

Buena Vista
School District



Buena Vista School District

Potential School Board Member's
RESOURCE GUIDE

An Overview of Responsibilities and
Commitment of Becoming a
School Board Member

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Who Makes Up a School Board	4
Who Serves on The Board	4
What Is the Board Structure?	4
Qualifications for Board Service	4
Legal Authority of School Boards	5
Policy Governance	6-13
Are You a Leader?	14-15
Roles and Responsibilities	16-19
Roles	16
Vision—Creating a Shared Vision	16
Structure—Establishing a Structure to Achieve the	16
Accountability—Developing Accountability	16
Advocacy—Championing the Vision	16
Responsibilities	17-19
Policymaking	17
Designating the Superintendent	17
Planning, Goal Setting and Evaluation	17
Financial Resources	17
Staffing and Evaluation	17
Instruction	18
School Facilities	18
Students	18
Communication with Various Constituencies	18
Advocacy	18
Adjudication and Investigation	18
General	19
The Board/Superintendent Team	20-21
Essential Attributes of an Effective School Board Member	22-24
The Role of Ethics in Public Service	25-27
Code for Board Member Behavior – GP-9	25
Board Member Covenants – GP 10	26
Board Member's Personal Life	28-29

School Board Member Tips	30
The Hardest Lessons	31
Overview of the Open Meetings Act	32-34
Open Meetings	32
Executive Sessions	33
The Board's Agenda	35-36
The Value of an Agenda	35
The Agenda—Foundation of an Effective Meeting	35
Steps in Preparing an Agenda	35
Prioritize Items on the Agenda	35
Focus the Agenda on District Goals and the Big Picture	36
Limit the Number of Agenda Items	36
More on Preparing the Agenda	36
Getting on the Agenda	36
Board of Education Website Access	37
List of Education Acronyms	38
Glossary	39-49

Introduction

Colorado School Board members have the privilege of serving their communities in order to ensure all students have access to high-quality education. School Board members have the ability to make positive changes, which affect the lives of students and therefore community members. Dedication, leadership, thoughtful decision-making and collaborative problem-solving are paramount to School Board leadership.

Becoming a new School Board member, you will have much to learn about the roles and responsibilities of a Board member. With the increasing demand for educational excellence and fiscal accountability, the responsibilities of School Boards are far more numerous and of greater impact than at any previous time in history. Overnight, the newly initiated are expected to become skilled interpreters of policy, diligent data analysts, and vigilant overseers of taxpayer's money. What's more, they are expected to function with the other Board members as part of a united team, despite differences in backgrounds, political philosophies, knowledge levels and expertise.

This Board introduction handbook is intended to give you an overview of your roles and responsibilities as a Board member and to assist you in acquiring the knowledge necessary to be a skilled and effective Board member. We hope you will find the information to be valuable as you provide leadership for your community in fulfilling its vision and mission for quality education.

*Thank you for taking
the bold step to become
a School Board
member! We are
excited for your
interest in pursuing
this challenging and
rewarding responsibility.*



Who Makes Up a School Board

School Boards are local government bodies that establish visionary goals then continuously monitor progress toward these ends, as well as set and monitor governing policy for local school Districts. They are elected to represent the interests of the community and to provide oversight for the raising and expenditure of public funds in support of the community's schools. But how does the Board accomplish this vitally important work? The mechanics of Board work come down to four simple principles:

- The Board works as a group
- The Board works in public meetings
- The Board works under the law
- The Board works through policy

Who Serves on The Board

Board members may take office by election or appointment and they may choose to serve for many different reasons. Board members might have children in the local schools, or not; they may have family members employed in the schools, or not; they may be employed by businesses that contract with the school District, or not; they may own property in the District, or not. The local electorate determines at the ballot box who will best serve the community's interests.

What Is the Board's Structure?

The Buena Vista School Board is made up of seven members. The members represent five Districts and two at-large positions.

Qualifications for Board Service

- Live in and a registered voter of the Buena Vista School District for at least 12 consecutive months prior to election or appointment
- If applicable, a resident of the director District for which the vacancy exists
- 18 years or older
- U.S. citizen
- Never convicted of a sexual offense against a child

Legal Authority of Schools Boards

In Colorado, local school boards serve as the primary governing bodies for public education in their Districts. They establish a clear vision and goals, set performance expectations for schools and the Superintendent, and ensure that educational decisions reflect the values and priorities of the community. School boards provide oversight, not management, working through the Superintendent to achieve District objectives. School boards have several key responsibilities outlined in Colorado statute:

Policy Making

- Adopt policies, rules, and regulations to support the efficient and lawful operation of the school District.
- Ensure that policies align with District goals and legal obligations.

Superintendent Oversight

- Hire and evaluate the superintendent.
- Hold the superintendent accountable for implementing Board policies.
- Provide direction and support aligned with the District's vision and goals.

Community Engagement

- Actively seek input from students, families, staff, and community members.
- Use stakeholder feedback to inform Board decisions and build public trust.

Financial Management

- Approve the annual budget and set funding priorities.
- Ensure responsible stewardship of public resources and transparency in financial decisions.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Approve instructional materials, such as textbooks and set graduation requirements.
- Monitor the District's educational programs in alignment with Colorado standards and community needs.

Personnel Employment

- Approve contracts of licensed personnel
- Approve salary schedules.

Property Management

- Oversee the acquisition and disposal of District property and facilities.
- Ensure that school infrastructure supports learning, safety, and community needs

Community Relations

- Serve as ambassadors for the District by fostering strong relationships with the public.
- Interpret community views and advocate for high-quality public education.

School boards serve as the vital link between the community and its schools. Through sound governance, community engagement, and strategic oversight, Boards ensure that public education reflects local values, meets student needs, and supports long-term success for all learners.

The Board of Education operates as a corporate body. Individual School Board members have no authority to act independently, and can't commit or bind the Board by their individual actions. Powers and duties of the Board must be exercised by the Board as a whole.

For the Board of Education to take action, the action must be voted on at a public meeting by a majority vote of the members elected to and serving on the Board, and a proper record made of the vote. The meeting must be properly convened and comply with proper notice to the Board and proper notice to the public (Open Meetings Act).

The regulations that govern how the School Board operates are determined by the Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and by local Board policies. It is important a Board member is aware of the established policies and follows them carefully to avoid violations.

