

Special Board of Education Meeting
Tuesday, August 25, 2026 6:00 PM Central

District 26 Administration Center
2115 Crystal Lake Rd.
Cary, IL 60013

1. Organization
 - 1.1. Call to Order
 - 1.2. Pledge of Allegiance
 - 1.3. Roll Call
2. Community Input
3. Discussion
 - 3.1. Coming to Order Training for the purpose of self-evaluation, practice, procedures and professional ethics
4. Adjournment

Special Board of Education Meeting 8/25/2026

AGENDA-

Call Meeting to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll call

Community Input

Discussion Topic

3.1 Coming to Order Training

Adjourn meeting

Tonight's Outcome:

Create a shared
understanding of roles and
responsibilities for the Board
and Cabinet



CARY CCSD 26 • BOARD OF EDUCATION

Governance in Practice

A Working Session on Board Roles, Communication & Community Trust

Board Training Meeting | 3-Hour Session with Dinner Provided

Grounded in the Cary CCSD 26 Board Policy Manual & Administrative Procedures

Why We're Building This Together

Goal: building shared habits of governance the Board and Cabinet can both count on

- Build, don't destroy.
- Move together, not alone.
- Create clear key messages — and use them everywhere.

Tonight's Outcome:

Create a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities for the Board and Cabinet

Agenda — 3 Hours, Seven Topics

Dinner & Welcome	15 min	<i>Whole Group</i>
Governance Foundations Refresher	10 min	<i>Whole Group</i>
1. Contract & Purchasing Approval	20 min	<i>Small Group</i>
2. Purpose of Executive Session	15 min	<i>Whole Group</i>
3. Managing Public Comment	20 min	<i>Small Group</i>
— Break —	10 min	
4. Chain of Command: Parent Emails	15 min	<i>Discussion</i>
5. Board Members & Building Principals	15 min	<i>Whole Group</i>
6. Admin Updates: Weekly vs. Monthly	20 min	<i>Small Group</i>
7. Addressing PRESS & Media Relations	20 min	<i>Small Group</i>
8. Commitments & Closing	20 min	<i>Whole Group</i>

The Oath That Frames Everything Tonight

“
I shall recognize that a Board member has no legal authority as an individual and that decisions can be made only by a majority vote at a public Board meeting.

— **Board Member Oath and Conduct**

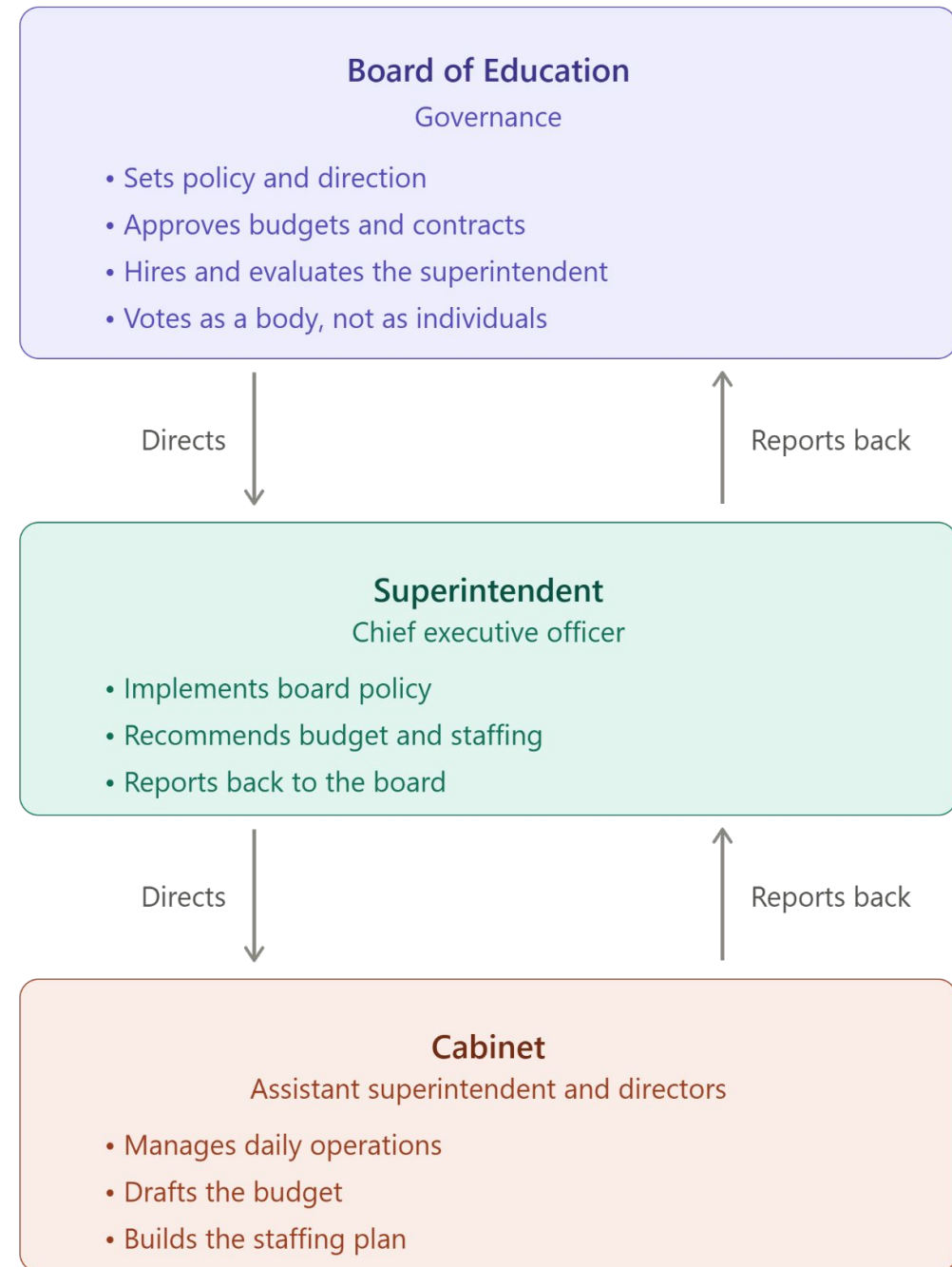
Policy 2:80, Board Member Oath and Conduct

