

# **WARRENTON-HAMMOND SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT OPERATING AGREEMENT**

## **Purpose of Agreement**

The Board of Directors is the educational policy making body for the Warrenton-Hammond School District. To effectively meet the District's challenges, the School Board and Superintendent must function together as a leadership team. To ensure accord among team members, effective group agreements must be in place. The following are the group agreements for the Board and Superintendent.

## **The Board Job Description and Relationship with Superintendent**

1. Set the long-term direction of the District through the mission, vision, goals, and priorities.
2. Focus on policymaking, planning and evaluation.
3. Maintain effective two-way communication with students, staff and the public.
4. Understand that as an individual, a Board member has no authority. It is when acting as a body that a majority of the Board has influence.
5. Be accountable for the financial stewardship of the District, including aligning resources with goals and priorities, setting expectations, and monitoring progress.
6. Manage Board processes, including operating agreements. Actively pursue opportunities to give and receive feedback regarding Board member performance as responsible communicators. Participate in an annual self-assessment of the Board's performance.
7. Deliberate and make decisions in accordance with public meeting law.
8. Set priorities for Board professional development annually.
9. Supervise the hiring, performance evaluation and other personnel management processes related to the Superintendent.
10. Work with the Superintendent as a team, recognizing that the Superintendent is the Board's advisor.
11. Respect the Superintendent's responsibility to manage the day-to-day operations of the District and to direct employees in District and school matters.

## **Role of Board Leadership**

1. Manage the Board's process; convene meetings; develop the Board agenda with the Superintendent, seeking Board member input; and execute documents, as appropriate.
2. Serve as the authorized spokesperson for the Board with regard to Board policy, process and decisions. The Chair may delegate this responsibility to other Board members and/or the Superintendent.
3. Communicate with individual Board members concerns shared with the chair by other board members regarding issues agreed to in the working agreements or group operating norms.
4. Facilitate the orientation of new Board members.
5. Assist the Superintendent in communicating important information to the full Board. Keep Board members apprised of information exchanged with the Superintendent.
6. The Vice-Chair will perform these duties when the Chair is not available.

### **Role of the Superintendent**

1. The Superintendent will serve as the Chief Executive Officer of the District and manage the day-to-day operations of the District.
2. Work as a team with Board members.
3. Work with the Board to establish a clear vision for the District and affirm it annually.
4. Collaborate with the Board to set annual District goals.
5. Work with the Chair and Vice-Chair to effectively bring information and issues to the Board so that it can make proactive data driven decisions on policy and budget/revenue issues.
6. Attend all meetings of the Board except those concerned with his own contract status and take part in deliberations, but does not vote.
7. Assist the Board in reaching sound judgments, establishing policies and approving those matters which the law requires the Board to approve. Provide the Board necessary and helpful facts, comparisons, investigations, information and reports. The Superintendent may utilize other personnel/consultants to provide input on special or technical matters to assist the Board in their decision making process.
8. Keep the Board informed of all critical information including relevant trends, anticipated adverse media coverage, or critical external or internal change.
9. Represent the school district by being visible in the community.

### **Meeting Operations and Decision Making**

1. Respect the scheduled starting and ending times for meetings.
2. Attend regularly scheduled Board meetings unless prevented by sickness or an unavoidable cause.
3. Cooperate in scheduling special meetings and/or work sessions for planning and training purposes.
4. Board members may make suggestions to be included on the Board agenda two weeks prior to the regularly scheduled or special meetings of the Board. Upon receipt of the Draft Board agenda from the Board Secretary, Board members will have two days to communicate feedback to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will communicate with the Board Chair on modifications of the Board agenda; however, the Board may revise the agenda during the Agenda Review at the beginning of any Board meeting.
5. Prepare for Board meetings by reading materials ahead of the meeting and asking questions that you have of the Superintendent or members of the Executive Team prior to the day of the meeting if possible. If after you have asked questions you intend to pull something from consolidated action, please notify the Board Chair and/or Superintendent before the meeting.
6. Make it a goal to make no new proposals on the night that the Board is scheduled to make a decision or take action. Communicate concerns or questions to Board leadership and the Superintendent prior to a public meeting. Try to avoid surprises.
7. Cast a vote on all matters except when a conflict of interest arises.
8. Actively solicit input, listen to all perspectives and give careful consideration to all issues. Make decisions in the best interest of the whole district always keeping students in mind.
9. Support decisions that have been made by the Board after honoring the right of the individual members to express opposing viewpoints and vote their convictions.
10. Uphold the legal requirement for confidentiality on all matters arising from the Board meeting Executive Session.