Policy Governance®

Buena Vista School District operates under the Policy Governance model developed by John Carver. Information about the model is outlined in summary form below from Caroline Oliver ©2002, with full detail in Carver's book, *Boards that Make a Difference*.

Governance - A Distinct Form of Leadership

Governance is distinct from management because it is:

- the bridge between the organization and the external world within which it operates and to which it is accountable
- the initial authority within an organization
- group leadership rather than individual leadership

Policy Governance - A Definition

Policy Governance is an operating system that efficiently focuses Boards on their unique contribution to organizations' results.

Boards are ultimately accountable for everything their organization does and does not do. Whereas organizations may operate 24/7, the Board has a limited amount of time available to exercise their oversight.

Grounded in universal governance principles and customized policy design, Policy Governance makes it possible for Boards to control through creating and monitoring policy. The Board is able to organize all its thoughts, activities, structures and relationships in one policy document or manual. Boards may also establish Resolutions for taking specific advocacy positions or actions.

The Policy Design

Governing policies are categorized under four headings:

1. **Ends:** the answers to the questions: what benefit is this organization to produce, for which people and at what cost?
2. **Executive Limitations:** the limits of ethics and prudence to which the CEO must adhere (always expressed in the negative e.g. "the CEO shall not fail to" or "the CEO may not"). In school Districts, the Superintendent serves as CEO.
3. **Governance Process:** the Board's definition of, and rules for, its own job
4. **Board-Management Relationship:** the Board's delegation and accountability linkage through the CEO

In each policy category, the Board starts with a statement that expresses its broadest values, and

then moves down level by level to express itself more specifically. At whatever level the Board feels it has said enough, the CEO is free to act on 'any reasonable interpretation of the Board's Ends and Executive Limitations policies and the Chair is free to act on 'any reasonable interpretation' of the Board's Governance Process and Board- Management Relationship policies. This form of policy design ensures a) that there is no area of operation about which the Board has been silent and b) that the Board's role and the CEO's and Chair's roles are clearly delineated.

Policy Monitoring

The Policy Governance Board can only be truly accountable if it is monitoring the implementation of its policies. This can be done by whatever method (internal report, direct Board inspection or external audit) and at whatever frequency (annually, quarterly or monthly) the Board dictates in its policy.

The policies form the **only** criteria for the monitoring process. The results of the monitoring process also provide the **only** basis for CEO/Superintendent evaluation (in relation to fulfillment of the Board's Ends policies and compliance with the Board's Executive Limitations policies) and the Board's own evaluation of itself (in relation to their own compliance with the Board's Governance Process and Board-Management Relationship policies).

Living the Policy

The Board's policy is kept alive and current because the Board resolves issues and makes decisions by looking at its policies. If they find that they have not already said enough, or that they have not said what they now want to say - they change the policy and therefore change their expectations of the CEO/Superintendent or themselves for the future.

POLICY GOVERNANCE® PRINCIPLES

By Caroline Oliver

This brief overview does not substitute for the understanding of Policy Governance available in the books 'Boards That Make A Difference' by John Carver and 'Corporate Boards That Create Value' by John Carver and Caroline Oliver, published by Jossey-Bass Publishers Inc. 1997 and 2002.

The Policy Governance® Principles

The Policy Governance operating system is an integrated expression of the following principles:

The Trust in Trusteeship

The Board, as a whole, holds the organization in trust on behalf of a larger group (the legal/moral ownership). The Board must clearly identify with their ownership and communicate with them to ensure that the organization is achieving what they want.

The Board Speaks with One Voice

The Board's policies **are** the Board's voice. The Board's value as a form of management is that it is the single expression of diverse views, values and perspectives. While unanimity is not required, the Board's group decision must be unambiguous, recorded in policy and upheld by every member of the Board as if it had been their own decision. No one person or sub-group may make policy for the Board.

Board Decisions Are Policy Decisions

The Board governs through policy because policy can encapsulate vision, perspectives and values in clear statements of enduring importance - readily transmittable to all and impacting every aspect of the organization's work in an efficient manner. Since the Board's voice is expressed in its policies, Board decision-making is always an amendment of, or addition to, existing policy.

Boards Should Formulate Policy by Determining the Broadest Values Before Progressing to More Specific Ones

This principle is essential to making policy without loopholes and to the Board's ability to delegate. As the Board creates policies that express its broadest to most specific values, it comes to a point at which it is happy to delegate any further interpretation of its policies to the CEO. The level at which the Board stops speaking is the level at which the CEO takes over, free to do anything that is consistent with "a reasonable interpretation" of the Board's policies.

Boards Define and Delegate, Rather than React and Ratify

Defining what the organization is for (Ends) and defining the 'acceptable boundaries' within which it can delegate organizational accomplishment of Ends to the CEO (Executive Limitations) is the Board's own job. The Board, if truly governing, should not be simply reacting to and ratifying staff or committee ideas.

Ends Determination is the Pivotal Duty of Governance

The Board must, on behalf of the ownership paint the target towards which the staff must aim. There is no greater governance job than this, and it cannot be delegated.

The Board's Best Control Over Staff Means is to Limit, not Prescribe

It is impossible for Boards to oversee all the detail involved in the day to day running of an organization. It is easier, and in fact more complete, to tell the CEO what is to be achieved on behalf

of the ownership (in Ends policies) and then allow the CEO to use his/her expertise and experience to determine how best to get there, within limits of law, prudence and ethics (Executive Limitations policies).

A Board Must Explicitly Design Its Own Products and Processes

Since the Board's authority is the initial authority the Board must define its own job and how it will do it. All Board members should clearly understand why the Board exists, which is not to oversee staff, but rather to define the future on behalf of the ownership and ensure that it gets achieved in a legal, ethical and prudent manner.

A Board Must Form a Linkage with Management that is Both Empowering and Safe

The Board needs good managers to fulfill its policies. The governance function can be most efficiently performed when the Board holds just one person accountable - the CEO. The CEO needs to be empowered to do the job but the Board needs to be sure that the organization is safe. The Board achieves this by saying "Here is what we want you to achieve (Ends), here is what we want you to avoid (Executive Limitations)" and then leaving the CEO free to make all further decisions and policies within "any reasonable interpretation" of its words.