Discuss at Your Table

Every topic tonight — contracts, executive session, public comment, emails, building visits, updates, and media — comes back to this one idea.

Where have we, individually or as a Board, blurred that line in the past? Where did it work well?

The Board
decides what
and why, the
cabinet
decides how
and carries it
out.



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Governance: The Board's powers and duties include the authority to adopt, enforce, and monitor all policies for the management and governance of the District's schools.



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Under 105 ILCS 5/2-3.25f, sound governance includes the board's responsibility to:

- **Protect district assets**
- **Direct sound administrative and academic policy**
- **Follow basic governance principles**
- Ensure that official board action occurs **only through a properly called and legally conducted board meeting**
- **Abide by majority decisions** of the board
- Respect student privacy
- Ensure decisions conform to **defined roles and responsibilities**
- Respect the administration's responsibility for **day-to-day operation** of the school system
- Maintain the distinction between the **board's role and the administration's role**
- Conduct itself in a **legally, ethically, and financially responsible manner**
- Comply with the School Code, Open Meetings Act, FOIA, and other applicable laws.

District Administration

District Administration: The work of professional educators and staff responsible for the day-to-day administration, operation, and leadership of the District's schools.

District Administration is responsible for implementing Board policies, managing school operations and personnel, supporting student learning and safety, and ensuring that District programs and services are carried out effectively and in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and Board direction.



Alignment Activity: Governance & Administration

1

Review Definitions

What does this look like in practice?

What does this look like for you?

2

Partner Up

Create a response that incorporates both answers

3

Quad Up

Create a response that incorporates both answers

4

Team Up

Create a common understanding.



01

Contract & Purchasing Approval

How district contracts move from need to Board vote

What the Policy Requires

1

\$25,000 Threshold

The Superintendent may not commit to any single non-customary purchase over \$25,000 without prior Board approval.

2

Budget Adoption ≠ Blanket Approval

Adopting the annual budget authorizes only budgeted purchases within State law — not open-ended spending.

