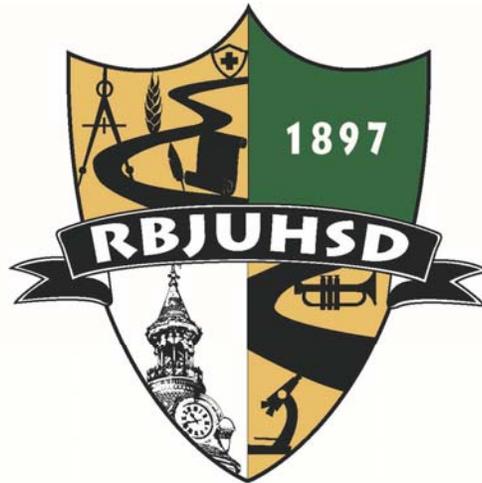


RED BLUFF JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT



**RED BLUFF JOINT UNION
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

GOVERNANCE HANDBOOK

2019/2020

BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

KATHY BRANDT, PRESIDENT

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ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

There are three dimensions to the effective governance of any organization. The Governance Handbook documents the governance responsibilities within these three dimensions.

Governing as a unified team with a shared vision to lead and serve the community.
Governing within a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities.
Creating and sustaining a positive governance leadership culture.

I. A Unified Team with a Shared Vision

The Board of Trustees views a unified focus as the key element in fulfilling the District’s Mission and Vision. The board’s collective commitment to achieving its goals guides the actions and behaviors of all Trustees.

These focused efforts are reflected in the District’s purpose, values, and Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP).

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to improve our community by serving our students in a safe environment.

We, the board, understand this to mean we have a covenant with the community to ensure that our schools are safe physically and emotionally. That the decisions we make put students’ needs above the desires of others. We are committed to building a system where objective measures reflect high-level student performance academically, athletically, and social – emotionally. We are driven by these goals and understand that continual improvement and a growth focus guide our efforts. The term TOGETHER reminds us that equity and fairness are rights we protect for each student in our schools.

Our Values

The Red Bluff Joint Union High School District values are **commitment**, **accountability**, **responsibility**, and **enthusiasm**. We strive to provide opportunities, resources, and support to ALL students, staff, and community.

We, the board, understand this to mean we are committed to working collaboratively with the families who make up our community. We will reach our purpose when each student excels in all aspects of their education. The board recognizes that students need exposure to diverse and rich learning experiences. Our students must be ready for a world where their education, confidence, health, and skills allow them opportunities in their chosen future.

Our Norms – how we will conduct ourselves and treat others.

Student focused	Proactive	Efficient	Disagree agreeably
No surprises	Team	Participate fully	Assume good will
Confidential	Empathetic	Open-Minded	Fun
Positive	Risk-tolerant	Prepared	Punctual

Responsibilities of the Board:

1. We set the direction.
2. We establish the structure.
3. We create a supportive environment.
4. We ensure accountability.
5. We act as community leaders.

Governance Team and LCAP Goals:

1. Increase the number of students prepared for post-secondary education.
2. Increase the number of students performing at grade level in Reading/Language Arts and Math.
3. Improve, support, and sustain student engagement with a positive and safe school climate.
4. Improve, support, and sustain student learning and safety by maintaining and improving district facilities.
5. Improve, support, and sustain a successful Career Technical Education (CTE) Career Pathway Program.

II. Shared Understanding of Roles and Responsibilities

To effectively and efficiently lead the district, the entire governance team must have a clearly defined and understood set of roles, responsibilities, and working relationships. Agreeing to work within those parameters creates the trust necessary for leading systemic improvement.



The role of the Board is to ensure the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community are transformed into policies that serve as a driving force to focus and align all district efforts.

Effective Governance Teams

- Communicate a common vision.
- Keep the district focused on learning and achievement for ALL students.
- Value, support and advocate for public education.
- Govern within board adopted policies and procedures.
- Ensure opportunities for the diverse range of views in the community to inform board deliberations.
- Periodically evaluate the governance team's effectiveness.

Effective Trustees

- Govern in a dignified, professional manner, treating everyone with civility and respect.
- Operate openly, with trust and integrity.
- Take collective responsibility for the governance team's performance; agree on behavioral norms and operational protocols.
- Recognize and respect differences of perspective and style on the board and among staff, students, parents, and the community.

- Understand the distinctions between board and staff roles, and refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the superintendent and staff.
- Understand that authority rests with the board as a whole and not with individuals.
- Keep confidential matters confidential.
- Participate in professional development and commit the time and energy necessary to be informed and effective leaders.

