



## *Governance Handbook 2019*

### **Board of Trustees**

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Jim Harvey, President

Carmen Fox, Vice President

Tom Courtney, Clerk

Ruben Medina, Trustee

Jessica Risler, Trustee

### **Superintendent**

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Peter Livingston

*This handbook reflects the governance team's work on creation of a framework for effective governance. This involves ongoing discussions about unity of purpose, trustee roles, commitment to norms, and developing consensus on protocols / formal structures that will enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits the children of Lucerne Valley Unified School District.*

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## EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

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### **Governance – A Definition**

School district governance is the process of setting organizational policies and standards that are adopted by the Board of Trustees and implemented by the Superintendent in order to provide strategic direction and ensure that objectives are met, risks are managed appropriately, and resources are utilized responsibly in order to ensure the best education possible for all students.

Governance tenets encompass the basic characteristics and behaviors that enable governance team members to effectively create a climate for excellence in a school district and maintain the focus on improved student learning and achievement. This Governance Handbook documents the governance responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and Superintendent of the Lucerne Valley Unified School District within these three dimensions:

1. Governing as a unified team with a shared vision to lead and serve the community
2. Mutual support for roles and responsibilities
3. Creating and sustaining a positive governance leadership culture

## UNITY OF PURPOSE

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Unity of purpose is a common focus, agreement on priority goals, and shared values about students and the district that transcend individual differences and fulfill a greater purpose.

A unity of purpose exists when the commitment to achieving these goals becomes the guiding principle of all trustees and the superintendent. The focused efforts of the Lucerne Valley Unified School District will be reflected in the vision and mission statements, and the strategic plan adopted by the board.

### **Belief Statement**

We embrace being a small district where each student has a name and not just a number.

### **The Lucerne Valley Unified School District Vision Statement**

All students will be proficient in State grade-level standards as determined by valid assessment measures. This will be achieved through the use of a highly qualified and trained staff, full implementation of effective curriculum, and research proven interventions under the guidance and support of highly qualified administrators. LVUSD will be a safe, caring, supportive environment for all.

## **The Lucerne Valley Unified School District Mission Statement**

Lucerne Valley Unified School District is committed to becoming a model district in the State of California. Our students will be prepared academically, socially, and ethically to become lifelong learners and responsible, productive citizens.

## **GOVERNANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

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Citizen oversight of local government is the cornerstone of democracy in America. The role of the trustees who sit on the board is to ensure school districts are responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of their communities. Boards fulfill this role by performing five major responsibilities. These are:

- Setting Direction
- Establishing an effective and efficient structure
- Providing support
- Ensuring accountability
- Providing community leadership as advocates for children and the school district

These responsibilities represent core functions that are so fundamental to a school system's accountability to the community it serves, they can only be performed by an elected governing body. Authority is granted to the board as a whole, not each member individually. Therefore, board members fulfill these responsibilities by working together as a governance team with the superintendent to make decisions that best serve all the students in the community.

The superintendent assists the board in carrying out its responsibilities and leads the staff toward the accomplishment of the agreed upon district vision and goals.

## **PERFORMING BOARD GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITIES**

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### ***Set the direction for the school district***

- Focus on student learning
- Receive needs assessment / baseline data
- Generate, review or revise setting direction documents (beliefs, vision, priorities, strategic goals, success indicators)
- Ensure an appropriate inclusive process is used
- Ensure these documents are the driving force for all district efforts

### ***Establish an effective and efficient structure for the school district***

- Employ and support the superintendent; set policy for hiring of other personnel
- Oversee the development of and adopt policies
- Set a direction for and adopt the curriculum
- Establish budget priorities, adopt the budget and oversee facilities issues
- Provide direction for and vote to accept collective bargaining agreements

### ***Provide support through our behavior and actions***

- Act with professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and vision
- Make decisions and provide resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals
- Uphold district policies and all actions the board has approved
- Ensure a positive working climate exists
- Be knowledgeable about district efforts

### ***Ensure accountability to the public***

- Evaluate the superintendent
- Monitor, review and revise policies and serve as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitor student achievement and program effectiveness and require program changes as indicated
- Monitor and adjust district finances
- Monitor the collective bargaining process
- Develop and implement board self-evaluation