Performance Must be Monitored Rigorously, But Only Against Policy Criteria

All policies (whether they apply to the CEO or the Board itself) are meaningless unless they are being acted upon. Policy Governance requires regular and rigorous monitoring of all Board policies to ensure their fulfillment. This monitoring also provides the basis for fair performance evaluation, that is, performance evaluation based on known expectations. The Board's Ends and Executive Limitations policies are the only expectations for the purpose of CEO evaluation and the Board's Governance Process and Board-Management Relationship policies are the only expectations for the purpose of Board evaluation.

What Policy Governance is NOT!

- Policy Governance is not a specific Board structure. It does not dictate Board size, specific officers, or require a CEO. While it gives rise to principles for committees, it does not prohibit committees nor require specific committees.
- Policy Governance is not a set of individual "best practices" or tips for piecemeal improvement.
- Policy Governance does not dictate what a Board should do or say about group dynamics, methods of needs assessment, basic problem solving, fund raising, managing change.
- Policy Governance does not limit human interaction or stifle collective or individual thinking.

What Policy Governance IS!

Policy Governance is a comprehensive set of integrated principles that, when consistently applied, allows governing Boards to realize owner-accountable organizations.

Principles of Policy Governance

1. **Ownership:** The Board connects its authority and accountability to those who morally if not legally own the organization-if such a class exists beyond the Board itself-seeing its task as servant-leader to and for that group. "Owners," as used in the Policy Governance model, are not all stakeholders, but only those who stand in a position corresponding to shareholders in an equity corporation.

2. **Governance Position:** With the ownership above it and operational matters below it, governance forms a distinct link in the chain of command or moral authority. Its role is commander, not advisor. It exists to exercise that authority and properly empower others rather than to be management's consultant, ornament, or adversary. The Board-not the staff-bears full and direct responsibility for the process and products of governance, just as it bears accountability for any authority and performance expectations delegated to others.
3. **Board Holism:** The Board makes authoritative decisions directed toward management and toward itself, its individual members, and committees only as a total group. That is, the Board's authority is a group authority rather than a summation of individual authorities.
4. **Ends Policies:** The Board defines in writing the (a) results, changes, or benefits that should come about for specified (b) recipients, beneficiaries, or otherwise defined impacted groups, and (c) at what cost or relative priority for the various benefits or various beneficiaries. These are not all the possible "side benefits" that may occur, but those that form the purpose of the organization, the achievement of which constitutes organizational success. Policy documents containing solely these decisions are categorized as "Ends" in describing the Policy Governance model.
5. **Board Means Policies:** The Board defines in writing those behaviors, values-added, practices, disciplines, and conduct of the Board itself and of the Board's delegation/accountability relationship with its own subcomponents and with the executive part of the organization. Because these are non-ends decisions, they are called "Board means" to distinguish them from ends and staff means. In describing the Policy Governance model, documents containing solely these decisions are categorized as Governance Process and Board- Management Delegation, but can be called by whatever name a Board chooses, as long as the concept is strictly preserved.
6. **Executive Limitations Policies:** The Board makes decisions with respect to its staffs means decisions and actions only in a proscriptive way in order simultaneously (a) to avoid prescribing means and (b) to put off limits those means that would be unacceptable even if they work. Policy documents containing solely these decisions are categorized as "Executive Limitations" in describing the Policy Governance model, but can be called by whatever name a Board chooses, as long as the concept is strictly preserved.
7. **Policy "Sizes" :**The Board's decisions in Ends, Governance Process, Board-Management Delegation, and Executive Limitations are made beginning at the broadest, most inclusive level and, if necessary, continuing into more detailed levels that narrow the interpretative range of higher levels, one articulated level at a time. These documents-which replace or obviate Board expressions of mission, vision, philosophy, values, strategy, and budget-are called policies in describing the Policy Governance model ,but can be called by whatever name a Board chooses, as long as the concept is strictly preserved.
8. **Delegation to Management:** If the Board chooses to delegate to management through a chief executive officer, it honors the exclusive authority/accountability of that role as the sole connector between governance and management.
9. **Any Reasonable Interpretation:** In delegating further decisions-beyond the ones recorded in Board policies-the Board grants the delegatee the right to use any reasonable interpretation of those

policies. In the case of Ends and Executive Limitations when a CEO exists, that delegatee is the CEO. In the case of Governance Process and Board-Management Delegation, that delegatee is the CGO (chief governance officer) except when the Board has explicitly designated another Board member or Board committee.

10. **Monitoring:** The Board monitors organizational performance through fair but systematic assessment of whether its policies of Ends and Executive Limitations are being fulfilled, given any interpretation of those policies the CEO can justify to the Board's satisfaction as reasonable. If there is a CEO, this constitutes the CEO's evaluation.

Policy Governance Boards live these principles in everything they are, do and say

CARVER GUIDE #1

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF POLICY GOVERNANCE

- PRINCIPLE #1 - The Trust in- Trusteeship
- PRINCIPLE #2 - The Board Speaks WITH One Voice or Not at All
- PRINCIPLE #3 - Board Decisions Should Predominately Be Policy Decisions
- PRINCIPLE #4 - Boards Should Formulate Policy by Determining the Broadest Values Before Progressing to More Narrow Ones
- PRINCIPLE #5 - A Board Should Define and Delegate, Rather Than React and Ratify
- PRINCIPLE #6 - Ends Determination Is the Pivotal Duty of Governance
- PRINCIPLE #7 - The Board's Best Control over Staff Means Is to Limit, Not Prescribe
- PRINCIPLE #8 - A Board Must Explicitly Design Its Own Products and Process
- PRINCIPLE #9 - A Board Must Forge a Linkage with Management That Is Both Empowering and Safe
- PRINCIPLE #10 - Performance of the CEO Must Be Monitored Rigorously, but Only Against Policy Criteria

CARVER GUIDE #2

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS A BOARD MEMBER

The Governance Process

- Board members, not staff, are morally trustees for the ownership and, consequently, must bear initial responsibility for the integrity of governance
- Board job – making sure something happens on behalf of ownership

The Basic Board Job Description

- Three core job products that cannot be delegated to the CEO
 - Organizations' linkage to ownership
 - Explicit governing policies
 - Assurance of executive performance

Policy Governance is not a “hands off” model

The best governance is hands off about some things and decidedly hands on about other things. The trick is knowing when to hands on and hands off.