Characteristics of Effective Trustees



Our words relay only about 7% of what we communicate. People interpret our meaning by observing our body language and listening to our tone of voice.

Trust

The title Trustee implies that we hold the trust of our constituency. We value that trust and accept the responsibility of educating the children of our community. To maintain and build that trust, we recognize the need to be effective board members.

III. A Positive Governance Leadership Culture

Exceptional boards make governance intentional, and create procedures and practices that can be thoughtfully adapted to changing circumstances. Protocols are tools to strengthen the capacity of the board to engage in a constructive relationship with the superintendent and staff— one that is grounded in a mutual understanding of the respective roles and responsibilities. Explicit norms and protocols, agreed to and upheld by the board and superintendent, provide transparency and stability in the governance relationship as the board carries out its role.

MEETING GUIDELINES

- Focus on students’ best interests
- Treat everyone with dignity and respect
- Listen openly
- Be open to ideas of others. Everyone’s opinion counts
- Work toward the future, learning from the past
- Promote a stable and consistent environment
- Be mindful of length of meetings, be brief with comments while avoiding repetition
- Share responsibility for the success of the board meeting

PROTOCOLS TO FACILITATE EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

Protocol	Agreement
Using Meetings as Strategic Leadership Tools	All governance team members agree that the board meetings are opportunities to strategically move the district forward, and to communicate direction, district priorities and progress to the community. The board agenda items will be linked to the Purpose and Values, as often as possible and appropriate. At the conclusion of each board meeting, the superintendent will review the calendar, including future topics.
Protocol	Agreement
Placing Items on the Board Agenda	Any Board member may request an item be placed on the agenda. Members of the public may also ask for items to be added to the agenda. The following steps detail how proposed agenda items will be handled. Step 1. Board members should discuss the idea, concern or issue with the Superintendent, or one other Board member. If the request comes from a member of the public to the Superintendent, the Superintendent will discuss it with one Board member. Step 2. If, after the discussion, the matter is thought to be appropriate for discussion and within the Board’s jurisdiction, contact the Superintendent and ask for the item to be added to the next meeting agenda. Forward any related documentation or information to the Superintendent. Step 3. The Superintendent and Board President will review proposed items and confirm they are appropriate for boardroom discussion. They will also determine whether the item should be heard in open or closed session. Step 4. In cases where the proposed item may have legal implications, the district’s legal counsel will be contacted for advice or direction.

	Step 5. The Superintendent and Board President will draft an agenda. The agenda will be structured such that items of great interest to the public, or items which necessitate visitors or presenters appear early on the schedule.
Protocol	Agreement
Agenda questions answered before a meeting	<p>The board packet will be available to all board members by the end of the Friday prior to the board meeting. Whenever possible all relevant presentation materials, slides, analysis and information shall also be made available the preceding Friday and posted on-line.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While occasionally additional information will be distributed on the evening of the meeting, this should be the exception rather than the rule. • The Superintendent shall include notes with the board packet. Those notes should explain any background information, or answer any questions which might reasonably be anticipated. • Board members agree to email or call the superintendent with questions or clarification on items in the board-meeting packet, as early as possible prior to the board meeting. The superintendent will use judgment as to whether this information will be distributed to all trustees. • The superintendent may direct a trustee to the appropriate staff member for answers to questions. • To the best of each board member’s ability, they agree to provide staff with a ‘heads up’ about questions they plan to ask at a board meeting.
Protocol	Agreement
Individual Board Member Requests for information	<p>Board members requesting information will contact the Superintendent. A Board member will try to give a minimum of one day’s notice for information requests before the board meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Superintendent may direct a trustee to the appropriate staff member or will work with staff to provide the information. • Board members will be mindful of the workload of staff and will self-monitor requests to ensure that one member’s requests will not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals. • Board members recognize the concept of “Nice to Know vs. Need to Know” information and will seek information only needed for effective decision-making.
Protocol	Agreement
Staff Reports	<p>In order to promote an efficient and effective use of board meetings, staff reports will be submitted in the board packet prior to the board meetings, whenever possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The board should receive monthly department reports which summarize accomplishments, address concerns, and inform the board of upcoming activities. • At the board meetings, staff may present an executive summary of the report and clarify any direction the staff is seeking from the Board. • Board members will review staff presentations prior to the board meeting, and call or e-mail in advance with questions as needed.

