

Bylaws of the Board

PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS

The Governing Board believes that its primary responsibility is to act in the best interest of every student in the District. The Board also has major commitments to parents/guardians, all members of the community, employees, the State of California, laws pertaining to public education, and established policies of the District. To maximize Board effectiveness and public confidence in District governance, Board members are expected to govern responsibly and hold themselves to the highest standards of ethical conduct.

(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)
(cf. 9270 - Conflict of Interest)

The Individual Trustee

In California's public school education, a trustee is a person elected or appointed to serve on a school district or county board of education. Individual trustees bring unique skills, values, and beliefs to the board. In order to govern effectively, individual trustees must work with each other and the Superintendent to ensure that a quality education is provided to each student.

To be effective, an individual trustee:

- Keeps learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus.
- Values, supports, and advocates for public education.
(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)
- Recognizes and respects differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff students, parents, and the community.
- Acts with dignity, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
- Keeps confidential matters confidential.
(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)
- Participates in professional development and commits the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader.
(cf. 9240 - Board Development)
- Understands the distinctions between Board and staff roles, and refrains from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff.
(cf. 2110 - Superintendent Responsibilities and Duties)
- Understands that authority rests with the Board as a whole and not with individuals.
(cf. 9200 - Members)

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PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS (continued)

The Board

School districts and county offices of education are governed by boards, not by individual trustees. While understanding their separate roles, the Board and Superintendent work together as a “governance team.” This team assumes collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture in order to govern effectively.

To operate effectively, the Board must have a unity of purpose and:

- Keep the District focused on learning and achievement for all students
- Communicate a common vision.
(cf. 0000 - Vision)
(cf. 0100 - Philosophy)
(cf. 0200 - Goals for the School District)
- Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
- Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
- Govern within Board-adopted policies and procedures.
(cf. 9311 - Board Policies)
(cf. 9321 - Board Bylaws)
- Take collective responsibility for the Board’s performance.
- Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.
(cf. 9400 - Board Self-Evaluation)
- Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform Board deliberations.
(cf. 1220 - Citizen Advisory Committees)
(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

The Board’s Responsibilities

The primary responsibilities of the board are to set a direction for the District, provide a structure by establishing policies, ensure accountability, and provide community leadership on behalf of the District and public education. To fulfill these responsibilities, there are a number of specific jobs that effective boards must carry out.

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PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS (continued)

Effective boards:

- Involve the community, parents, students, and staff in developing a common vision for the District focused on learning and achievement and responsive to the needs of all students.
- Adopt, evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the District's vision and values.
- Maintain accountability for student learning by adopting the District curriculum and monitoring student progress.
- Hire and support the Superintendent so that the vision, values, and policies of the District are implemented
- Conduct regular and timely evaluations of the Superintendent based on vision, values, and performance of the District, and ensure that the Superintendent holds District personnel accountable.
- Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the District's vision and values, and regularly monitors the fiscal health of the District.
- Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.
- Establish a framework for the District's collective bargaining process and adopt responsible agreements.
- Provide community leadership on educational issues and advocate on behalf of students and public education at the local, state, and federal levels.

Legal Reference: (see next page.)

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PROFESSIONAL GOVERNANCE STANDARDS (continued)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35010 Power of governing board to adopt rules for its own governance
35160 Board authority to act in any manner not conflicting with law
35164 Actions by majority vote

GOVERNMENT CODE

1090 Financial interest in contract
1098 Disclosure of confidential information
1125-1129 Incompatible activities
54950-54962 The Ralph M. Brown Act
87300-87313 Conflict of Interest Code

Management Resources:

CSBA Publications
CSBA Professional Governance Standards, 2000
Maximizing School Board Leadership: Boardsmanship, 1996

WEB SITES

CSBA: www.csba.org.