



SCHOOL BOARD WORKING GUIDELINES

Board/Superintendent Communications Framework

School Board Operating Protocol

How board members work together as a governance team is as important as the position itself. The relationships with each other, the superintendent, other staff, students and the community influence the board's efficacy. Collaborative skills directly affect the board's ability to come to consensus, advocate with integrity and create an affirmative atmosphere that encourages the best from every stakeholder.

School Board of Brevard County

4/21/2017



School Board Working Guidelines

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Board Expects

1. Regular communication with the superintendent monthly via monthly meetings.
2. To be notified by email or text message as soon as possible for
 - a. School emergency (lock down, fire, ...)
 - b. Student emergency (arrest, injury, death)
 - c. Staff emergency (arrest, injury, death)
3. To receive board packets and supporting documentation 14 days before the scheduled board meeting.
4. To receive regular monthly expenditure reports (with comparison data <last 3 years>)
5. That all board members will receive the same information
 - a. One member's request for additional information results in all members receiving or having the same access to information.
 - b. Special communications are done for all board members.
6. That board members will treat each other and staff with respect.
7. That the superintendent and staff will treat all board members with respect.
8. That reasonable requests for additional information will be satisfied in a timely manner.
9. No surprises!

Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

Henry Ford

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK

The Superintendent Expects

1. That requests for additions to the agenda will be received as early as possible before the meeting.
2. That direction is only given at board meetings when a majority of the board votes to give direction and only to the superintendent.
3. That board members will be respectful toward staff and each other and be respectful of staff's time.
4. That board members will read all supporting documentation before the board meeting.
5. That board members will notify staff members with questions about agenda items or supporting materials with as much notification as possible before the scheduled board meeting.
6. That the board of the whole will vote to put an item on a future agenda and refer to board policy before significant staff time is expended and/or when preparing the agenda item would impact meeting previously approved goals.

Agenda Agreements

1. Board members may request that items be placed on the agenda.
2. The board chair will meet with the superintendent or chief operating officer when necessary to review and approve the agenda.
3. A consent agenda will be used for items not requiring discussion.
4. Any board member may ask to have an item pulled from the consent agenda to allow for discussion or individual consideration. The board member will notify the superintendent prior to the meeting of intent to pull an item and what additional information may be required (NO SURPRISES).
5. Pulled consent items will be discussed after the consent agenda vote.



BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Meeting Preparation Agreements

1. Board members will come to the meeting prepared to discuss items on the agenda.
2. Board members will notify the superintendent about positive and negative comments received from the community about the district or specific agenda items.
3. Board members will give the superintendent time to research clarifying questions about agenda items and not spring surprises at the board meeting.

During the Meeting Agreements

1. Meeting agendas are available to the public
 - a. At the meeting site
 - b. On-line
2. Procedures for public comment are clear and available at the meeting site.
3. Only the board chair will respond to public comment during the meeting
 - a. The board chair may recognize the superintendent for factual information.
 - b. The board chair may recognize a board member to respond to personal attack, request follow up on an item, or respond to an issue that needs immediate clarification. (ideally personal attacks will not be allowed by the chair)
4. The board chair will ensure that only one person speaks at a time and that each member has an equal opportunity to participate.
5. The public is welcome to participate in the meeting during the designated public comment time.
6. Board members will model the behaviors expected of students, staff, and community members.
7. Issues, not people (staff, public, each other), will be attacked during meetings.
8. Members will listen respectfully to each other and staff.



¹During the Meeting Agreements' continued on page 4

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK

9. Monitor for compliance with law and policy.
 - a. Superintendent, legal counsel, and all board members have responsibility.
 - b. Use “point of order” to interrupt and get meeting back on track.
10. Refrain from taking a position on an issue until all relevant information is presented.
11. The focus of board meetings will be work of the board and not administrative/staff work.
 - a. Is the item to celebrate a success?
 - b. Is the item a policy decision?
 - c. Is the item something that requires board action?
 - d. Is the item needed to ensure accountability?
 - e. Does the item align with the strategic plan?
12. Members will not make long, unnecessary speeches.

After Board Meeting Agreements

1. Board members and staff will support (or stay silent- not undermine) the decision of the board.
2. Board members and staff will abide by confidentiality laws of executive sessions.
3. Ensure that all documents, records, reports, etc. are processed and maintained in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, policies, etc.



BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT COMMUNICATIONS FRAMEWORK

Site Visit Agreements

1. Board members are encouraged to attend as many school events (sporting events, fine arts events, community events) as a spectator as their time permits.
2. Board members wishing to visit a school shall:
 - a. Check in with the principal upon arrival.
 - b. Follow campus guidelines for visitors (badge in, escort, etc.)
 - c. Respect staff time and allow staff to perform their duties.
 - d. Not evaluate staff.
 - e. Not give direction to any staff or students.
 - f. Not accept gifts (other than nominal tokens) or favors from any district employee.
3. When visiting with teachers of their own children, board members will make it clear that they are acting as parents rather than as board members.
4. If a board member observes an issue on a campus that needs administrative follow-up, the concerns will be communicated to the superintendent.

Board and Community Communications



1. Board members will serve as ambassadors for their district, emphasizing positive aspects of the district.
2. The superintendent and media relations staff will serve as the spokesperson for the district with the media.
3. The chair will serve as the spokesperson for the board with the media to ensure a consistent message on critical issues.
4. Complaints received from staff or the community will be directed through the staff person best able to provide resolution of the complaint, or to the superintendent.
 - a. Complaints should be in writing and processed per policy/protocol.
 - b. The board is the last stop in the complaint process.
 - c. Board members have no authority to solve problems.
 - d. Board members can ensure that complaints are addressed.