Protocol	Agreement
Board Deliberations	<p>Each board member brings unique skills, values and beliefs to the board table. The best possible decisions are likely when all members of the team have been part of the discussion and everyone is operating within the same parameters. This protocol promotes making the ‘best’ decision by welcoming all viewpoints, exploring all options, being efficient and avoiding repetition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agenda describes when and how the public may speak to any given item. • The Board President introduces the item. • The President will ask for a motion. • If a motion is made, the President will ask for a second. (If there is no motion or no second, the item fails.) • The staff makes the presentation, including the staff recommendation. The board asks clarification questions about the presentation. • The Board President <u>may</u> acknowledge any member of the public who wishes to speak. Public is limited to addressing the board one time per item for three minutes. • The board may ask for further clarification, following public comments. • The board deliberates and advocates. • At any point a Board member may “Call the Question” which, after a second, means all discussion stops and a vote immediately follows. • The board votes.
Protocol	Agreement
Allowing the majority to set the direction	<p>The board agrees there are multiple ‘right’ answers in addressing issues. Dissenting opinions are listened to respectfully. The final authority for board decisions rests with the board as a whole.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to a board decision, if a member of the public asks a trustee about a future board decision, the trustee will clarify that he/she is voting as an individual (“I” message). • Following a board decision the trustee agrees to fully support the majority decision (“we” message). • Following the decision, if trustees are approached by the media about the decision, they will refer the media to the Superintendent for additional information.
Protocol	Agreement
Individual Board Member Requests for Action	<p>Only the board, by formal board action, may direct staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No individual trustee has the authority to either direct staff to take action or to cause action to be taken by staff indirectly. • Individual trustees shall take great care to ensure that communication to staff not imply direction nor assume that staff should take action based upon individual trustees’ comments.

Protocol	Agreement
<p>Handling Complaints from the Community</p>	<p>The Board of Trustees is the unit of authority over the district and trustees understand that a board member has no individual authority or capacity to solve an issue or complaint.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When approached by a community member with an issue or concern, board members will listen openly and seek understanding of the issue or concern. • Trustees will demonstrate their dedication and commitment to the governance team by clarifying their authority as one of five in all board decisions and actions. • Individual Board members should not commit the Board or Administration to any action or course. • If the person making the complaint has contacted multiple Board members, the Board member listening to the concern should advise that sharing any comments expressed by other board members is inappropriate. • The trustee will explain that the district has complaint policies in place and if appropriate, will let the community member know what the complaint policy is and how they may access the process or procedure. • All complaints should be handled first at the level where the issue occurred. Board members will use judgment in responding, being mindful of their role in judicial review. • Trustees will call and/or email the superintendent when they direct a community member to contact him/her.
Protocol	Agreement
<p>Role in Public</p>	<p>The Board understands the importance of being visible and accessible to the public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trustees represent the board in what they say and do and will set an example of professionalism. • Board members understand that they are always representing the schools in the minds of community members. • All Board members should be prepared to advocate for the schools, and promote district programs and efforts.
Protocol	Agreement
<p>Visiting Schools</p>	<p>The board understands that periodic visitations to school sites are a valuable tool in understanding the culture of the school and increasing board member visibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When visiting a school for business related to their child, the Board member should make every effort to clarify they are acting only as a parent. • Trustees wishing to visit a school site will inform the superintendent/principal in order to arrange a date/time for the visit. • The superintendent/principal may accompany the trustee when visiting classrooms and school/site departments. • Periodically, the superintendent/principal will arrange for Trustees to accompany him/her to visit school sites. Staff will normally be notified in advance that the Superintendent and Trustee(s) intend to visit.

Appendix A

Selected Board Bylaws Related to Governance

9000 Role of the Board

The Board of Trustees has been elected by the community to provide leadership and citizen oversight of the district. The Board shall ensure that the district is responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community.

The Board shall work with the Superintendent to fulfill its major responsibilities, which include:

1. Setting the direction for the district through a process that involves the community, parents/guardians, students, and staff and is focused on student learning and achievement.
2. Establishing an effective and efficient organizational structure for the district by:
 - a. Employing the Superintendent and setting policy for hiring of other personnel
 - b. Overseeing the development and adoption of policies
 - c. Establishing academic expectations and adopting the curriculum and instructional materials
 - d. Establishing budget priorities and adopting the budget
 - e. Providing safe, adequate facilities that support the district's instructional program
 - f. Setting parameters for negotiations with employee organizations and ratifying collective bargaining agreements
3. Providing support to the Superintendent and staff as they carry out the Board's direction by:
 - a. Establishing and adhering to standards of responsible governance
 - b. Making decisions and providing resources that support district priorities and goals
 - c. Upholding Board policies
 - d. Being knowledgeable about district programs and efforts in order to serve as effective spokespersons
4. Ensuring accountability to the public for the performance of the district's schools by:
 - a. Evaluating the Superintendent and setting policy for the evaluation of other personnel
 - b. Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of policies
 - c. Serving as a judicial (hearing) and appeals body in accordance with law, Board policies, and negotiated agreements
 - d. Monitoring student achievement and program effectiveness and requiring program changes as necessary
 - e. Monitoring and adjusting district finances
 - f. Monitoring the collective bargaining process
5. Providing community leadership and advocacy on behalf of students, the district's educational program, and public education in order to build support within the local community and at the state and national levels

The Board is authorized to establish and finance any program or activity that is not in conflict with, inconsistent with, or preempted by law.