### **Annual Planning and Evaluation**

1. Set priorities as a Board for Board professional development annually.
2. Participate in annual self-assessment of the Board's performance.
3. Annually affirm the Board of Director's vision, mission statement and goals.
4. Participate in establishing annual expectations and goals for the Superintendent.
5. Objectively evaluate the Superintendent's performance and provide appropriate feedback.

### **Communication**

1. Communicate openly and honestly.
2. Respect differences and listen well and for positive intent.
3. Focus on the situation, issue, or behavior, not the person.
4. When a Board member receives an informal complaint, refer the complainant back to the individual staff member to solve the problem at the lowest level, but also inform the appropriate administrator.
5. Formal complaints must be put in writing and signed by the complainant. These are submitted in accordance with Board Policy. Complainants may appeal a decision to the next higher level including the Superintendent's decision to the School Board.
6. The Board recognizes that changing technology and the growing use of social media will affect the way individual Board members communicate to and interact with constituents and receive and process information.
7. E-mails sent to individual board members on district/board issues are all public records, except those specifically relating to personnel. The Board member can reply and thank the patron for their input, suggestion or observation and Cc the Superintendent who will respond to the e-mail if needed.

#### **GUIDELINES:**

##### ***The following are examples of appropriate uses of electronic communications:***

*\* The dissemination of any information by a school board member to any number of school board members by one-way distribution (no discussion).*

*\* The dissemination of information by a school board member to any number of school board members and the return of information that is not a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power. An acceptable form of information to be returned would be availability of time for a meeting*

*\* The dissemination of any information by the administration to any number of board members for the purpose of collecting board members' opinions individually without sharing the opinions in the form of discussion with school board members.*

##### ***The following are examples of inappropriate uses of electronic communications:***

*\* The discussion with more than one school board member of a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power even though the number of school board members involved does not constitute a quorum.*

*\* The forwarding of a school board member's comments to another school board member on a matter or matters over which the board has supervision, control, jurisdiction or advisory power.*

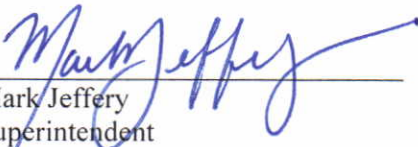
8. All requests for information by Board members will be sent to the Superintendent for action.

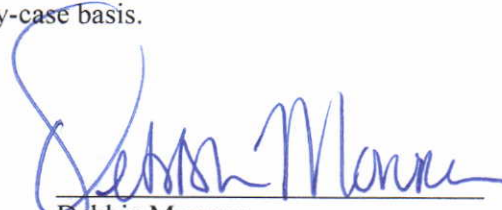
9. When a concern or problem arises, communicate one-on-one with the Board member. If the issue is not resolved, communicate with the Board chair.
10. The Board may be required to make findings of facts that are appealable to another agency. In these situations, no Board member will have personal contact related to the issue with parties who have a personal interest in the findings and in the Board's decision prior to the time the decision is made.

### **Board or Superintendent Committees**

**Board Committees:** The committee chair is responsible for implementing the charge of the Board. The committee chair will provide regular updates of committee progress to the Board. These are public meetings and will be advertised in accordance with the open meetings law.

**Superintendent Committees:** Board members may be asked to serve on a Superintendent or District committee. The Board member is a representative of the Board to staff, student, parent and community members. Board members serving on a committee should temper their participation, mindful of their position as an elected official. Board members serving on a committee are to respect the role of the committee chair and refrain from initiating a new direction for the committee or initiating formal community input except when requested by the committee chair. The Board representative on a Superintendent or District committee will assist the Superintendent in reporting committee progress to the Board. Voting rights will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

  
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Mark Jeffery  
Superintendent

  
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Debbie Morrow  
Board Chair