


Champaign CUSD 4 Board Protocols

April 4, 2022; June 5, 2023

 *New 6.5.23 Content*

The Board of Education recognizes that we are leaders elected by the Champaign Unit 4 community to act at all times in the best interest of the students while providing sound stewardship of committed resources to the community. We will serve and conduct ourselves through a cooperative working relationship, actively displaying respect at all times and exemplifying our District Mission of: **Positively transforming learning and life outcomes for students through educational justice, equity, and excellence.**

These Board Agreements have been established to remind all Board members of our collective responsibility. In the spirit of continuous improvement, the Board of Education will review this document on a biennial basis.

Board Member Orientation

- We support a robust onboarding process which includes engagement with other Board members, the Superintendent, and staff as specified in our policy.

2:120 Board Member Development

Board Member Roles & Responsibilities

- We understand that our primary role is to ensure and implement sound governance for the success of the district.
- We employ the Superintendent who is solely responsible and accountable to the Board for “day to day” district operations, achievement of district goals, and the success of the district.
- We will speak with “one voice” to the Superintendent. We will reach majority consensus when directing the superintendent or clarifying required information/research.
- We will govern the district, with but not limited to input from stakeholders with a focus on the district strategic plan, the district mission statement, the district vision statement, and district values.
- We will encourage and respect collective discussion and diverse viewpoints when making decisions.

2:20 Powers and Duties of the School Board

2:80 Board Member Oath and Conduct

Board Members Listening to Concerns from the Community

- We will maintain an awareness that we are recognized as leaders in the community and must always be aware that the community views us as Board members in any setting.
- We understand that our comments will impact the views of community stakeholders.
- We will listen carefully to any concerns while remembering that we are hearing only one side of the story.
- We will communicate with each community member and clarify that a Board member has

no individual authority to intervene or resolve a concern.

- We will advise those with concerns to speak with the most appropriate staff member in the district who is able to help them resolve their concerns (Chain of Command).
- We will inform the Superintendent when we hear a concern that could be of importance to the community. The Superintendent will address the concern and follow-up with the entire Board as appropriate.

STANDARDIZED/AUTOMATED REPLY: (updated June 5, 2023)

An automated response to a citizen concern will be relayed upon receipt of an email (using verbiage derived/suggested from the Board Attorney)

- The concern/matter detailed within the email of the citizen will be addressed by the Superintendent, appropriate district administrator (if designated), and the Board President.

INDIVIDUAL REPLY (if a board member opts to reply personally, in addition to the automated reply):

- Issue an email to the Superintendent and Board President to confirm if a general reply to the citizen is suggested.
- An individual response is an option that may be considered (in addition to the automated reply), but the content of the reply should ONLY entail recognizing receipt of the citizen-email.
- Each board member should notify the Board President and the Superintendent via email of any additional/future reply that transpires between the board member and the citizen who issued the initial email.
- The Board President will “cc” the Board Vice President and the Superintendent if there is any other individual reply to the citizen who issued the initial email.

2:140 Communications to and from the Board

Board Interactions and Behavioral Expectations

- As we are quite visible to our students and community, we will conduct and hold ourselves accountable in a respectful manner in meetings, community events, and private situations.
- We have, along with the Superintendent, the right to expect respect, performance, candor, and honesty from one another.
- Our discussions will always be respectful and focus upon solving problems through a collaborative process culminating with all members supporting the decision of the Board and actively working toward its implementation.
- We will approach discussion with the belief that everyone has good intentions.
- We will sincerely and actively seek to understand the viewpoints of others by listening.

2:20 Powers and Duties of the School Board

2:80 Board Member Oath and Conduct

No Surprises

- We members of the Board and the Superintendent agree to timely communication so that neither side is surprised during the meetings or between meetings.