9005 Governance Standards

The Board of Trustees believes that its primary responsibility is to act in the best interests 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.

The Board expects its members to work with each other and the Superintendent to ensure that a high-quality education is provided to each student. Each individual Board member shall:

1. Keep learning and achievement for all students as the primary focus
2. Value, support and advocate for public education
3. Recognize and respect differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents and the community
4. Act with dignity, and understand the implications of demeanor and behavior
5. Keep confidential matters confidential
6. Participate in professional development and commit the time and energy necessary to be an informed and effective leader
7. Understand the distinctions between Board and staff roles, and refrain from performing management functions that are the responsibility of the Superintendent and staff
8. Understand that authority rests with the Board as a whole and not with individuals

Board members also shall assume collective responsibility for building unity and creating a positive organizational culture. To operate effectively, the Board shall 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

9010 Public Statements

The Board of Trustees recognizes the responsibility of Board members in their role as community leaders to participate in public discourse on matters of civic or community interest, including those involving the district, and their right to freely express their personal views. However, to ensure communication of a consistent, unified message regarding district issues, Board members are expected to respect the authority of the Board to choose its representatives to communicate its positions and to abide by established protocols.

All public statements authorized to be made on behalf of the Board shall be made by the Board president or, if appropriate, by the Superintendent or other designated representative.

When speaking for the district, the Board encourages its spokespersons to exercise restraint and tact and to communicate the message in a manner that promotes public confidence in the Board's leadership.

Board spokespersons shall not disclose confidential information or information received in closed session except when authorized by a majority of the Board.

When speaking to community groups, members of the public, or the media, individual Board members should recognize that their statements may be perceived as reflecting the views and positions of the Board. Board members have a responsibility to identify personal viewpoints as such and not as the viewpoint of the Board.

In addition, the Board encourages members who participate on social networking sites, blogs, or other discussion or informational sites to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner and to model good behavior for district students and the community. Such electronic communications are subject to the same standards and protocols established for other forms of communication, and the disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act may likewise apply to them.

9200 Limits Of Board Member Authority

The Board of Trustees recognizes that the Board is the unit of authority over the district and that a Board member has no individual authority. Board members shall hold the education of students above any partisan principle, group interest, or personal interest.

Unless agreed to by the Board as a whole, individual members of the Board shall not exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee. Individual Board members shall submit requests for information to the Superintendent. Board members shall refer Board-related correspondence to the Superintendent for forwarding to the Board or for placement on the Board's agenda, as appropriate.

Individual Board members do not have the authority to resolve complaints. Any Board member approached directly by a person with a complaint should refer the complainant to the Superintendent or designee so that the problem may receive proper consideration and be handled through the appropriate district process.

A Board member whose child is attending a district school should be aware of his/her role as a Board member when interacting with district employees about his/her child. Because his/her position as a Board member may inhibit the performance of school personnel, the Board member should inform the Superintendent or designee before volunteering in his/her child's classroom.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide a copy of the state's open meeting laws (Brown Act) to each Board member and to anyone who is elected to the Board but has not yet assumed office.

Board members and persons elected to the Board who have not yet assumed office are responsible for complying with the requirements of the Brown Act.

9323 Meeting Conduct

Meeting Procedures

All Board of Trustees meetings shall begin on time and shall be guided by an agenda prepared in accordance with Board bylaws and posted and distributed in accordance the Ralph M. Brown Act (open meeting requirements) and other applicable laws.

The Board president shall conduct Board meetings in accordance with Board bylaws and procedures that enable the Board to efficiently consider issues and carry out the will of the majority.

Quorum and Abstentions:

The Board shall act by majority vote of all of the membership constituting the Board.

The Board believes that when no conflict of interest requires abstention, its members have a duty to vote on issues before them. When a member abstains, his/her abstention shall not be counted for purposes of determining whether a majority of the membership of the Board has taken action.

Public Participation

Members of the public are encouraged to attend Board meetings and to address the Board concerning any item on the agenda or within the Board's jurisdiction. So as not to inhibit public participation, persons attending Board meetings shall not be requested to sign in, complete a questionnaire, or otherwise provide their name or other information as a condition of attending the meeting.