Hands on examples

- Set the Board's work plan and agenda for the year and for each meeting
- Determine Board training and development needs
- Attend to discipline in Board attendance, following by law as and other self imposed rules
- Become an expert in governance
- Meet with and gather wisdom from ownership
- Establish the limit on the CEO's authority to budget, administer finances and compensation, establish programs, and otherwise manage the organization
- Establish the results, recipients, and acceptable costs of those results that justify the organization's existence
- Examine monitoring data and determine whether the CEO has used a reasonable interpretation of Board-stated criteria

Hands off examples

- Establish services, programs, curricula, or budgets
- Render any judgments or assessment of staff activity where no previous Board expectations have been stated
- Determine staff development needs, terminations, or promotions (except CEO)
- Design staff jobs or instruct any staff member subordinate to the CEO
- Decide on the organizational chart or staffing requirements

Roles and Responsibilities as a Board Member

- Be prepared to participate responsibly
- Remember your identity is with the ownership not the staff
- Represent the ownership, not a single constituency
- Be responsible for group behavior and productivity.
- Be a proactive Board member
- Honor divergent opinions without being intimidated by them
- Use your special expertise to inform your colleague's wisdom
- Orient the whole not the parts
- Think upward and outward more than downward and inward
- Tolerate issues that cannot be settled quickly
- Don't tolerate putting off the big issues forever
- Support the Board's final choice
- Don't mistake form for substance
- Obsess about the ends
- Don't expect agendas to be built on your interests
- The organization is not there for you.
- Squelch your individual points of view during monitoring
- Support the chair in Board discipline

Are You A Leader?

A local Board of Education has one of the most important responsibilities in our society—helping plan the education of the children in the community. Its decisions affect the lives of students and their parents, the livelihoods of those the District employs and the economic well-being of the community.

At a time when America's schools and students face greater challenges than ever before, School Boards must demonstrate their leadership by focusing on the academic skills and competencies of students that will make them successful citizens in the future. To accomplish this task, Boards must be visionary and open to embracing research-based reforms that have resulted in high-performing Districts. Do you have the leadership skills necessary to accomplish the enormous progress schools must make? The following characteristics can be found in the highly successful leader.

1. **Leaders understand what it means and what it takes to be a leader**
Leadership is the act of identifying important goals and then motivating and enabling others to devote themselves and all necessary resources to achievement. It includes summoning one's self and others to learn and adapt to the new situation represented by the goal.
2. **Leaders have a vision for their District and its future**
Leaders have a vision of the ideal, can articulate this vision to any audience and work diligently to make it a reality. Leaders also know how to build upon and sustain a vision that preceded them.
3. **Leaders communicate clearly and effectively**
Leaders possess effective writing and presentation skills. They express themselves clearly, and are capable of responding to the hard questions in a public forum. They are also direct and precise questioners, always seeking clarity and understanding.
4. **Leaders collaborate and cooperate with others**
Leaders communicate high expectations and provide accurate information to foster understanding and maintain trust and confidence. Leaders reach out to others for support and assistance, build partnerships, secure resources and share credit for successes and accomplishments.
5. **Leaders persevere for the long term vision**
Leaders build institutions that endure. They "stay the course," maintain focus, anticipate and work to overcome resistance. They create capacity within the organization to achieve and sustain its vision.
6. **Leaders support, develop and nurture staff**
Leaders set a standard for ethical behavior. They seek diverse perspectives and alternative points of view. They encourage initiative, innovation, collaboration and a strong work ethic. Leaders expect and provide opportunities for staff to engage in continuous personal and professional growth.
7. **Leaders hold themselves and others responsible and accountable**
Leaders embrace and adhere to comprehensive planning that improves the

organization. They use data to determine the present state of the organization, identify root-cause problems, propose solutions and validate accomplishments.

8. **Leaders never stop learning and honing their skills**

Leaders are introspective and reflective. Leaders ask questions and seek answers. Leaders in education are familiar with current research and best practice, not only in education, but also in related fields.

9. **Leaders have the courage to take informed risks**

Leaders embrace informed, planned change and recognize that everyone may not support change. Leaders work to win support and are willing to take action in support of their vision, even in the face of opposition.

Roles and Responsibilities

Roles

Vision—Creating a Shared Vision

- Board keeps students as the focus of the work of schools
- Board adopts a shared vision based on community beliefs to guide local education
- Board demonstrates its strong commitment to the shared vision and mission by using them to guide decision making and communicating to others

Accountability—Developing Accountability to Measure and Communicate How Well the Vision is Being Accomplished

- Board receives regular reports on student progress and needs based on a variety of assessments in order to evaluate the quality of education in the District (ENDS)
- Board evaluates both Superintendent and Board performance (EL and GP)
- Board evaluates progress toward achievement of District long- and short-term goals and ensures that policies and allocation of resources effectively support District vision (monitoring ENDS)
- Board periodically reports District progress to community and parents

Advocacy—Championing the Vision

The role of the Board of Education is not to run the schools, but to see that they are well run.

- Board seeks others who can help expand educational opportunities and meet the needs of the whole child
- Board advocates for children and families and establishes strong relationships with parents and other mentors to help support students
- Board leads in celebrating the achievements of students and others in education

Responsibilities

In order to give the best service to the local community, a Board member will need to develop skills and knowledge in a variety of areas. These include:

Policy making

A Board's major function, and the foundation upon which the District's structure is built, is the monitoring of policy. Policies establish how the Board will govern and sets parameters for the Superintendent.

- The Board's vision for the District
- Boards do not carry out a policy. The responsibility for implementing policy is delegated to the Superintendent.

In the Policy Governance model, there are two major categories of policy: Board policy and Administrative policy.

- **Board policies:** ENDS, Board/Superintendent Relations (B/SR), Governance Policies (GP), and Executive Limitations (EL). The Board sets and monitors these policies.
- **Administrative policies:** These are operating policies of the District to achieve the vision and primarily set and monitored by the Superintendent. However, Colorado statute outlines some administrative policies that are under the authority of the Board for review and decision-making, even though the responsibility to implement remains with the Superintendent.

Designating the Superintendent

The Board is responsible for:

- Hiring the Superintendent
- Evaluating the performance of the Superintendent

Evaluating Progress Toward Ends Goals (Vision)

The shared community vision is set through Ends goals and the Board establishes acceptable measures and benchmarks to monitor progress toward the goals.

Evaluation of progress toward Ends gives assurance to the stakeholder community the vision is being realized or not.

Financial Resources

The Board approves and adopts the budget. Much of the responsibility for establishing a structure for the District is affected by this budget

Staffing and Evaluation

The Board is responsible for establishing policy that governs:

- Salaries and salary schedules
- Terms and conditions of employment

The Board delegates the tasks of recruiting, recommending for hire, evaluating, promoting and disciplining staff (in accordance with Board policy) to the Superintendent.