- Avoiding surprises is paramount in displaying respect for all District administration and the community.
- Board members will submit agenda-specific questions to the Superintendent by noon on the day of the board meeting, understanding that the Superintendent may be limited in issuing a response if research is necessary. Questions submitted after this timeframe will be addressed by the Superintendent within the next board update or board meeting.
- If a board member is tardy arriving to a board meeting or not able to attend a board meeting, the Board Secretary should be contacted prior to the meeting. The reason for the tardy arrival to the meeting or the absence at a board meeting will not be shared with the full Board unless the board member will participate in the meeting remotely, in which case the board member shall provide the notification required by board policy for absent board member participation at a board meeting.
- On the date of a meeting, all board members will be informed how many members will be in attendance.
- Any board member speaking at a non-board forum is encouraged to verbalize such disclaimers as “I am speaking as a citizen” or “I am speaking as a member of this community” prior to sharing any other comment.

2:130 Board Superintendent Relationship

Preparing for Board Meetings

- We recognize that our personal schedules drive the timing for a thorough review of the agenda information.
- We will endeavor to contact the Superintendent and/or Board President with any questions on the agenda before the Board meeting.
- We agree that the same submitted questions may be asked in open session along with new questions that arise during the discussion.
- The process and intention of asking questions prior to the meeting is to help the Superintendent provide the best possible answer for the community.
- The Board President or Vice President will offer “insight or background” to members on discussions with the Superintendent following agenda preparation meetings. The Board President serves as a conduit for any concerns that Board members may express in regard to district business.
- We understand our responsibility to prepare for meetings and to timely and effectively communicate our concerns either to the Superintendent or Board President prior to any meeting.

2:110 Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers

Requests for Information/Questions

- The Superintendent will delegate the retrieval of information and set the time frame for response.
- We will not contact individual staff members as that action interferes with district operations.
- We will self-monitor and ensure that one person’s request for information or questions does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals.
- The Superintendent will provide all Board members the same information when responding to an individual member’s request for information. The philosophy is, “One gets information, we all get information.”

- The Superintendent will set the time frame for gathering a response as balanced against current needs of the district.
- The Superintendent, based on a need to unexpectedly expend resources in gathering an answer, may seek to confirm requests for information with a majority of the Board.
- We always have the right to request that an item be placed on the agenda for discussion by the Board.
- Board members should email the Superintendent, but copy the Board President.
 - Note: Board members should strive to do their own research in an attempt to answer questions (e.g., looking up a policy) and must be mindful of how staff time is utilized. All requests for information (finance, technology, etc.) should be brought to the attention of the Superintendent.
- Board member questions or communications to staff about programs should be channeled through the Superintendent. Board members must be careful about the manner in which they interact with staff (e.g., lunch outings) due to the possibility of circumventing the decision-making process.

Placing Items on the Agenda

- The agenda-generating process will begin the Tuesday following the last board meeting.
- Consensus among board members should be garnered regarding a potential agenda topic prior to requesting agenda placement. Upon three board members reaching consensus in accordance with the OMA on an agenda topic, the Superintendent will be notified and the item will be added to the agenda; provided that an item shall not be placed on the agenda with only the support of three board members if the item has been on the agenda in the previous six months.
 - The standard utilized to determine agenda consideration will stem from Board Policy denoted as Item #12 of the *Code of Conduct for Members of School Boards*, specifying that the determining factor for inclusion of an item on any board meeting agenda stems from its focus on the *primary work of clarifying the district purpose, direction of goals, and monitoring district performance*.
- Board member will submit items for the agenda no later than the Monday preceding the upcoming board meeting. Based on the agenda item and any need for administrative follow-up/preparation involving the agenda item, the Board expects the Superintendent to communicate when agenda-placement of the agenda item will occur.
- The Board President is responsible for focusing Board meeting agendas on appropriate content.
 - 2:110 Qualifications, Term and Duties of Board Officers*
 - 2:220 Board of Education Meeting Procedure*

Closed Session Meetings

- We will, at all times, respect the confidentiality of privileged information and will not divulge conversations, discussions, or deliberations that take place during a closed session meeting.
- We understand that to divulge closed session information damages the relationship of the team and has the potential for far reaching consequences which may impact future District operations.