In order to conduct district business in an orderly and efficient manner, the Board requires that public presentations to the Board comply with the following procedures:

1. The Board shall give members of the public an opportunity to address the Board on any item of interest to the public that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board, either before or during the Board's consideration of the item.
2. At a time so designated on the agenda at a regular meeting, members of the public may bring before the Board matters that are not listed on the agenda. The Board shall take no action or discussion on any item not appearing on the posted agenda, except as authorized by law.
3. Without taking action, Board members or district staff members may briefly respond to statements made or questions posed by the public about items not appearing on the agenda. Additionally, on their own initiative or in response to questions posed by the public, a Board or staff member may ask a question for clarification, make a brief announcement, or make a brief report on his/her own activities. Furthermore, the Board or a Board member may provide a reference to staff or other resources for factual information, ask staff to report back to the Board at a subsequent meeting concerning any matter, or take action directing staff to place a matter of business on a future agenda.
4. The Board need not allow the public to speak on any item that has already been considered by a committee composed exclusively of Board members at a public meeting where the public had the opportunity to address the committee on that item. However, if the Board determines that the item has been substantially changed since the committee heard the item, the Board shall provide an opportunity for the public to speak.
5. A person wishing to be heard by the Board shall first be recognized by the president and shall then proceed to comment as briefly as the subject permits. Individual speakers shall be allowed three minutes to address the Board on each agenda or non-agenda item. The Board shall limit the total time for public input on each item to 20 minutes. With Board consent, the president may increase or decrease the time allowed for public presentation, depending on the topic and the number of persons wishing to be heard. The president may take a poll of speakers for or against a particular issue and may ask that additional persons speak only if they have something new to add.
6. The Board president may rule on the appropriateness of a topic. If the topic would be more suitably addressed at a later time, the president may indicate the time and place when it should be presented. The Board shall not prohibit public criticism of its policies, procedures, programs, services, acts, or omissions. In addition, the Board may not prohibit public criticism of district employees. Whenever a member of the public initiates specific complaints or charges against an employee, the Board president shall inform the complainant that in order to protect the employee's right to adequate notice before a hearing of such complaints and charges, and also to preserve the ability of the Board to legally consider the complaints or charges in any subsequent evaluation of the employee, it is the policy of the Board to hear such complaints or charges in

closed session unless otherwise requested by the employee. The Board president shall also encourage the complainant to file a complaint using the appropriate district complaint procedure.

7. The Board president shall not permit any disturbance or willful interruption of Board meetings. Persistent disruption by an individual or group shall be grounds for the president to terminate the privilege of addressing the Board. The Board may remove disruptive individuals and order the room cleared if necessary. In this case, members of the media not participating in the disturbance shall be allowed to remain, and individuals not participating in such disturbances may be allowed to remain at the discretion of the Board. When the room is ordered cleared due to a disturbance, further Board proceedings shall concern only matters appearing on the agenda. When such disruptive conduct occurs, the Superintendent or designee shall contact local law enforcement.

Recording by the Public

The Superintendent or designee shall designate locations from which members of the public may broadcast, photograph, or tape record open meetings without causing a distraction.

If the Board finds that noise, illumination, or obstruction of view related to these activities would persistently disrupt the proceedings, these activities shall be discontinued or restricted as determined by the Board.

9400 Board Self-Evaluation

The Board of Trustees shall annually conduct a self-evaluation in order to demonstrate accountability to the community and ensure that district governance effectively supports student achievement and the attainment of the district's vision and goals.

The evaluation may address any areas of Board responsibility, including but not limited to Board performance in relation to vision setting, curriculum, personnel, finance, policy, collective bargaining and community relations. The evaluation also may address objectives related to Board meeting operations, relationships among Board members, relationship with the Superintendent, understanding of Board and Superintendent roles and responsibilities, communication skills, or other boardmanship skills.

The Board shall be evaluated as a whole. Individual Board members also are encouraged to use the evaluation process as an opportunity to privately assess their own personal performance.

Each year the Board, with assistance from the Superintendent, shall determine an evaluation method or instrument that measures a reasonable number of previously identified performance objectives. Videotape of a Board meeting may be used as an evaluation tool only with the consent of all Board members.

Any discussion of the Board's self-evaluation shall be conducted in open session. At the request of the Board, a facilitator may be used to assist with the evaluation process. The Board may invite the Superintendent or others to provide input into the evaluation process.

Following the evaluation, the Board shall develop strategies for strengthening Board performance and shall establish priorities and objectives for the following year's evaluation.