



Bayfield School District



Board of Education Norms and Protocols

Board Norms for Community Engagement – We appreciate when both internal and external stakeholders take time to speak with the Board of Education. Our board represents the community to increase collaboration and engage in each of our schools. To assist with engagement, we agree to:

- Listen to the concern or the report.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Model civility with all stakeholders.
- Refer the concern or the report to staff and/or to superintendent for consideration.
- Unify communication through the board president, on behalf of the board.
- Recognize the board's statutory and policy duties.

Meeting Protocol – Professional behavior at all board meetings is important. We conduct board business in a professional and well-functioning environment. We agree to avoid words and actions that create negative impressions on an individual, the board, and/or the district. We will be open-minded and willing to “listen for understanding” to various presenters/speakers. We agree to disagree with courtesy and respect for all viewpoints.

- Respect for each other and presenters at all meetings.
- Incorporate space for all members to voice opinions without getting the “last word” on every issue.
- Convey disagreements respectfully, and work toward consensus.
- Express appreciation and gratitude to guests, presenters, and speakers.

Communication with Staff – Communication between the staff and the board is encouraged as long as it follows board policy. The leadership team recognizes that “good, timely, open, and constant” communication regarding school district issues is extremely important. As a board, we will strive to anticipate issues which may become important and/or are sensitive to our school district and district stakeholders. We agree to respectfully disagree. At the core of our communication, we respect the professional expertise of staff, acknowledge fellow members, and recognize those with dissenting viewpoints. Superintendent (and staff) should honor the board with timely responses to requests for information and answers to questions.

Follow the Chain-of-Command – The last stop, not the first, will be the board. We agree to follow the chain-of-command, and insist others do so. While the board is eager to listen to its constituents, the board will insist everyone follow this procedure. For staff and community members, each inquiry is to be referred to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issue. Board requests that will likely require considerable time or have political implications are to be directed to the superintendent. All personnel complaints and criticisms received by the board or its individual members will be directed to the superintendent.

- Understand every story has two sides and be conscientious of each director's response.
- Build relationships of trust among the board, leadership, and staff.
- Create integrity and consistent communication as promises are not made by the board.
- Ensure timely follow-up communication from the superintendent with the Board of Education and/or community stakeholders.

Practice Efficient Decision-Making – To be efficient and effective, long board meetings will be avoided. The board will strive to run meetings where decision-making, action, and votes are efficient. If a board member believes she/he does not have enough information or has questions, further discussion/dialogue will occur before the meeting occurs. Review board reports in detail and make every effort to use internal communication to be prepared for meetings.

- Come to the meetings prepared by reviewing the agenda in *BoardDocs*.
- Read documents and attachments, and then ask questions to the superintendent prior to our meeting.

Board Acts as a Body – Individual board members do not have authority. Only the board, acting as a whole, has authority. We agree an individual board member will not take unilateral action. The board president will communicate the position(s) of the board on controversial issues. When board members serve on various school committees, their role shall be defined by the board as silent observer or active participant. Board members should not speak on behalf of the board without authorization from the board.

- Prioritize individual requests from board members to superintendent/staff.
- Model professionalism and respect toward other board members, all staff, students, and community groups.