### ***Demonstrate Community Leadership***

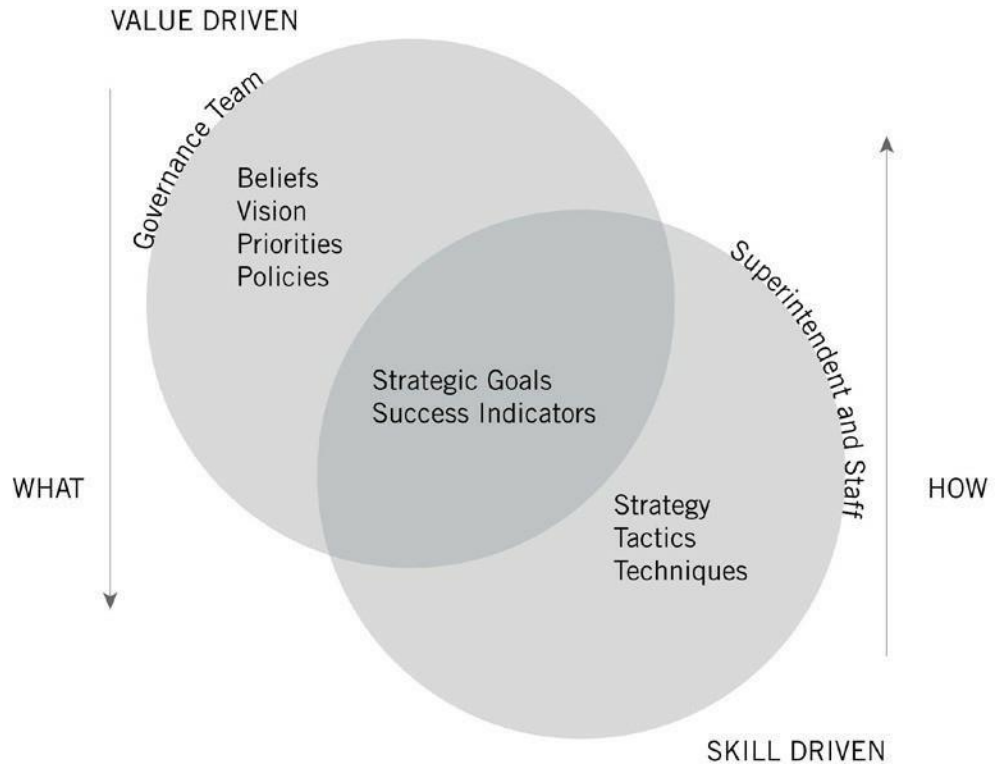
- Speak with a common voice about district policies, goals, and issues
- Engage and involve the community in district schools and activities
- Communicate clear information about policies, programs, and fiscal condition of the district
- Educate the community and the media about the issues facing students and the district
- Advocate for children and district programs to the general public, key community members, and local, state, and national leaders

## **EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE TEAMS**

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*Effective teams value and respect their essential roles, reach mutual agreement on the roles of the board and superintendent, and strive to operate within them.*

# UNDERSTANDING GOVERNANCE ROLES\*



\*Source: California School Board Association

# Protocols to Facilitate Governance Leadership

Requesting Information from the Superintendent	
<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Critical to the ability of trustees to make informed decisions is timely access to Information.</li> <li>● The superintendent wants to be responsive to requests for information, maintain the focus on district priorities and balance the management of staff time.</li> <li>● This will provide clarity about the organizational structure for trustees and Staff.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Trustees will always work through the superintendent when asking questions or requesting additional information on board meeting agenda items.</li> <li>● The superintendent will ensure timely responses to requests and will provide the information or direct trustees to the correct source. As appropriate, the superintendent will distribute answers to all trustees.</li> <li>● Board members will self-monitor to ensure one person's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals. Requests requiring inordinate amounts of time will be brought to the board to decide whether to support the request.</li> </ul>

Meetings as Strategic Leadership	
<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The board meeting is a meeting to conduct district business in public. Well-run efficient meetings model leadership, promote trust and confidence and provide opportunities to demonstrate strategically moving the district forward and planning for the future.</li> <li>● The governance team wants to demonstrate to the public that the board maintains the focus on priorities and that deliberation and discussion are conducted with professionalism and respect.</li> <li>● The board meeting provides opportunities to share educational philosophy among the governance team and with the community.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The board will communicate how the agenda topics link to district priorities and how actions link to the goals and strategies.</li> <li>● The principal/superintendent reports will explicitly demonstrate the relationship to the district goals.</li> <li>● The board members agree to share accountability for board deliberations that demonstrate that the 'right' amount of time is spent on the 'right' things while valuing the input of each member of the governance team.</li> <li>● Board member comments at the board meeting with focus on goals, professional learning or educational trends.</li> <li>● Annually and as needed the board will schedule study sessions and board conversations linked to the district's strategic priorities.</li> </ul>

