

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Global Governance Commitment

**POLICY:**

- (1) The purpose of the board, on behalf of the people of Orange County, is to see to it that the Orange County Public Schools:
  - (a) achieve appropriate results for appropriate persons at an appropriate cost, and
  - (b) avoid unacceptable actions and situations.

The board holds itself accountable to the citizens of Orange County by ensuring that all action it takes is consistent with the board's policies.

In fulfillment of this commitment, the board will rigorously and continually improve its capacity to govern effectively by using its policies to define its concerns in terms of values and its vision in terms of expectations.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:**

Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Governance Style

**POLICY:**

The board will govern with an emphasis on:

- outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation
- encouragement of diversity in viewpoints
- strategic leadership more than administrative detail
- clear distinction of board and superintendent roles
- collective rather than individual decisions
- future rather than past or present, and
- proactivity rather than reactivity.

Accordingly:

- (1) The board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The board will be the initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The board will use the expertise of individual members to enhance the ability of the board as a body, rather than to substitute the individuals' judgments for the board's values.
- (2) The board will direct, control and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the board's

values and perspectives. The board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts on learners, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those results.

- (3) The board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. self-discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, adherence to policy making principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability.
- (4) Continual board development will include orientation of new board members in the board's governance process and periodic board discussion and evaluation of process to assure continued improvement.
- (5) The board will allow no officer, individual or committee of the board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling its commitments.
- (6) The board will monitor and discuss the board's process and performance on a scheduled basis. Self-monitoring will include comparison of board activity and discipline to policies.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Board Job Description

**POLICY:**

The specific job responsibilities of the board, as an informed agent of the ownership, are those that ensure appropriate organizational performance. The job of the board is to represent the citizens and lead the district by determining and demanding excellent organizational performance.

- (1) The board will develop and use proactive strategies to produce the link between the Orange County Public Schools and the citizens of Orange County to assure understanding of and support for the board's vision, mission, goals and objectives.
- (2) The board will monitor district performance through reports provided by the superintendent.
- (3) The board will be responsible for selecting names for schools.
- (4) The board will be responsible for approving charter schools.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**TITLE:** Chairperson's Role

**POLICY:**

- (1) The chairperson assures the integrity of the board's process and, secondarily, occasionally represents the board to outside parties.

Accordingly, the chairperson has the following authority and duties:

- (a) Assure that the board's behavior is consistent with its own policies and those obligations legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
- (b) Assure that the board discusses only those issues which, according to board policy, clearly belong to the board to decide, not the superintendent.
- (c) Ensure that board meeting deliberation is fair, open and thorough, but also efficient, timely, orderly and to the point.
- (d) Chair board meetings with consistent application of the board's rules and all the commonly accepted power of that position (e.g., ruling, recognizing).
- (e) Refrain from making decisions about policies created by the board. Therefore, the chairperson has no authority to supervise or direct the superintendent.
- (f) Represent the board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions and in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the areas delegated to the chair, regardless of the chairman's personal position or vote on the issue.
- (g) Conduct timely board meeting debriefings and quarterly self-assessments to ensure process improvement.
- (h) Compile and facilitate the summative evaluation of the superintendent.
- (i) Sign all contracts authorized by the board.
- (j) Appoint members of all board committees, as necessary, to support the work of the board.
- (k) The chairperson may delegate this authority but remains accountable for its use.
- (l) In conjunction with the superintendent and board legal counsel, approve draft board meeting agendas prior to their release.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:**

Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Board Committee Principles

**POLICY:**

- (1) Board committees, when used, will be used to support the work of the board and to reinforce the wholeness of the board's job and never to interfere with delegation of authority from the board to the superintendent.

Accordingly:

- (a) This policy applies to any group which is formed by board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless of whether the group includes board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the superintendent.
- (b) Board committees are to help the board do its job, not to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the board by preparing policy alternatives, implications or recommendations for board deliberation. All recommendations will come with an explanation of the decision-making process and the implications of the recommendations. In keeping with the board's broader focus, board committees normally will not have direct dealings with current staff operations.
- (c) Board committees may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Committee expectations and authority will be carefully stated in policy to assure that committee authority will not conflict with authority delegated to the superintendent.
- (d) Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the superintendent works with the full board, he or she will not be required to obtain approval of a board committee before an executive action. Any direction to the superintendent will come from the full board.
- (e) Board committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Therefore, a board committee that has helped the board create policy on some topic will not be used to monitor organizational performance on that same subject.

- (f) Committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an ad hoc capacity.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Committee Structure

**POLICY:**

A committee is a board committee only if its existence and charge come from the board and its work is intended to support the board's work, whether or not board members serve on the committee. The only board committees are those listed in this policy. Unless otherwise indicated, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.

Committees:

- Legislative
- Communication
- Budget
- Policy

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Annual Agenda Planning

**POLICY:**

- (1) To accomplish its stated objectives, the board will follow an annual agenda that schedules continuing review, monitoring and refinement of policies, meetings with community and staff, monitoring of policies, and activities to improve board performance through education, enriched input and deliberation.

Accordingly:

- (a) The planning cycle will end each year in January in order that administrative decision-making and budgeting for the forthcoming

year can begin and be based on accomplishing the next one-year segment of the board's most recent statement of long term goals.