2:80 Board Member Oath and Conduct

Board Discussion During Meetings

- We will actively engage during meetings while sharing time with other members to ask questions of staff.
- We will respectfully listen to other members during discussion and encourage focused discussion on the agenda topic.

Board Member Voting or Action on Agenda

- When a vote is taken upon any measure before the Board with a quorum being present, a majority of votes cast determines the outcome, unless Illinois law requires another vote total for a specific action. We respect the right of individual Board members to vote as they determine to be in the best interest of the district.

2:220 Board of Education Meeting Procedure

Speaking with One Voice

- We recognize that no Board member or subset of the Board of Education has the authority to act or speak on behalf of the Board without the consent of the Board.
- We recognize the relationship between the Superintendent and any individual Board members is collegial, is not hierarchical, and is based on mutual respect for our complementary roles.

Public Comment at Board Meetings

- We recognize Board meetings are conducted in an open public setting and are not meetings of public discussion or engagement with the Board.
- We recognize any person may address the Board once during the appointed place on the agenda for all open meetings.
- We recognize the Board President or designee will summarize the procedure for public comment prior to receiving comments from the public.
- We recognize the Superintendent is the Board's default designee to coordinate any required response to the public comment and will apprise the Board accordingly.

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

Engaging the Community

- We recognize the Board sits in trust for the whole community, and we will make continuing efforts to hear and engage the whole community.
- We will attempt to be in touch with all stakeholders and all segments of the community, not just those who seek us. We will monitor efforts in this area, asking the question, "Which community voices are not part of Board considerations, and how will those voices be heard?"

8:10 Public Relations

Board Member Visits to Schools

- We all have equal access and are encouraged to visit all District school facilities.
- We recognize that our presence in a school is a potential disruption to the daily routine.

- We may directly contact the principal of our “adopted school” for a visit and give a courtesy notice to the Superintendent.
- We may visit the schools of our children as necessary by following the normal parental visit guidelines. There is no need to notify the Superintendent for such visits or for any visitation- commitments unrelated to board service.
- We recognize that our volunteer service obligations also require sacrifice on behalf of our families. We agree that allowing retired Board Members the opportunity to participate in the high school graduation ceremony to hand their child or other household family member their diploma is an appropriate acknowledgement of Board Service.

Spokespersons for the Board

- We recognize the Board President or designee, in consultation with the Superintendent, is the spokesperson for the Board to the media.
- We recognize the Superintendent or designee, in consultation with the Board President, is the spokesperson for the district.

2:110 Qualifications, Term, and Duties of Board Officers

Continuing Education for Board Members

- We recognize the importance of the District Vision to be, “Empowering each learner to thrive in a diverse and changing world.” Thus, we are committed to overall self-improvement through continuing professional development.
- We are encouraged to participate fully in local, regional, state, and national board related activities.
- We will share other learning activities with our fellow board members.

Intentional/Unintentional Violations of Agreed Upon Process Agreements

- The Board President (Vice President if the Board President is identified as the member- in-question involved in the alleged violation) will have a one-on-one discussion with any board member who violates a Board Protocol.
- Subsequently ranked board officers—per the board policy listing of board officer duties—will determine which neutral officer will facilitate a one-on-one conference, if needed.
- If the violation does not cease, the matter will be brought to the attention of the full board.
Note: depending on the severity of the issue, serious violations will be brought to the full attention of the Board.
- See each descriptive step below.

Progressive Approaches to Address VIOLATIONS:

- Documentation will occur at all levels with the non-members in-question involved in the conference relaying meeting details.

First Offense:

- A One-on-One Conference between the board member in-question and the Board President where the member in-question presents his/her/their position and the Board President presents

the concern using objective points/resources stemming from Board Policy/Protocol.