## Role of the Board President

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The board has an obligation to set an example of good government in action for the community.</li> <li>● The board intends for meetings to proceed professionally, efficiently and effectively.</li> <li>● The board president sets the tone and shapes the public's perception of the school board.</li> <li>● Each board member must have the opportunity to express his or her viewpoint during board deliberation.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The role of the board president is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Confer with the superintendent before the board meeting to prepare, as necessary for the board meeting.</li> <li>● Facilitate the board meeting, supporting the effective flow of the discussion and encouraging input from all trustees while staying on task, moving forward, and maintaining proper meeting decorum</li> <li>● Model the tone and behavior the board wishes to convey to the community.</li> <li>● Following the board meeting, the board president with the superintendent will ensure there is appropriate follow-up and clarification of possible options for the board.</li> <li>● The board president serves as the primary spokesperson for the board.</li> </ul>

## Board Deliberation and Motions on Agenda Action Items

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The tenets of parliamentary procedure help ensure the orderly conduct of board meetings.</li> <li>● Establishing clear and simple rules leads to wider understanding and participation, fostering a healthier exchange of ideas.</li> <li>● Motions are the vehicles for orderly decision making by the board</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The board president will introduce the agenda item and present the opportunity for the superintendent and staff to report on the issue at hand and to provide staff recommendations.</li> <li>● The board president will open the item for discussion so that board members may exchange thoughts or ask the superintendent and staff for further clarification if necessary.</li> <li>● Members of the public will be afforded the right to address the board before or during consideration of the item. (Gov Code 54954.3)</li> <li>● The board president will call for a motion. A board member may act by saying "I move that.....".</li> <li>● Another board member may second the motion by saying "I second the motion"</li> <li>● The board president will acknowledge the motion and second and ask if any further discussion by the board is necessary</li> <li>● The board president will call for a vote saying "All in favor please respond by saying aye." "Any opposed please respond by saying no."</li> <li>● The board president announces the result of the vote and clarifies Board direction for the Superintendent and the record keeper.</li> </ul>



### Amended Motions and Substitute Motions

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A “motion” is a formal proposal put before the board by a member of the board</li> <li>● Any motion can be amending before board consideration</li> <li>● There can be multiple motions on the floor at the same time</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A recommendation to amend a motion can be made by any member of the board.</li> <li>● When a board member recommends amending a motion on the floor, if the maker and the person who seconded the motion accept the amendment, it now becomes the pending motion on the floor.</li> <li>● If a recommended amendment is not accepted by the maker of the motion and person who seconded it, the person proposing the amendment must make a “substitute” motion and it must be seconded before the board can consider it. A substitute motion is a second motion separate from the first motion.</li> <li>● When multiple motions exist simultaneously, the board should first consider the last motion made that is seconded. If this motion passes the action is final for this topic and the previous motion(s) becomes moot. If the motion fails, the motion made prior to the failed motion then becomes the pending motion for consideration by the board. The first motion made is the last to be considered.</li> <li>● Substitute motions shall be limited to three to avoid confusion and unwieldy conversations.</li> </ul>

### Board Meeting Agenda Consent Calendar

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A consent calendar allows the board to approve items together without discussion or individual motions.</li> <li>● Consent calendars help streamline meetings by allowing procedural decisions that are likely to be noncontroversial to be made through a single motion.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Board members, staff, or members of the public can request an item be pulled from the consent calendar for individual consideration.</li> <li>● Typical reasons to remove an item from the consent calendar are; to discuss the item, to query the item, or to register a vote against the item.</li> <li>● Ideally requests to remove an item from the consent calendar and the reason for the request should be made during approval of the agenda. Items may also be removed when the consent calendar is considered by the board.</li> <li>● Consent items should include, but are not limited to; approval of minutes, field trips, conference requests, inter-district transfers, volunteers, personnel, etc.</li> <li>● An agenda item “Items removed From The Consent Calendar” will follow the consent calendar on the agenda to facilitate consideration of removed items.</li> </ul>

### Newly Elected Board Member Resources

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Newly elected members to the Board of Trustees will likely be unfamiliar with state open meeting laws, meeting procedural policies, board bylaws, the district budget, goals, and other district related issues.</li> <li>● The governance team wants to provide all the tools necessary to help new board members reach their potential to be a productive and effective member to the team.</li> <li>● Having resources related to board meeting procedure and pertinent district information will help prepare new board members for their first board meeting and facilitate integration into the governance team.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>Newly elected board members will receive the following resources upon election and prior to their first board meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Brown Act Handbook, LVUSD Governance Handbook and Governance Calendar, Annual Board Meeting Calendar, Board Bylaws/Policies, and CSBA Professional Governance Standards</li> <li>● Strategic/Long Range Plan, District Budget, District Budget Development Calendar, and District Resource Document</li> </ul> <p>The governance team will schedule a workshop/conversation meeting at the first board meeting held with newly elected board member(s). This should include a mock meeting scenario to help familiarize new board members with agenda item</p>

