

Board Relations and Procedures



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Board Relations and Procedures

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In effective school systems, the Director of Schools and the Board function as a team. A structured approach to developing a vision for the district and setting goals is enhanced by first developing a system of standard operating procedures. The School Board is the corporate policymaking body for the District, and the Director of Schools and his staff provide the leadership to cause Board policies to be implemented. Therefore, the Obion County Board of Education and the Director of Schools function as a team to provide open communication to the staff and patrons of the district.

The Obion County Board of Education adopts these guidelines as Standard Operating Procedures to effectively communicate with staff and stakeholders of the district.



I. DEVELOPMENT OF BOARD MEETING AGENDA

A. Items may be placed on the agenda with these stipulations.

1. The tentative agenda is created by the administration and presented to the Board's Executive Committee (Board Chair and Director of Schools) five (5) days before the regular Board meeting.
2. Agenda items must be submitted to the Director of Schools' Office at least ten (10) days in advance of a meeting to have those items considered for placement on the agenda except in the case of an emergency.
3. The Board Chairperson shall place an item on the agenda if the item is requested by at least two (2) Board members at least seventy-two (72) hours in advance of a meeting.

B. Personnel items are generally not discussed at an open Board meeting.

1. If at all possible, Board members should refrain from criticizing or discussing individual employees in an open meeting since such meetings are public record and the affected employees are usually unable to offer an appropriate rebuttal to any criticism. Accordingly, if a Board member has any questions or concerns about any aspect of an employee's performance, the member should, if at all possible, direct these questions or concerns to the attention of the Director of Schools and permit the Director of Schools time to investigate the issues and to deal with them as appropriate.

2. If the Director of Schools deems it necessary, he will communicate any issues about which the Board ought to be aware to the Board members in advance of a regular meeting.
- C. Consent agenda items are generally routine and members have knowledge of their content and how they affect the District.

Consent agenda items may include the following:

1. Financial information
2. Personnel items
3. Any other routine and non-controversial items

Board members will use their best efforts to advise the Board Chairperson at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to a meeting if there are any items the member would like to remove from the consent agenda for specific discussion and consideration by the Board.

- D. The Board and the Director of Schools must share pertinent information.
1. The Director of Schools and Board members should always mutually share pertinent information with each other prior to Board meetings regarding items to be discussed during these sessions.
 2. There should be no surprise items brought to the discussion table by the Director of Schools, Board members, or other participating parties.

II. CONDUCT DURING BOARD MEETINGS

The presence of four (4) Board members constitutes a quorum for a meeting.

- A. Persons/delegations may address the Board under certain conditions.
1. Individuals who desire to appear before the Board must submit a written request with descriptive materials to the office of the Director of Schools fourteen (14) calendar days before the meeting.
 2. If the request is approved by the Executive Committee, the individual will be placed on the agenda. Individuals placed on the agenda will be recognized at the meeting and given time to address the Board. All written materials submitted will be presented to the Board.
 3. The Board may permit an individual who does not meet this deadline to address the Board, but the individual must contact the board secretary at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the meeting.
 4. Delegations must select one individual to speak on their behalf unless otherwise determined by the Board.
 5. The Chairperson may recognize an individual who wants to address an agenda item provided that person has signed up on a Board provided form. A majority vote of the members present can overrule the Chair's decision.
 6. Individuals who speak to the Board shall address remarks to the Chairperson and

may direct questions to individual Board members or staff members only upon approval of the Chairperson.

7. Each person who speaks shall state his name, address, and subject of presentation. Remarks will be limited to ten (10) minutes unless time is extended by the Board.
 8. The Chairperson shall have the authority to terminate the remarks of any individual who is disruptive or does not adhere to Board rules.
 9. Individuals who desire additional information about any item on the agenda shall direct such inquiries to the office of the Director of Schools.
- B. Discussion of individual employees or students by the Board or audience is not permitted.
1. The Board will not entertain negative comments on individual employees in public session.
 2. The Board will not entertain negative comments on individual students in public session.
- C. Board shall observe the parliamentary procedures in Robert's Rules of Order.
1. All discussion shall be directed solely to the business currently under deliberation.
 2. The Board Chairperson has the responsibility to keep the discussion to the motion at hand and shall halt discussion that does not apply to the business before the Board.
 3. The Board Chairperson has the right to recognize a Board member prior to giving his/her comments.
 4. As a courtesy to others, the Board may request that all electronic devices shall be turned off or silenced during Board meetings. Emergency situations warrant exceptions.

III. VOTING

- A. The Board Chairperson will vote on all action items.
- B. In case of a tie vote, the item is postponed. The Chairperson shall bring the item back to the Board on a subsequent agenda.