Instruction

The Board, working with the Superintendent and staff, must:

- Set graduation requirements.
- Approve instructional materials.

School Facilities

The Board is responsible for determining school facility needs and:

- Communicating those needs to the community
- Purchasing, disposing of or leasing school sites
- Approving building plans that will support the educational programs

Students

The Board can accept, modify or reject Administrative policies recommended by the Superintendent regarding school:

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| • Admissions | • Suspension | • Safety |
| • Placement | • Graduation | • Health services |
| • Promotion | • Conduct | • Food services |
| • Attendance | • Discipline | • Transportation |
| • Expulsion | | |

Communication With Various Constituencies

The Board is responsible to maintain an ongoing two-way communication with:

- School staff
- Students
- Members of the community

This is done formally through Linkages that the Board facilitates with various groups throughout the year.

Advocacy

Board members, both individually and collectively, need to serve as advocates for children. This could include speaking and writing to local, state, and national elected or appointed officials for matters related to public education.

Adjudication and Investigation

The board may have to hear appeals from staff members or students on issues that involve board policy implementation.

General

Other activities include:

- Establishing procedures for the operation of the Board
- Electing Board officers
- Retaining an attorney or law firm for the school District
- Setting strategy and coordinating litigation decisions when the school District is involved in a lawsuit
- Establishing and maintaining effective Board/Superintendent relations
- Continuously reviewing and evaluating Board operations and performance
- Working with city, county and other government and non government officials and agencies

Boards don't carry out a policy.

***The responsibility for
implementing policy is delegated
to the Superintendent.***

The Board/Superintendent Team

The Board and Superintendent have very distinct and separate roles. Together they form the District's leadership team. Before an effective working relationship is established, a Superintendent and Board must develop a mutual understanding of their respective roles, then review and validate this understanding on a regular basis. An honest and candid discussion of the functions of each entity will greatly enhance the partnership between the Superintendent and the Board.

In the Policy Governance model utilized in BV Schools, the Board/Superintendent Relationship is defined through policy (Board/Superintendent Relationship Policy). As well, the Board established any limitations in the authority of the Superintendent through policy, known as Executive Limitations. These policies together guide the establishment of clear roles of each leader, the Superintendent and the collective Board. [BV Schools Board/Superintendent Policies and Executive Limitation Policy linked here](#) and available on the District website at <https://www.bvschools.org/page/board-of-education>

As Superintendent of the school District, the Superintendent is generally responsible for:

- A. Implementing policy set by the Board
- B. Making recommendations to the Board based on his/her best educational knowledge regarding:
 - Personnel
 - Curriculum
 - Budget
 - Vision
 - Plan
 - Security/Safety
- C. Informing the Board of all vital matters pertaining to the school District
- D. Developing and maintaining an efficient and effective management system for the school District
- E. Delegating appropriate responsibilities and assigning duties to other employees of the District, but ultimately being accountable for their actions
- F. Recommending all candidates for employment and being directly and indirectly responsible for their administration
- G. Developing and improving instructional programming of the school including being alert to advances and improvements in educational programming
- H. Preparing and submitting a preliminary budget to the Board and managing the financial operations of the school District
- I. Developing and implementing an efficient and effective Security/Safety program for all buildings

Research has shown that a positive working relationship between the Board and the Superintendent can directly impact student achievement in the District.

When there is ongoing tension or conflict between the Board and the Superintendent, it becomes difficult to move the District forward. This lack of teamwork can ultimately affect

students, who benefit most when District leaders are working together with trust and shared purpose. There are several actions that Boards and Superintendents can take to ensure a good working relationship will exist.

Full Disclosure: The cornerstone of a strong Board-Superintendent partnership is the frank disclosure of school problems to the Board members. Complete and thorough disclosure requires the Superintendent be open and receptive to inquiries from members of the Board, that she/he be knowledgeable about the District's activities, and that she/he provide information as quickly as possible.

Frequent Two-Way Communication: The Superintendent should provide timely oral and written communications of pending or emergency items. Board members should reciprocate, immediately informing the Superintendent of citizen concerns. The Board must be well informed to make wise decisions. The Superintendent is responsible for keeping Board members informed on an ongoing basis (not just at meetings). Before major decisions are made, Board members should have an opportunity to read background information, examine alternatives and consider the implications of alternative actions.

Careful Planning: No one enjoys surprises and careful planning will avoid the majority of them. Thoughtful, collaborative planning helps prevent misunderstandings and keeps everyone moving in the same direction. The planning process should begin with the Board adopting clear END goals for the district. From there, the Superintendent leads the implementation of actions to achieve those goals, often referred to as strategic priorities. One of the most effective ways to plan at a district-wide level is through a comprehensive strategic planning.

Informal Interaction: The Superintendent must interact regularly with Board members. They should attend conferences together and participate in school activities. Through such informal interaction they become more sensitive to each other's interests and values without, of course, breaching professional relationships.

Periodic Evaluation: The Superintendent and the Board should evaluate the work of the School District at sessions scheduled throughout the year. Periodic evaluations, called ENDS monitoring reports, keeps the Board apprised of the progress on District goals. At these meetings the Board should evaluate the Superintendent's progress toward District END goals, discuss the relationship between the Board and the Superintendent and agree to any modifications necessary.

Mutual Support: Both parties need support from the other. A strong partnership is strengthened when Board members support the Superintendent from unjust criticism and the Superintendent, in turn, Board members from unwarranted accusations.