### Establishing Multi - Year Goals

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Establishing district multi-year and annual goals is critical to a forward thinking, proactive board that is committed to continuous learning.</li> <li>● Important to the work of the board is the ability to track progress over multiple years.</li> <li>● Critical to governance work is data driven decision-making that promotes clarity of direction, focus and alignment. Setting goals ensures that the work of the district is focused.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The annual goal setting process is linked to the district mission map and the superintendent evaluation and will follow an established calendar.</li> <li>● July - review past year accomplishments and status of goals.</li> <li>● July - set annual goals based on the District Strategic Plan and establish a schedule of progress reports.</li> </ul>

## Designated Spokesperson

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● It is essential that important and accurate information be communicated to members of the board, the staff and the community in as timely a fashion as possible.</li> <li>● The governance team recognizes that some situations have legal or other considerations that may place restrictions on what may be told to the media or public.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>The governance team commits to speaking with one voice. The designated spokesperson will vary depending on the issue or situation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Crisis/Disaster:</b> The superintendent is the primary spokesperson and may involve the board president at her discretion.</li> <li>● <b>Meeting Information</b> (e.g. board meetings, agenda items, study sessions): The board president and the superintendent will serve as primary spokespersons or may choose a designee.</li> <li>● <b>Core Values /Vision / District Priorities / General District Information:</b> All governance team members may serve as spokespersons utilizing developed and agreed upon key messages.</li> </ul> <p><i>For requests via email:</i> If a trustee receives an email request from a member of the public, the trustee will respond and copy the board president and superintendent on the response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● If the request is sent to the superintendent, she will copy the answer to all trustees.</li> <li>● If the e-mail is sent to some or all trustees, trustees will refer the request to board president with a copy to the superintendent (if the superintendent is not already copied). The board president or superintendent will agree on which of them will respond, copying all trustees.</li> </ul> <p><i>For requests from the media:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A trustee may answer a request from the media or recommend that the request be directed to the board president or the superintendent.</li> <li>● If the trustee answers the request directly via e-mail, he/she will copy the superintendent and board president. If the trustee answers the request directly via conversation or phone call, he/she will inform the superintendent and board president.</li> <li>● The board Vice President will perform the role of the board president if the board president is unavailable for an extended period.</li> </ul>

## Confidentiality

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The governing board recognizes the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of information acquired as part of a board member's official duties.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The responsibility of the board includes being privy to closed sessions or confidential information about district litigation, personnel, negotiations, superintendent evaluation, or other issues permitted under the Brown Act.</li> <li>● We will work to maintain the public's trust by not breaching confidentiality.</li> <li>● If we inadvertently or accidentally violate a confidential issue, we will take immediate responsibility for our action.</li> <li>● Confidential items will be reserved for full board discussion.</li> </ul>

## Handling Community or Staff Concerns and/or Complaints

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Board members want to be accessible, responsive, consistent and fair in dealings with complaints and concerns from staff and the community.</li><li>● The board values open communication and timely resolution of issues.</li><li>● Board members may take receiving complaints as an opportunity to explain the role of trustees.</li><li>● Board members understand they do not have the authority to resolve complaints as individual members of the governing body.</li></ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>When approached with an issue or concern, trustees agree to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Listen openly, being careful to remain neutral.</li><li>● Remind staff and members of the community that no individual trustee has the authority to solve the issue/concern.</li><li>● Encourage addressing this with the person who can most directly help with their concern, e.g. teacher, principal, superintendent.</li><li>● As appropriate, explain the district complaint or grievance process. Trustees will notify the superintendent of the issue or concern, as appropriate.</li></ul>

## Board Governance Self-Assessment

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Conducting a governance self-evaluation demonstrates accountability to the community and the willingness of the governance team to strengthen and improve</li></ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The board supports continuous improvement through ongoing evaluation of governance effectiveness.</li><li>● The governance self-assessment provides an opportunity to reflect, evaluate, prioritize and focus on strengthening the governance team.</li><li>● The board will participate in at least one workshop annually to review the governance goals, governance team agreements and processes and to participate in a self-evaluation process.</li><li>● The assessment process will align with assessment of progress on district goals and the superintendent evaluation.</li><li>● At the conclusion of the annual governance self-assessment, the board will reach agreement on one to two governance goals/objectives that are directly linked to the district goals.</li></ul>

