

SAN LORENZO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD BYLAW

Board Bylaw

BB 9005 (a)

Governance Standards

THE GOVERNING 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:

1. Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for all students.
2. Communicate a common vision.
3. Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
4. Govern in a dignified and professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
5. Govern within Board-adopted policies and procedures.
6. Take collective responsibility for the Board's performance.
7. Periodically evaluate its own effectiveness.
8. Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform Board deliberations.

The Board's Job

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.

Effective Boards:

1. 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.

2. Adopt, evaluate and update policies consistent with the law and the District's vision and goals.
3. Maintain accountability for student learning by adopting the District curriculum aligned to the State Framework and Federal guidelines. As well as, monitoring student progress.
4. Hire and support the Superintendent so that the vision, goals and policies of the District can be implemented.
5. Conduct regular and timely evaluations of the Superintendent based on the vision, goals and performance of the District, and ensure that the Superintendent holds District personnel accountable.
6. Adopt a fiscally responsible budget based on the District's vision and goals, and regularly monitor the fiscal health of the District.
7. Ensure that a safe and appropriate educational environment is provided to all students.
8. Establish a framework for the District's collective bargaining process and adopt responsible agreements.
9. Provide community leadership on educational issues and advocate on behalf of students and public education at the local, state and federal levels.
10. Convene as a judicial and appeals body to serve as the final decision maker in accordance with law, Board policies and negotiated agreements

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

54950-54963 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

Internal Board Operations

Protocols of the Board and Superintendent

- I. Listed is a series of Protocols which govern appropriate role behavior for members of the Board of Education and the superintendent. In no way are the Protocols intended to discourage any member of the staff or citizen of the community from speaking directly with an individual Board member or the superintendent; rather, they are intended to give guidance and direction to responses which either a Board member or the Superintendent give to questions and/or concerns expressed to them.

In general, Protocols allow for everyone to define and understand the difference between policy making (the “what”) and administration (the “how”) as well as provide guidance to Board members, the superintendent, members of the staff and citizens of the community to understand and respect the differences between the roles.

- II. Adherence to these Protocols by the members of the Board and the Superintendent will permit the district to operate efficiently and effectively. There is, however, no intent to abridge the rights and obligations of Board members to oversee the operation of the district, nor to interfere with the superintendent in his/her role as the chief executive officer of the district.
- III. Our authority, our power as a Board member, lies not with us as individuals, but rather as members of a team. Our actions and decisions, both individually and collectively, should always be guided by what is in the best interests of all the students of the District, and our personal commitment should never stray from the determination to provide the best possible education for each student.

Leadership

1. Ensuring the District is fiscally solvent is a primary responsibility of the Board. All Board members shall take the necessary steps to be well informed of all financial decisions that may fiscally impact the District.
2. Never is a member of the Board or the Superintendent to discuss confidential personnel or negotiations matters with members of the bargaining unit.

3. Internal mistakes may occur and should not be attributed to an unwillingness to be a team player.
4. Each member of the Board will devote the time necessary to become informed, reading agendas, pursuing needed information, attendance at workshops, and when possible county and state association conferences.
5. Each member of the Board will weigh all decisions with due consideration, hearing all aspects under deliberation, keeping an open mind and strive to avoid jumping to conclusions.

Board Relationship

6. During a meeting Board members, when interacting with the public, will not make statements which could be misinterpreted as having full Board concurrence.
7. No individual Board member will make or appear to make a decision which appropriately should be made by the entire Board.
8. Board meeting attendance is to be given the highest priority.
9. Any complaint made to a Board member by a citizen or a member of the staff is to be referred directly to the Superintendent, who is to resolve it according to Board policy making certain all Board members are informed.
10. Loyalty to each other includes:
 - a) giving one's opinion on all issues;
 - b) respecting each individual's opinion; and
 - c) accepting and living with actions of the majority of the members of the Board.
11. The Board will conduct a self evaluation prior to the Superintendent evaluation.
12. All conversations taking place in closed sessions will remain absolutely confidential. Only appropriate items will be raised in closed sessions.
13. Each Board member and the Superintendent is dedicated to making the District and each other successful.

14. Under no circumstances will a matter be brought to a public meeting that is intended to surprise a Board member or the Superintendent.
15. All Board members are to be apprised in a timely manner of any incident which they may be called upon to answer or explain.
16. Board members shall notify the Superintendent before the meeting, if more information is needed on an agenda item.
17. Each member of the Board and the Superintendent is to be treated with dignity and respect. Criticize ideas, not people.
18. Individual requests for reports, surveys, projects, etc. will be directed only to the Superintendent.
19. Promotional appointments and personnel changes are recommended by the Superintendent. Appointments are made by the Board.
20. Unsubstantiated rumor, innuendo and information from anonymous sources shall be processed through the Superintendent.
21. Irritations will not be allowed to fester. Disagreements and/or concerns should be communicated directly and immediately.
22. No one is to divide, or attempt to divide, the Board members. All Board members and the superintendent will seek accommodation and compromise acting as one united governance team.
23. Board member shall be committed to any decision made even if you voted against it.
24. Any concern reported to the superintendent by a Board member is to receive the highest priority, with the disposition of the matter communicated to all members of the Board.
25. Board member shall be supportive of the Superintendent during risk taking.
26. No individual Board member or the Superintendent will ever use the media as a forum.
27. The Superintendent shall ensure that all significant administrative actions are to be communicated regularly to all Board members.

28. All information, requests, comments, and actions shall be reported to all Board members via the Superintendent.

Staff Relationship

29. Questions and clarification of Board agenda items are to be communicated through the Superintendent to the appropriate Cabinet member prior to a Board meeting.
30. No individual Board member is to come between the Superintendent, his staff, and other members of the Board.
31. All substantive contacts between a Board member and a staff member are to be reported to the Superintendent as soon as possible.
32. Board members, as their time permits, are encouraged to visit school sites and attend school functions, but will avoid interrupting instruction or interrupting employees at work. The site administrator shall be contacted at the time of a visit and the Superintendent notified.
33. Board members are Policy makers (“The What”). The Superintendent/ Administration are the implementers (“The How”).