Essential Attributes of an Effective School Board Member

Even the most experienced Board members never stop learning the technical details of the job. Strong Board members are committed to high-quality public education and the success of every student. They approach the role with a willingness to learn, listen, and grow. Just as important, they come prepared—having reviewed materials and reflected on key issues—so they can engage fully and make informed, thoughtful decisions. Preparedness and a student-centered mindset are the foundation of effective Board service. Here are some steps to consider:

1. **Be prepared to participate responsibly.**
Do your homework, come prepared to work. Remember that sometimes the work is to listen, agree and disagree as your values dictate, and accept that the group decision is legitimate even if it's not your personal choice. ***It is unhelpful and ultimately compromises the Board's work to have opinions and not express them.***
2. **Focus on serving all children of the District.**
Ensure every deliberation, decision and action reflects the best interests of every student you serve. No child is more important than another.
3. **Remember that your identity is with the community, not the staff.**
It can be easy to identify with staff as you probably will have more discussions with them about issues. But you must remember that your job is to serve in trust for the community.
4. **Represent the community, not a single constituency.**
You will understand and/or identify with certain constituencies (parents, neighborhoods or communities, special ed, etc.), but you **MUST** remember that being a Board member means serving in trust for the entire community. There's no way seven people can provide a spokesperson for every constituency or legitimate interest, so in a moral sense you must stand for them all. You can be **FROM** a constituency, but you must not let yourself **REPRESENT** it.
5. **Be responsible for group behavior and productivity.**
As a Board member, you are responsible not only for your actions but also for how the Board functions as a whole. When the Board oversteps its role, interferes with day-to-day administration, or fails to follow its own policies, every member shares in that responsibility. Support respectful dialogue, clear boundaries, and genuine collaboration to help the Board operate with integrity and purpose.
6. **Honor divergent opinions without being intimidated by them.**
You are obligated to express your honest opinions on issues, and so are each of the other Board members. Encourage your colleagues to speak their opinions and listen to them carefully and respectfully. But don't allow yourself to be intimidated

by louder or more insistent Board members.

7. **Use your special expertise to inform your colleagues' wisdom.**

If you have special expertise (law, accounting, construction, etc.) remember that you are NOT personally responsible for decisions relating to that area. Use your expertise to help inform your colleagues (i.e., help them understand what fiscal health looks like versus fiscal jeopardy), but don't assume sole responsibility for those decisions. Also remember that you are not on the Board to help the staff or even advise them with your special expertise. Your job as a Board member is to govern. If you wish to offer your help as an expert, make sure that all parties know you are acting as a volunteer, not a Board member, and remember that asking for or accepting your help is a staff prerogative, not yours.

8. **Stay Focused on the Big Picture.**

It is easy to get drawn into the day-to-day operations of the district, but a Board's true responsibility is to focus on impact—what kind of difference the district is making in the lives of students and the broader community. That means stepping back from the details and leaning into the big-picture questions: Are we moving in the right direction? Are our goals clear and meaningful? This work is challenging, but it is at the heart of effective governance.

9. **Support the Board's final choice.**

No matter which way you voted, you are obligated to support the Board in its decision. This doesn't mean you have to pretend to agree with it. You may maintain the integrity of your dissent. What you support is the legitimacy of the choice even though you do not agree. For example, you will support without reservation that the Superintendent must follow the formal Board decision, not your personal preference.

10. **Serve the Whole, Not Just the Individual**

Board agendas should reflect the shared work of governing the district, not a collection of individual interests. As a Board member, your role is to act as a trustee for the entire community, focusing on what the district should achieve for all students. Effective governance means setting aside personal preferences to ensure decisions reflect the broader public good.

11. **Focus on Agreed Upon Outcomes When Monitoring**

Your own values count when the Board is creating policies. But when you monitor the performance of the Superintendent or the success of programs, etc., you must refer to the criteria the corporate Board decided, not what your opinion was about those criteria. And as you review the criteria, your monitoring should not be based on whether things were done the way you would have done them, but whether they were a reasonable interpretation of the Board's policy. Build capacity for wisdom, and collaborative action.

12. **Continuously ask of yourself and the Board, “Is this Board work?”**

Board deliberations must rise above day-to-day concerns and add meaningful value to the district’s long-term direction. The Board exists to tackle complex, foundational issues—those that demand the collective insight, wisdom, and judgment of a diverse group committed to serving the whole community. Staying focused on big-picture, mission-driven decisions is essential to responsible governance.



OUR PURPOSE

Ensuring every student reaches the peak of success by being curious, connected, collaborative, critically competent, constructive, creative, and character-centered

OUR GOALS

ENDS 1: Students are capable of building relationships with others, solving conflicts positively, and contributing to their community

ENDS 2: Students have the academic knowledge, skills, and critical thinking to pursue their individual post-secondary goals

ENDS 3: Students demonstrate the resiliency and character needed to face the personal and practical challenges of life

ENDS 4: Students are proud of and inspired by their school experience

The Role of Ethics in Public Service

Research shows that the public has higher ethical expectations for members of the Board than any other elected body. This should come as no surprise to you if you think about the fact that your community has entrusted their most precious resource to the Board of Education—their children. Furthermore, especially in smaller communities, Board members are often very recognizable. They attend the same church, grocery store and school and town events that the rest of the community attends. Their children are your children's friends and your neighbors have contact with you on a regular basis.

Board members are expected to set an example that is morally admirable and free of even a hint of self-serving impropriety. At times, the ethical high road can require making very difficult decisions, especially when doing the ethically correct thing is not always clear cut. Nonetheless, public trust and credibility is essential for effective governance. Making decisions or behaving in a manner that is unethical undermines the credibility of elected Board members and erodes the public's trust.

Many Boards that are intent on maintaining the public's trust often agree to a set of guidelines or code of ethics that can be a constant reminder of ethical conduct. Below is Buena Vista School Board Policy, Governing Policy (GP) 9, Code of Conduct.

Code for Board Member Behavior

GP – 9 Board Members' Code of Conduct

The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members. The Board acting in its legislative capacity shall have the authority and responsibility to interpret and apply these standards of conduct.

Accordingly:

1. Board members will represent the interests of the citizens of the entire school district. This accountability to the whole district supersedes:
 1. any conflicting loyalty a member may have to other advocacy or interest groups
 2. loyalty based upon membership on other boards or staffs
 3. conflicts based upon the personal interest of any Board member who is also a parent of a student in the district.
 4. conflicts based upon being a relative of an employee of the district, or
 5. conflicts based upon the member's election from a subsection of the district.
2. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization except as explicitly set forth in Board policies
 - a. Members' interaction with the Superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly authorized by the Board.
 - b. Members' interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any Board member to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.

- c. Members will not publicly express individual negative judgments about Superintendent or staff performance. Any such judgments of Superintendent performance will be made only by the full Board, meeting in executive session.
3. Members shall maintain confidentiality appropriate to sensitive issues and information that otherwise may tend to compromise the integrity or legal standing of the board, especially those matters discussed in executive session.
4. Board members will communicate with the public, in open session, using procedures established by the board. Procedures will outline methods of discussions on personnel and policy.