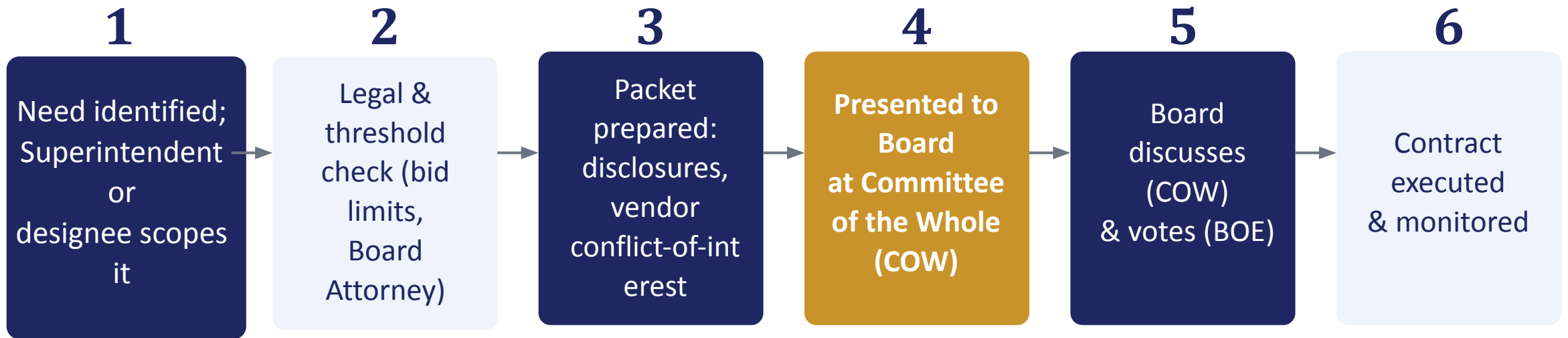
3

\$35,000 Bid Threshold

Supplies, materials, or work over \$35,000 must follow State law bidding procedures (105 ILCS 5/10-20.21), unless exempted.

No purchase or contract may result from favoritism, extravagance, fraud, or corruption — every purchase must support a recognized District function at fair value.

From Need to Signed Contract



Board's Job in Step 4–5

Ask about function/purpose, cost reasonableness, vendor conflicts of interest, and legal compliance then vote as a full Board. Individual members do not pre-approve or negotiate terms outside the meeting.

Does This Go Into Section 7 or Section 8 For Board Approval?

Form groups of 3–4. For each scenario, decide:

Scenario A

A \$18,000 classroom technology purchase, fully within the adopted budget line.

Scenario B

A \$40,000 emergency roof-repair contract not anticipated when the budget was adopted.

Scenario C

A \$2,000 vending-machine agreement that will generate revenue for the District.

Report out: one group per scenario, 1 minute each. Facilitator confirms the correct threshold using Policy 4:60 and AP1.



02

Purpose of Executive Session

Using closed session for what it's actually for

What Executive Session Is — and Isn't

It IS for:

- Personnel matters (appointment, discipline, evaluation of specific employees)
- Student discipline hearings
- Security procedures and safety planning
- Pending, probable, or imminent litigation
- Sale or purchase of securities, investments, or property
- Collective bargaining / Superintendent contract discussions

It is NOT for:

- Taking final action or votes — final votes happen in open session
- General policy debate that doesn't fit a statutory exception
- Avoiding public accountability on a routine matter
- Sharing outside the room — confidentiality travels with every member

Protecting What Happens Behind the Closed Door

Confidentiality isn't a formality — it's what allows honest, difficult conversations to happen at all. Once a Board member shares session content outside the room, that trust is very hard to rebuild.

Talk it through:

- What makes it hard, in practice, to keep executive session content confidential even with good intentions?
- How should a Board member respond if a community member asks, “What did you all talk about in closed session?”
- What's one habit we could adopt to reinforce this norm going forward?



03

Managing Public Comment

Welcoming input while protecting the Board's business

The Rules That Keep Comment Fair and Orderly

Total time	Up to 45 minutes for public comment, unless adjusted by the presiding officer
Individual time	Ordinarily 3 minutes; up to 5 minutes if requested in advance, at the presiding officer's discretion
When to speak	Only at the designated agenda time, and only when recognized by the presiding officer
No engagement	Public requests to speak or debate between speakers and Board members or staff is not permitted
Conduct	Respect and civility are expected, per Policy 8:30, Visitors to and Conduct on School Property
Written correspondence	Board or Superintendent must issue a formal written response within 60 days of receipt

Source: Policy 2:230, Public Participation at Board of Education Meetings and Petitions to the Board

The Presiding Officer's Toolkit for Public Comment

1

Set the tone early

Briefly restate the ground rules before comment begins, every meeting, every time.

2

Redirect, don't engage

If a speaker tries to debate, calmly redirect: "We hear your comment; the Board doesn't respond during public comment."

3

Enforce time evenly

Apply the same time limit to every speaker, regardless of topic or tone.

4

Decide gray areas

The presiding officer has authority to resolve procedural questions policy doesn't spell out.

Role-Play: Handling Difficult Public Comment

In groups of 3 or 4

Role 1: Presiding Officer

Role 2: Speaker

Role 3 & 4: Observer(s)

Card A

The speaker goes past 3 minutes and won't stop when asked.

Card B

The speaker names and criticizes a specific staff member or student.

Card C

The speaker asks the Board to respond right now, live.

Card D

More speakers signed up than fit in the 45-minute window.

Debrief as a whole group: which phrases kept things calm and on-policy?

Board Agenda Section 3 “Open Forum”

3.1 Board

- What is purpose?
- How can we share out as one Board voice?
- Is this the best title for this section?

