage with others respectfully through attentive listening and civil deliberations.
- ☐ Respect differences of opinion and diverse perspectives.
- ☐ Be accountable for self-behavior as well as the impact of our actions on the board/district.
- ☐ Strive to create and maintain a board culture that promotes respect, understanding, collaboration, and standards of professional conduct at all times.
- ☐ Respect the different roles and responsibilities within the school system, and maintain a focus on policy and governance.
- ☐ Engage in responsible, intentional, and continuous relationship-building with board members, the superintendent, and district stakeholders.
- ☐ Model continuous learning in our roles as members of the governance team.

Communication Norms

The board of education agrees to:

- ☐ Support and follow the chain of command and promote public understanding of the chain of command.
- ☐ Build trusting relationships by engaging in courteous, open and honest dialogue.

- ☐ Demonstrate respect to all individuals and groups reporting to the board, attending meetings, and in our daily interactions.
- ☐ Engage in compromise and consensus building until we reach a decision as a collective board and support the majority decision in subsequent words and actions.
- ☐ Adhere to the “No Surprises” rules, and ensure that all district-related communications are shared with the board and superintendent.
- ☐ Ongoing, transparent communication with community stakeholders while maintaining confidentiality regarding sensitive matters, including items discussed in executive sessions.
- ☐ Make requests for information only when necessary and applicable to the work of the board.
- ☐ Ensure that all board members are included on all information distributions.
- ☐ Use social media as a tool to promote positive and important news about the school district.
- ☐ Avoid engaging on controversial topics on social media.
- ☐ Be positive and mindful of how our actions on social media reflect on the whole board.
- ☐ Share information from social media that may further an awareness of community concerns or controversy to the superintendent and board president.
- ☐ Refrain from communications that attack or question the actions or motives of the board or individual board members.

Board Meeting Norms

The board of education agrees to:

- ☐ Arrive at meetings on-time, prepared, and ready to do the work of the district.
- ☐ Provide advance notice to the board president and district clerk when attendance at a meeting is not possible.
- ☐ Transparently conduct the business of the district.
- ☐ Respectfully and intently listen to but not engage with those sharing public comments at meetings.

- ☐ The board president will respond to any and all official and public inquiries directed to the Board, and provide official statements on behalf of the board.
- ☐ Be aware of non-verbal communication and the message it sends to the public.
- ☐ Stay focused on the agenda and avoid sidebar conversations.
- ☐ Ensure that cell phones or other communication devices are not in use at the board table.
- ☐ Be respectful of each others' time by being concise in our comments, adhering to reasonable time constraints, and avoiding the repetition of comments already made by other board members.

Board Priorities for Year Ahead

From your Board Self-Assessment of August 27, 2026

1. Strengthen Board Communication to the Public
    a. Improve communication with the public about the Board's work and priorities.
    b. Explore additional communication support and tools (such as contract with someone to focus on communication).
    c. Strengthen student voice and engagement with student governments.

2. Support New Board Member Onboarding
    a. Provide a strong orientation for new board members.
    b. Use opportunities such as the Annual Conference.

3. Strengthen Ongoing Board Development & Engagement
    a. Explore professional development opportunities that fit within the Board's available budget.
    b. Stay informed about statewide and national education issues.
    c. Increase Board understanding of student achievement in foundational areas including math, science, and language arts.
    d. Maintain active board participation and learning beyond regular meetings.

4. Recognize & Celebrate Staff Accomplishments
    a. Regularly recognize staff achievements at the district and statewide levels.

5. Continue to Strengthen Student Voice
    a. Create meaningful opportunities for students and student governments to share perspectives and present to the Board.



Thank you!

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