Monitoring Method: Board Self Assessment
Monitoring Frequency: Annually

Adopted: September 12, 2000
Revised: April 2020
Revised: April 12, 2021
Monitored: April 26, 2021
Monitored: March 28, 2022
Revised: March 28, 2022
Monitored: March 11, 2024
Monitored: March 10, 2025

Board policy GP 10 further outlines Board covenants and can be found in the full Board policy manual.

GP – 10 Board Member Covenants

In order to build and maintain productive and effective relationships, Board members shall maintain a system of communication and interaction that builds upon mutual respect and trust.

Accordingly, members will:

1. exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction
2. demonstrate respect for the opinions of others
3. focus on issues rather than personalities
4. maintain focus on common goals
5. communicate in a timely manner to avoid surprises
6. respect decisions of the full board
7. withhold judgment on issues until fully informed
8. seek first to understand rather than be understood
9. criticize privately, praise publicly
10. use executive sessions appropriately and judiciously
11. maintain appropriate confidentiality
12. undertake honest expression of feelings during discussions to find common ground
13. take the initiative to communicate and ask questions for clarification
14. share information and knowledge
15. give direction as the whole, not as individuals
16. make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the district and one another
17. be aware of appropriate body language
18. demonstrate civility and respect for one another

19. establish credibility of information
20. show up to each meeting prepared by being aware of current agenda and packet

Members will not:

1. embarrass each other or the district
2. intentionally mislead or misinform each other
3. maintain individual agendas inconsistent with Board Ends policies
4. assume responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints

Board Member's Personal Life

Board members admit that the most surprising discovery about Board service is the great amount of time it takes to be an effective Board member and the tremendous variety of concerns with which the Board deals. Oftentimes the abrupt change from citizen status to Board member status catches newly elected Board members off guard. They are suddenly bombarded with concerns and complaints from friends, acquaintances and people they've never met before. They no longer can be out in the community without being approached by one or more citizens about concerns within the school District. And, even when you tell them that your authority to act is limited to Board meetings, they'll see you as a 24/7 Board member.

The Board member and his/her family and possibly business will inevitably be affected by a Board member's investment of time and talent in the schools. If you learn to manage the demands of public service on your private life, Board service can be rewarding and enjoyable. School Boards meet twice each month with a typical meeting lasting between two and four hours; emergencies may prompt *additional special meetings*. *Board members may also have to attend committee meetings that require even further preparation and time. The Board member's involvement in community affairs and attendance at school programs and events accounts for even more dedicated time to the Board member's schedule.*

Many newly elected Board members are unprepared for the huge amount of Board-related paperwork they must read or for the multitude of new information they must learn in a very short time. *It's not uncommon to hear Board members state that it takes them several hours prior to a Board meeting to review their Board packet thoroughly and to get all of their questions answered.*

Without question, there is a huge time commitment required to serve on a Board of Education. However, experienced Board members often find that the tremendous satisfaction they reap from their public service greatly outweighs any negative aspects of the job or personal sacrifices they must make. Still, anyone running for the School Board should be well aware that they will be dedicating many hours to fulfilling the responsibilities of their new position.

There are several ways to use your time more efficiently:

- **Schedule time in week for information processing.** Determine how you will manage the multitude of information you will be receiving by developing your own filing and paper routing system. Keep in mind that your administration keeps on file all the Board packets and agendas from past meetings. Because everyone works differently, you will need to organize on the basis of your own most effective way of working.
- **Familiarize yourself with Board policies.** It cannot be understated – Board work is policy work. It frames the work of the Board. It limits what a Board member is responsible for. It is important to remember the Board hired staff to manage the district so your personal

time is not consumed at the operational/management or tactical level.

- **Study the Strategic Priorities and END goals now.** Use the minutes and agendas of past Board meetings to learn about the kinds of issues that have come before the Board. As a new Board member, you can save time right from the start by learning as much as you can about the school system. Study the Strategic priorities and ENDS and all the accountability information available through BV School Accountability (SCAP) site. Meet with the Superintendent and Board president to learn more about how the Board operates and key issues the District is facing.
- **Prioritize commitments.** Prior to being elected to the Board, you were probably very active in community and school events that required much of your time. You will have to make some decisions about those activities you need to give up in order to make time for your new Board responsibilities. This requires you to establish priorities and learn to say yes to only the priorities at the top of your list. For very service-oriented Board members, this may be one of the most difficult challenges for them.
- **Active listening while delegating response appropriately.** As a board member, you'll likely hear a variety of concerns, ideas, and requests from community members. It's important to practice **active listening**—giving your full attention, asking clarifying questions, and ensuring the person feels heard and respected. At the same time, be mindful not to make promises or commitments. A helpful response focuses on understanding the individual's viewpoint while gently reminding them that decisions are made collectively by the full Board. Some matters brought to you may be **operational in nature**, not related to Board-level policy or governance. In these cases, it's appropriate—and often most effective—to direct the person to the relevant staff member or administrator who can address the issue directly. Setting clear boundaries while remaining open and approachable will help you maintain a healthy balance and ensure community members feel valued and guided in the right direction.
- **Learn from others.** Attend conferences, learning walks study sessions, and training classes to learn as much as possible about your responsibilities as a Board member.

School Board Member Tips

1. **Go slow in the beginning, especially if you have come to the Board to “reform” it.**
The chances are you will feel differently about a lot of things after six months on the Board.
2. **Remember that the only authority you have lies in the corporate action of the School Board.**
You have no legal authority to act alone unless the Board as a whole specifically delegates a task to you.
3. **Healthy discussion and differing viewpoints are a vital part of strong Board decision-making.**
Differences of opinion are healthy and expected. The key is to stay focused on the issues, not personalities. Decisions should reflect what's best for the district—not be reactions to other members' positions. Respectful collaboration builds a stronger, more effective Board.
4. **Listen more than you speak.**
Thoughtful listening is one of the most valuable skills a Board member can bring. Speaking with intention—not frequency—builds credibility. By taking time to listen, you learn from others and contribute more meaningfully when you do speak.
5. **Respect Staff Roles and Processes**
Board members should avoid direct involvement in individual staff or personnel matters. These concerns are best handled through the district's established administrative channels. Trusting the process protects employee confidentiality and ensures fairness, while allowing the Board to focus on governance and policy.
6. **Give the Superintendent and staff your public support.**
Except in unusual and mitigating circumstances, the Superintendent has a right to expect this. Use individual conferences with the Superintendent and the official forum of legal Board meetings to iron out differences of opinions.
7. **Make an effort to be informed.**
School business is always important business – and big business – with million dollar budgets. To be informed requires time and effort. Ask for briefings from staff as you feel the need. **Visit each school within the District during the scheduled learning walks.**
8. **Be Welcoming and Helpful**
Welcome conversations with community members and listen with care. Share that decisions are made by the full Board, and kindly refer them to the appropriate staff when needed. This builds trust while keeping your role clear and collaborative.