IV. INDIVIDUAL BOARD MEMBER REQUEST FOR INFORMATION OR REPORTS

- A. Board members shall request information and/or reports through the Director of Schools or his designee.
- B. The Director of Schools will gather the information and/or report and disseminate it in a timely manner to the Board provided the information is easily accessible. If the Director of Schools determines in his sole discretion that the information and/or report request is burdensome and/or will take an inordinate amount of staff time to prepare, he may so advise the Chairperson. The Chairperson will then place the

request on the agenda of the next meeting for consideration.

- C. Board members are encouraged to advise the Director of Schools of questions or concerns on agenda items before the Board meeting.

V. BOARD MEMBER VISITS TO SCHOOL CAMPUS ACTIVITY

- A. Board members are encouraged to attend special events on campuses.
- B. Board members shall not go into teachers' classrooms or campuses to evaluate, investigate, or berate any staff member.
- C. Board members must notify principal of visits to campuses other than when they are attending a scheduled activity.
- D. Any complaint/concern lodged by Board members regarding staff members or daily operations shall be directed to the Director of Schools.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. Director of Schools will meet with the Board Chairperson on a routine basis.
- B. The Director of Schools will communicate with all Board members via regular transmittals.
- C. The Director of Schools will communicate information in a timely fashion to all Board members.
- D. Requests to the Director of Schools from the Board Chairperson will be distributed to all Board members.
- E. Board will communicate with the community through regular Board meetings and publications.
- F. Individual Board members cannot speak for the Board of Education unless authorized to do so by the Board of Education through an official act.
- G. Board members will refrain from direct involvement in the day-to-day system/school operations and refer all public requests to the Director of Schools or his/her designee.

VII. EVALUATION OF DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

- A. The Board shall evaluate the performance of the Director of Schools at least annually during the term of his contract.
- B. The evaluation shall take place prior to June 30 of each fiscal year.

- C. The evaluation shall be based on the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Schools as set forth by the laws of the State of Tennessee and his contract.
- D. The Director of Schools and the Board mutually agree that the instrument attached to the Director's employment contract, titled "Evaluation of Superintendent 2008" and attached thereto as Exhibit II, shall be the instrument used annually to evaluate the Director. Any deviation or changes in the performance evaluation instrument shall be mutually agreed upon and shall be incorporated by amendment to the employment contract and such amendment shall be made an exhibit thereto.
- E. The evaluation shall include a recommendation for improvement in any areas where the Board deems the Director of Schools' performance to be unsatisfactory or in need of improvement.
- F. A copy of the written evaluation shall be delivered to the Director of Schools on or before June 30 of each fiscal year of his employment. The Director of Schools shall have the right to make a written or oral response to the evaluation.
- G. Within thirty (30) days of delivery of the evaluation results of the Director of Schools, the Board shall meet with the Director of Schools to discuss the evaluation.

VIII. EVALUATION OF THE BOARD

- A. In a workshop/retreat, the Board/Director of Schools team shall conduct a self-assessment and evaluation, review operating procedures, and conduct new board member orientation.
- B. The evaluation of the Board and the Director of Schools is an indication of the success they are having in meeting established goals.

IX. CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR SELECTING BOARD OFFICERS

- A. Candidates for the Chairperson of the Board and Vice Chairperson must have at least one-year's experience on the Board.
- B. Elections are held in September of each year.

X. ROLE AND AUTHORITY OF BOARD MEMBER AND/OR BOARD OFFICERS

- A. No Board member or officer has authority outside the Board meeting.
- B. No Board member can direct employees in regard to performance of duties.
- C. The Board Chairperson shall
 - 1. Preside at all Board meetings,

2. Appoint committees,
3. Call special meetings, and
4. Sign all legal documents required by law.

D. The Vice Chairperson shall act in the capacity of the Chairperson in his absence.

XI. ROLE OF BOARD IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

- A. Board can only discuss those items listed on the executive session agenda and as limited by law.
- B. Board must vote in public session.
- C. Discussions during executive session must remain confidential.

XII. MEDIA INQUIRIES TO THE BOARD

The Board Chairperson shall be the official spokesperson for the Board to the media/press on issues of media attention.

XIII. ANONYMOUS PHONE CALLS AND/OR LETTERS

The Obion County Board of Education encourages input; however, anonymous calls or letters will not receive Board attention, discussion, or response and will not result in directives to the administration. Confidentiality is strictly maintained when possible.

XIV. REVIEW OF BOARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard Board Operating Procedures will be reviewed and updated annually and will be part of Board training.