School Board Working Guidelines

SCHOOL BOARD OF BREVARD OPERATING PROTOCOL

For the purpose of enhancing teamwork among members of the board and between the board and the administration, we, the members of the School District Senior Leadership Team (board and superintendent) do hereby publicly commit ourselves collectively and individually to the following operating protocol:

1. Children's interests come first. The board will represent the needs and interests of all the children in our district.
2. Don't spring surprises on other board members or the superintendent. Surprises to the board or the superintendent will be the exception, not the rule. There should be no surprises at a board meeting. We agree to ask the board chairperson or the superintendent to place an item on the agenda instead of bringing it up unexpectedly at the meeting.
3. Communication between staff and the board is encouraged as long as it follows board policy. The senior leadership team recognizes that "good," "timely", "open", and "constant" communication regarding school district issues is extremely important. We will strive to anticipate issues which may become important or are sensitive to our school district and district stakeholders.
4. Encourage outreach to staff. While the board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, each inquiry is to be referred to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issue. Board requests that will likely require considerable time or have political implications are to be directed to the superintendent. All personnel complaints and criticisms received by the board or its individual members will be directed to the superintendent.
5. Own the collective decision making process. The senior leadership team will support decisions made by the board and/or the administrative team once a decision is made. We will support the majority decision(s).



SCHOOL BOARD OF BREVARD OPERATING PROTOCOL

6. Exemplify the governance role. The Board has ownership of policies and this is the entity's number one duty. The leadership team (board and superintendent) will support the policies our district currently has in place. The Board will hold workshops to continue to study and review policies for effectiveness and appropriately engage key stakeholders in the development or deletion of policies and policy revisions. We will maintain and apply district policies consistently while being cognizant of and recognizing the potential uniqueness of any given situation.
7. Annually conduct a self-assessment/evaluation. The board will address its behavior by yearly self-evaluation and by addressing itself to any individual problems, such as poor meeting attendance or leaks of confidential information.
8. Clearly state goals. The board will set clear goals for themselves and the superintendent. The board and superintendent will set clear goals for the District.
9. Utilize CEO input. The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the senior leadership team and should make recommendations, proposals or suggestions on most matters that come before the board.
10. Board acts only as a body. Individual board members do not have authority. Only the board as a whole has authority. We agree that an individual board member will not take unilateral action. The board chairperson will communicate the position(s) of the board on controversial issues. When board members serve on various school committees their role shall be defined by the board as silent observer or active participant.
11. Meeting protocol. Conduct at a board meeting is very important. We desire to have a legacy of a well-functioning, effective board. We agree to avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the board or the district. We will be open minded and willing to "deeply listen" to all speakers/presenters. We agree that we can disagree and will do so using common courtesy and respect for others. We will not react to impromptu complaints on the spot, but will assure any individual(s) that the school district will follow-up.

SCHOOL BOARD OF BREVARD OPERATING PROTOCOL

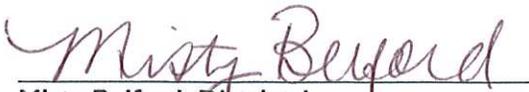
12. Avoid marathon board meetings. To be efficient and effective, long board meetings must be avoided. Points are to be made in as few words as possible; speeches at board meetings will be minimal. If a board member believes s/he doesn't have enough information or has questions, every effort should be made to ask questions of responsible staff or the superintendent.
13. Practice efficient decision-making. Board meetings are for decision-making, action and votes, not endless discussion. We agree to move to the question when discussion is repetitive.
14. Speak to agenda issues. The board will not play to the audience. We agree to speak to the issues on the agenda and attend to our fellow board members. Facts and information needed from the administration will be referred to the superintendent.
15. Executive/closed sessions will be held only for appropriate subjects. Executive sessions will be held only when specific needs arise. Board members will be extremely sensitive to the legal ramifications of their meetings and comments.

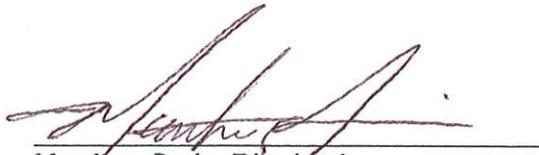


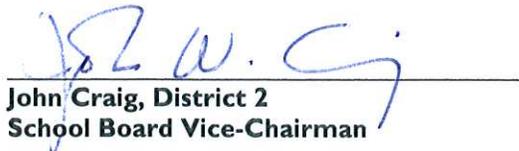
Remain Focused on the Big Picture

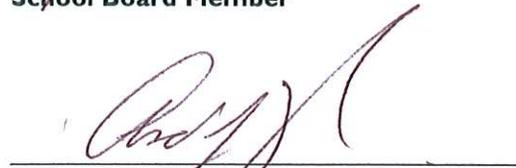
SIGNED AND AGREED TO THIS 31st day of August, 2017

FOR THE BOARD:


Misty Belford, District 1
School Board Chairperson


Matthew Susin, District 4
School Board Member


John Craig, District 2
School Board Vice-Chairman


Andrew Ziegler, District 5
School Board Member


Tina Descovich, District 3
School Board Member

FOR THE DISTRICT:


Desmond K. Blackburn, Ph.D.
Superintendent