- (b) The planning cycle will start with the board's development of its annual agenda for the next year, and will include:
  - (i) Scheduled discussions and consultations with selected groups and persons whose insights and opinions will be helpful to the board;
  - (ii) Discussions on governance matters, including orientation of new board members in the board's governance process, and periodic discussions by the board about means to improve its own performance;
  - (iii) Education related to policies
  - (iv) Review of the balanced scorecard and strategic plan policies.
- (c) Throughout the year the board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible. All questions about consent agenda items will be e-mailed, faxed or voice-mailed to the superintendent by Monday morning at 8:30 before a Tuesday board meeting, if possible, to allow for administrative discussion.
- (d) Monitoring of board policies will be included on the agenda for separate discussion only if a majority of the board has questions about superintendent compliance or reasonable interpretation or if policy content is to be debated.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Board Members' Code of Conduct

**POLICY:**

The public is represented by the school board acting as a body. Consequently, the school system is answerable to the board as a body, not to individual board members. The board fails to be accountable to the public if it allows any breach in this principle. Therefore, the board and its individual members are committed to ethical and businesslike conduct, including proper use of authority and decorum consistent with maintaining the integrity and discipline of effective board leadership.

The board commits itself to act as a body, rather than a collection of individuals. Thus the board can determine its expectations for individual member conduct. Consequently, each board member is expected to:

- (1) Support Board Decisions
  - (a) Regardless of individual dissent, once the board has made a decision, individual members will support the decision of the board.
    - (i) Board decisions are only those that have been voted upon or have been reached affirmatively through consensus. These decisions will be written as policies, or in the case of short-term projects or processes (e.g. a superintendent search) will be reflected in the minutes of the meeting. Comments by individual board members, even if they are not challenged, will not reflect a board decision.
    - (ii) Although all members are obligated to register differences of opinion on board issues at the board level, individual members may not direct their differences of opinion in a manner which would create polarization on the board, in the organization or community or undermine a decision of the board majority.
    - (iii) Members' interactions with public, press, or other entities, must recognize that individuals have no authority to speak for the board unless specifically authorized by the board. None of these official interactions shall expand board decisions beyond what was authorized by the board.
    - (iv) Members will not individually render judgments of superintendent or staff performance apart from compliance with board policies as monitored by the board as a body.
- (2) Make no attempt to exercise authority over the organization except through setting and following explicit written board policies.
  - (a) While the board expects individual members to be given common courtesy, it does not require the superintendent and staff to heed any individual member's opinions or instructions. Individual members' interactions with the superintendent or staff must recognize that individual members have no authority over staff and no authority to insert themselves into staff operations except when explicitly authorized by the board.
    - (i) No board member can place himself or herself between staff members in their disputes or negotiations.
    - (ii) No board member can attend or serve on staff committees or engage in solving staff problems.
    - (iii) No board member can direct staff or commit staff time or school system resources.
    - (iv) No board member may become directly involved in solving a parent or citizen complaint at the staff level. Board members will ensure that the superintendent is informed of the issue so that he may have appropriate staff members respond.
  - (v) Nothing contained in Section 2a is intended to restrict or discourage normal and open communication between the

governing board, staff and community.

- (3) Respect and never violate the confidentiality of executive session. This means that no information, however a member may feel about it, will be shared with any person not a part of the executive session.
- (4) Focus on what needs to be accomplished at the board table (i.e., policy development, monitoring adherence to policies, major issues relating to interaction with other governmental agencies). In order to accomplish this:
  - (a) If issues are raised by community members or staff on which the board already has a policy, the chair will state the policy. Discussion will center on whether the concerns justify needed changes to the policy or whether additional monitoring of the policy is needed.
  - (b) The chair will keep a list of potential issues for policy discussion as they arise so that the board may discuss issues in the context of policy-making, at an appropriate time, with all necessary information.
  - (c) Responsibilities delegated to the chair or to another board member will be followed through by that member and an update or report will be provided to the board. Members serving on board-created committees will provide an update as appropriate.
- (5) Keep personal concerns and differences with other board members from impacting the functioning of the board.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Board Members' Conflict of Interest

**POLICY:**

The School Board shall be governed by and comply with Florida law in conflict of interest.

ADOPTED: 11/17/08



**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Process for Addressing Board Member Violations

**POLICY:**

The board is committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the board's policies. In the event of a member's willful and continuing violation of policy, the board will seek remedy by the following process:

- (1) Conversation in a posted meeting between the offending member and the board chairman or other individual member.
- (2) Discussion in a posted work session between the offending member and the full board.
- (3) Public censure of the offending member of the board.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections , Florida Statutes

ADOPTED: 11/17/08

**SCHOOL BOARD GOVERNANCE – cont'd**

**FILE: B**

**TITLE:** Procurement and Purchasing

**POLICY:**

Procurement and purchasing decisions, to be in the public interest, must be made in accordance with objective guidelines and fair procedures. In order to prevent even the appearance of impropriety in the decision-making process, the board commits to regulate and record contacts designed to influence its decisions between members and vendors, contractors and consultants or their representatives. As such, the board members shall:

- (1) Refrain from individually meeting with or speaking with lobbyists about potential contracts once the invitation to bid or request for proposal has been issued.
- (2) Require registration of individuals wishing to influence board decisions on contracts.
- (3) Require that each contact, whether in person (in or out of the office), by telephone or by electronic means, be recorded in a public record by the lobbyist.

**LAWS IMPLEMENTED:** Sections

ADOPTED: 11/17/08