- *If the Vice President conducts the “First Offense: One-on-One Conference,” then the Board Secretary confers with the member-in-question for the “Second Offense Conference.”*

Second Offense:

- A One-on-One Conference between the board member in-question and the Board Vice President (excluding the Board President) where the member in-question presents his/her/their position and the Vice President presents the concern using objective points/resources stemming from Board Policy/Protocol.
- *If the Vice President conducts the “First Offense: One-on-One Conference,” then the Board Secretary confers with the member-in-question for the “Second Offense Conference.”*

Third Offense:

- The full Board will be notified of the issue as well as all involved parties.
- A special board meeting may be called that will include a representative of the Illinois Association of School Boards.
- Possible removal of the member-in-question from all board committees, via board consensus.
- Based on the severity of the situation, the board may consider prohibiting participation in other areas, such as graduation ceremonies and other similar privileges.

Fourth Offense:

- A special board meeting may be called to consider the censure of the member in-question.
- Legal counsel shall be consulted.

*All discussion and any distributed material within each progressive steps will be treated as confidential/sensitive information.

*No discussion or material distribution (if applicable and unless required by law) will occur beyond the (above) stipulated school board members involved in each conference.

Board/Superintendent/Administration Relationship Building

- The Board and administration can enjoy fellowship outings as long as school business is not discussed (back to school picnics, holiday parties, etc.).

Board/Superintendent Committee Expectations

- The Superintendent controls the membership and guidelines of all superintendent committees. The Superintendent may invite a member of the Board to participate in superintendent committees. However, the board member is not authorized to speak for the Board and should abide by the committee expectations set forth by the Superintendent.
- The Board will establish all official board committees. Committees, as represented by the Committee Chair, are to give their feedback and recommendations to the entire board. The board should not attempt to rehash committee work which minimizes the purpose of having a

committee. Board members who sit on a board committee must not make any promises or decisions for the full board.

Evaluation Process

- The Board will conduct a self-evaluation(s) to further enhance its development. The board will determine its needs and meet with the Illinois Association of School Boards.

Use of Cell Phones During Meeting

- Board members should utilize caution when using cell phones during a meeting. If an emergency arises, a board member should step outside the meeting to use the cell phone.

Board/Superintendent Communications (added June 5, 2023)

This board expects:

1. To receive regular communication from the superintendent via email on Fridays.
2. To be notified by text upon the occurrence of an emergency by the Superintendent with a follow-up, detailed email issued when the urgency lessens:
 - a. School emergency (lockdown, fire, etc.)
 - b. Bus accident
 - c. Student emergency (arrest, injury, death)
 - Injury: The need for board notification of an injury is at the discretion of the Superintendent.
 - d. Staff emergency (arrest, injury, death)
 - Injury: The need for board notification of an injury is at the discretion of the Superintendent.
3. To receive board packets and supporting documentation 3 calendar days before the scheduled board meeting.
4. To receive regular monthly expenditure reports.
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 the information. ("One gets, all get.")
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. That there will be no surprises. No one gets surprised at any time – in the meeting or between meetings. The truth of no surprises is respect for all participants and the process.

This superintendent expects:

1. Agenda additions will be authorized by 3 Board Members understanding that the addition to the agenda may not appear on the agenda for the upcoming meeting. Rather, the requested addition to the agenda will appear within 2 subsequent board meetings.
2. That direction is only given at board meetings when most of the board agrees to give direction.
3. Board Members requesting a project or information (e.g., data) should communicate with the Superintendent.
4. That board members will read all board packets and supporting documentation before the board meeting.
5. That board members will contact the Superintendent with questions about agenda items or supporting materials by at least noon before the scheduled board meeting.
6. That there will be no surprises. No one gets surprised at any time – in the meeting or between meetings. The truth of no surprises is respect for all participants and the process.

Original date: January 5, 2022 Adopted from Naperville 203.

Amended: June 5, 2023