## Visiting Schools and Attending School Events

<b>Principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The board wants to be informed about instructional practices, and the needs of the students and staff with regard to school programs.</li> <li>● The board respects the busy schedule of staff and the anxiety that can be created by well-meaning, but unannounced visits to schools.</li> </ul>
<b>Protocol</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● As a professional courtesy, trustees will schedule school visits.</li> <li>● The superintendent and/or principal will accompany trustees on classroom visits.</li> <li>● Trustees requesting a meeting with school staff or administration will schedule this meeting through the superintendent.</li> <li>● The superintendent will ensure that staff is aware of the process and protocols for trustees visiting the classrooms.</li> <li>● Board members are encouraged to visit schools and attend school events.</li> </ul>

## Collective Bargaining

<b>Principle</b>	<p>Board members involvement in the collective bargaining process ensures that the District is represented well by those selected to negotiate on behalf of the Board and the community, while also ensuring that the ethical, fiscal and educational goals of the LVUSD community are represented in the actions taken throughout the collective bargaining process</p>
<b>Protocol</b>	<p>To achieve this, board members should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Participate by providing direction and guidance to those selected to represent the Board (District Negotiating Team). Board members will not participate in the individual negotiation sessions, either directly (at the table) or indirectly (observing the District's negotiation team).</li> <li>● Create the most positive environment possible to support the negotiation process; (e.g., Superintendent will endeavor to hold regular monthly employee/employer relations (ERR) meetings with each union's lead Negotiator and President). Superintendent and management team member shall endeavor to hold regular meetings to maintain consistent positive communication.</li> <li>● Set the District's collective bargaining parameters for its negotiation team.</li> <li>● Expect, as the representative of the Board, that the Superintendent will ensure that the Board, collectively and individually, is informed on the issues and strategies implemented within the collective bargaining process.</li> <li>● Expect, as the representative of the Board, that the Superintendent will recommend, for approval of the Board, the Chief Negotiator and the members of each of the District's negotiation teams.</li> <li>● Encourage open communication to all those impacted by negotiations, within allowed parameters.</li> <li>● Expect, while the negotiation process is taking place that the Superintendent will be available to address the challenges related to the district. As the representative of the Board, the Superintendent will guide the development of the bargaining strategy and will be primarily responsible for facilitating the collective bargaining process.</li> </ul>

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES GOALS

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### Goal 1:

**Student Achievement through a rich and varied curriculum: All learners will experience a challenging and relevant learning environment that will prepare them for the future.**

- A) All board decisions related to student achievement shall adhere to the objectives of the board approved Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).

### Goal 2:

**Community Relations: Lucerne Valley Unified School District will support and encourage every community member to invest in our children's future and build shared ownership and participation in our school district through:**

- A) Seeking community involvement and considering the community a partner in all efforts to educate the students of Lucerne Valley.
  - 1) The board will accomplish this by encouraging board members to attend local community meetings representing the district and participating as necessary.
  - 2) Encourage community participation at District Board meetings.
  - 3) Promote a clear message about District activities regularly through the local press.

### Goal 3:

**Budget and Finance: Lucerne Valley Unified School District will develop and implement a financial management system that ensures the highest levels of fiscal responsibility.**

- A) Board members will work towards a better understanding of the financial system in an intelligent manner. The Board needs to have an understanding of all aspects of budgeting.
- B) Ensure that all decisions are supported by our LCAP including:
  - 1) Long range budget planning that includes a balanced budget over a three year period.
  - 2) Thoughtful review of all practices to ensure long term sustainability.
  - 3) Budget planning which is student centered.

- 4) Transparent budgeting processes.
- 5) Board members will play an active role in the development of the annual budget and LCAP.

**Goal 4:**

**Specific to members of the Board of Education: The Lucerne Valley Unified School District will hold itself to the highest standard possible out of respect to the school and community that we serve.**

- A) Embracing technology, the board will demonstrate its commitment to technology by utilizing it to perform regular board functions and by promoting its use throughout the District.
- B) Adhere to board policies regarding board member responsibility and commitments specific to attendance at board meeting and other board related functions.
- C) Board members will actively participate in available training of best governance practices in order to make best decisions for students, staff, and the community.
- D) Board members will strive to be respectful of differing ideas, opinions, and votes of fellow Board members.

**Goal 5:**

**The Board will strive to promote transparency in all decision making, thereby protecting the public's interest in open government and ensuring the governance process is visible.**

- A) The Board will maintain a policy relating to transparency and make that policy easily accessible (Board Bylaw 9009).
- B) The Board will keep honesty, integrity, and openness priorities in the exercise of district governance in an effort to effectively and efficiently make decisions that serve the needs and interests of the community.