



Avoca District 37

BOARD NORMS

Topics



- ▶ Review IASB's Foundational Principles of Effective Governance
- ▶ Review Previous Board Agreements
- ▶ Review Previous Board Legacy
- ▶ Discuss Next Steps, Priorities

Foundational Principles of Effective Governance

Per IASB School Board Governance Basics

1. The Board clarifies the district purpose.

2. The Board connects with the community.

3. The Board employs a superintendent.

Foundational Principles of Effective Governance

Per IASB School Board Governance Basics

4. The Board delegates authority.

5. The Board monitors performance.

6. The Board takes responsibility for itself.

Board Agreements

- ▶ Seven principles agreed to by the previous Board - originally in 2011, reviewed and re-agreed to in 2013 and 2015
- ▶ Board Agreements will be a discussion topic at the Board Retreat, however, in the interim should provide guidance around some of the values and beliefs of the Board
- ▶ Board Agreement #1 comes from IASB, Agreements #2-7 were uniquely created by the Avoca Board

Board Agreement # 1

Unity of purpose

We affirm the unique role of public education, whereby each community collectively pools its resources for the common good through the education of its children. Therefore, we seek to uphold and improve public education for our community. We aim to:

- Build trust and move the district forward.
- Become an effective team with a common, focused direction.
- Understand our individual jobs and collective responsibilities.
- Create a district culture that supports positive change.
- Perpetuate a positive district culture that survives board member and staff turnover.

*Please refer to the Avoca Policy Manual:
2:20 Powers and Duties of the School Board
2:80 Board member Code of Conduct*

Board Agreement #2

Speaking
with one
voice

- No Board member has the authority to act or speak on behalf of the board without the consent of the board.
- Board members have an obligation to express their opinions and respect others' opinions; however, board members understand the importance of ultimately speaking with one clear voice and supporting the decision of the majority.

Board Agreement #3

“Customer
Concerns”
from the
community
or staff

- Board members will listen carefully to concerns brought to their attention, remembering they are hearing only one side of the story.
- Board members will clarify that one board member has no individual authority to fix a problem.
- Respecting the Chain of Command, Board members will then direct the concerned person to the most appropriate district employee to help resolve the concern.
- Board members will call the superintendent if they think the issue merits immediate attention.

Board Agreement #4

No
surprises!

- The superintendent and all board members will keep each other informed so that no one is caught off-guard by new information during a meeting or by community members between meetings.
- Whenever possible, board members with questions about upcoming meeting agenda topics will call the superintendent or business manager prior to the meeting.
- Board members understand that although they are asking the question(s) prior to the meeting, they have a right to ask the question(s) at the meeting as well.
- The truth of no surprises is respect. Each board member and the superintendent must respect all the other participants and the processes the board team shares.

Board Agreement #5

Board member request for information

- Board members will self-monitor to ensure that one board member's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals.
- A superintendent who determines that a request for information may require a significant amount of time to fulfill may bring that request to the board for a consensus directing the superintendent whether to proceed.
- The information supplied in response to any individual board member's request will be provided to all board members unless the board member requests otherwise.

Board Agreement #6

Board member use of email

- Board members will be judicious in their use of email, understanding that most emails concerning district business are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and may be made public.
- In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, board members will not “reply all” to any district email.

Board Agreement #7

Board member preparation

- The board meeting agenda and supporting documentation will be posted by the Friday before the Thursday board meeting and one week prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting. Board members understand that at times extenuating circumstances may delay the posting of the board packet.
- Board members will review the board agenda and supporting documentation before the board meeting.

Board Legacy

The comments listed below are in the order that they were posted at the Board of Education self-evaluation retreat. They are not prioritized.

- ▶ Greater focus on the whole child
 - ▶ Social/Emotional
 - ▶ Leadership
 - ▶ Problem-solving skills
- ▶ Continue to be the lighthouse district in technology
- ▶ Communicates clearly, regularly and effectively with community
- ▶ Financially sound
- ▶ Continued strong academic growth (in spite of any monetary challenges)
- ▶ Managed the money available to avoid referendum for as long as possible while continuing to provide a top education and bring facilities to a higher level of safety and efficiency
- ▶ We placed a strong value on continuous improvement, remained open to new ideas and practices, as we maximized the unique potential of each child we served.
- ▶ Our students are well prepared for future personal success, as defined by them.

Next Steps, Priorities

- ▶ Establish committees / committee membership
- ▶ Plan/register for required Board Member training
- ▶ Plan Board Member retreat timing

Questions?