10-MINUTE BREAK





04

Chain of Command for Communication

What to do when a parent emails you directly

Where a Message Goes — and Where It Doesn't Stop



Key rule: if contacted individually, refer the person to the appropriate level of authority. Board members' questions to staff also route through the Superintendent's office.

Also remember:

- No expectation of privacy for any communication sent to the Board, by any method
- Emails among a Board quorum may share information, but never deliberate, debate, or decide District business
- No individual member replies on behalf of the whole Board

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“Can You Just Fix This for Me?”

“A parent emails you directly, upset about a teacher's grading practice, and asks you personally to intervene.”

With a partner (5 minutes), then whole group:

- What's your first reply — in one or two sentences?
- Who do you loop in, and how quickly?
- What would cross the line into “individual action that compromises the Board or District”?



05

Board Members & Building Principals

Setting a shared norm for building visits and meetings

Building Visits: What Should Our Practice Be?

The Policy Manual doesn't spell out a specific visit protocol — this is a norm we set for ourselves, anchored in the same principles as everything else tonight: chain of command and no individual authority.

Draft norm — react & refine:

- Notify the Superintendent in advance of any building visit or principal meeting
- Visits are informational — for listening and learning, not directing staff
- No individual member gives instructions to a principal or building staff
- Follow-up items or concerns route through the Superintendent's office

Talk it through:

- Does this match how visits actually happen today?
- What's the right amount of notice to the Superintendent?
- How do we handle a principal's informal invitation (e.g., a school event)?



06

Administrative Updates: Weekly vs. Monthly

Right-sizing what the Board hears, and how often

What Belongs at Each Level: EXAMPLE

WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY
How last week went Upcoming events the Board can attend or support	1:1 check-ins between Board President and Superintendent (especially valuable in the first 6 months)	Review of Board agendas: how much time is focused on student-outcome goals?	Strategic plan progress and transition dashboard review

What Belongs at Each Level: CARY SD 26

WEEKLY	MONTHLY	QUARTERLY	ANNUALLY
What’s essential? Don’t need details. Continue building updates for construction. Like the narrative. Keep the initials for each section. - skip the email reminder, assume 4 pm post.	Follow policy to ensure monthly topics.	Follow calendar, aligned to policy.	Follow calendar, aligned to policy.

Sort It: Weekly, Monthly, or Immediate?

As a group, sort each item below into Weekly Update, Monthly Update, or Notify Immediately. Be ready to defend a tricky one.

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 A new grant award | 2 A routine facility repair | 3 A bus accident with injuries |
| 4 A media inquiry about a rumor | 5 A personnel investigation opening | 6 A well-attended student event recap |

Report out: which item split your group, and where did you land?

Board Committee Members

1 Insurance
Mindy/Stacey

2 Professional Growth
Julie

3 Parent-Teacher
Advisory (discipline)
Stacey

4 Technology
Kathryn/Bridgette



07

Addressing Press & Media Relations

Speaking with one voice to build community trust

Who Speaks for the Board — and When

Board President

Official spokesperson for the Board of Education. Communicates on the Board's behalf to news media and community.

Superintendent

The District's chief spokesperson, coordinating media relations efforts with the Board President.

Every other Board member:

Unauthorized statements are considered personal opinions — not the Board's position. Members are encouraged to say so explicitly when speaking publicly on District matters.

Draft a Response Protocol

Groups of 3–4, one scenario each. Draft a 3-step response: what you say, who you loop in, and how fast.

Scenario A

A reporter contacts a Board member directly about a controversial vote, wanting a quote tonight.

Scenario B

A rumor spreads on social media faster than the District's official statement can go out.

Scenario C

A Board member is quoted in the paper giving a personal opinion on a District decision.

Goal: Agree to a common process for the full team.



08

Commitments & Closing

Speaking with one voice to build community trust

Start - Stop - Keep

1

**What do we
want to start as
a BOE/Cabinet
team?**

2

**What do we
want to stop as
a BOE/Cabinet
team?**

3

**What do we
want to keep
as a
BOE/Cabinet
team?**

Summary: BOE–Cabinet Norms

- 1 Contract approval thresholds & process
- 2 Executive session discipline & confidentiality
- 3 Consistent public comment facilitation
- 4 Chain-of-command for parent communication
- 5 Shared norms for building visits
- 6 A clear weekly/monthly update cadence
- 7 One-voice media & PRESS protocol

One Commitment Each

Before we close, each Board member shares one specific commitment for the next 30 days.

Consider a commitment tied to:

- How I'll respond the next time a resident emails me directly
- How I'll prepare for or ask about a contract before voting
- How I'll protect confidentiality after executive session
- How I'll represent the Board — or flag that I'm speaking personally — if a reporter calls



Thank You

Session notes will follow before our next meeting.

Cary CCSD 26 Board of Education