The Hardest Lessons

Experienced Board members from across the nation were asked to identify the most difficult lesson or fact they had to learn about Board service. Here's what they said most often.

- ***That you must represent all of the students.*** Your decisions must be made in the interest of the total school system and not made solely for personal reasons, special groups or interests.
- Learning to acknowledge publicly that you have no power and authority as an individual Board member; that only the Board as a whole can make policies and decisions for the School District.
- Determining what your function is on the Board and how to accomplish it effectively.
- No matter what you think you know about Board service when you first come on Board, you still have a lot to learn.
- Recognizing the difference between setting policy (the Board's job) and administering the schools (the Superintendent's job).
- Learning how to respond to the complaints and concerns of citizens, school administrators and other staff.
- That change comes slowly.
- You can't solve everyone's problems by yourself.
- You must think deeply and sometimes accept a reality that is contrary to your own beliefs.
- Effective Board service means being able to hold the minority viewpoint when voting on a given issue; then openly supporting the majority vote of the Board in your community.
- Discovering how the schools are funded.
- That the primary focus of all Board decisions must be student achievement.



The primary focus of all Board decisions will always be student achievement.

Overview of the Open Meetings Act

Open Meetings

All meetings of a public body (i.e., School Board) must be open to the public.

1. Colorado law requires most Board discussions and decisions to take place in open meetings, ensuring the public can observe how decisions are made. This builds trust and accountability.
2. The Board has policy, GP-13, Board By Laws for procedures for conducting business in open meetings.
3. Deliberation Happens in Public. Board members must save their discussions, debates, and decision-making for the public meeting—not private conversations beforehand. Avoid “serial” meetings or group discussions via email, text, or phone that could violate open meeting laws.
4. A “meeting” is defined as the convening of a public body at which **two or more** are present for the purpose of deliberating toward or rendering a decision on a public policy.
5. Opening meeting law does not apply to a social or chance gathering or conference where two or more are present as long as Board members in attendance do not collectively discuss matters of public policy.
6. While Board meetings are open to the public, the meetings are for the purpose of the business of the Board. While members of the public are welcome to attend and observe, the meetings are conducted for the Board to carry out its official business. Time is typically provided for public comment, but the primary purpose is for the Board to deliberate, make decisions, and govern the district.

All decisions of a public body must be made at a meeting open to the public.

All deliberations of a public body constituting a quorum of its members must take place at a meeting open to the public unless an executive session meeting exception applies.

Executive Sessions

Exceptions to the public open meetings requirement:

Colorado's Open Meetings Law (COML), specifically under **C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)**, outlines the permitted reasons for holding an executive session.

C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4) allows a public body (like a school board) to hold an executive session for the following reasons:

1. **Personnel Matters**

Discussion of individual employees (but not general personnel policies).

- *Note:* If the employee who is the subject of the discussion requests an open meeting, the session must be open.
- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f)

2. **Real Estate Transactions**

Discussion about the purchase, acquisition, lease, transfer, or sale of real, personal, or other property interests.

- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(a)

3. **Legal Advice from Counsel**

Conferences with an attorney to receive legal advice on specific legal questions.

- Merely having an attorney present is not enough—the discussion must be clearly for legal advice.
- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b)

4. **Matters Required to Be Kept Confidential**

If a matter is required to remain confidential under federal or state law, the board must cite the specific statute before entering executive session.

- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(c)

5. **Security Arrangements**

Specialized details of security arrangements or investigations, if disclosure would jeopardize public safety or property.

- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(d)

6. **Negotiations Strategy**

Determining positions and strategy for negotiations and instructing negotiators (e.g., real estate, contracts).

- *Important:* Discussions related to **collective bargaining** or **employment contracts** must occur in public unless another exception applies.
- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(e)

7. **Open Records Exceptions**

Consideration of documents that are protected under the **mandatory nondisclosure** provisions of the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA).

- *Note:* Work product or deliberative process documents must be considered in public unless another exception applies.
- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(g)

8. **Student Matters**

Discussions of individual students where public disclosure would adversely affect the individual(s) involved.

- *Statute reference:* C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(h)

A public body cannot hold a meeting without first giving public notice of the meeting.

Minutes must be kept of all meetings, whether an open meeting or executive session.



The Board's Agenda

The Value of an Agenda

A well-planned agenda helps Board members prepare for effective discussions and decisions. It assures that the concerns of Board members, staff and community will be given appropriate consideration. It helps make it possible to conduct the meeting in an orderly, efficient and fair manner with a minimum of confusion, misunderstanding, dissension that could result from inadequate preparation. It is an avenue for communicating to the Board, staff and community important matters to be discussed and actions to be taken. An agenda is important record—for preparing the minutes, planning future meetings and even for legal purposes.

The Agenda—Foundation of an Effective Meeting

- The steering mechanism for any meeting.
- Forces logical organization and preparation for the meeting.
- Serves the meeting leader as a guidance and disciplinary tool.
- Tells those who will participate how to prepare.
- For Board members, the agenda identifies items and issues to be discussed and for which advance study may be advisable.
- For the public, it calls attention to matters in which an individual may be especially interested.
- For the staff, it indicates what supporting materials may be needed to assure that the Board will have the information necessary to reach the right decision.
- For the Board president, the agenda provides the guidelines necessary for conducting the meeting in an efficient, well-organized manner.
- For legal purposes, the agenda is kept on file and can be cited as the record of what transpired, also serving as the basis for preparation of the minutes.
- For the Superintendent, as the chief administrative officer and advisor to the Board, the agenda provides the means for assuring that items and matters to be reported and acted upon will be brought to the Board's attention.

Steps in Preparing an Agenda

Typically, the Superintendent and Board president jointly prepare the agenda, with the Superintendent responsible for gathering items and preparing the public notices while the Board president is responsible for confirmation and discussion. Once the agenda is designed, the president is responsible for ensuring that the agenda is followed.

Prioritize Items on the Agenda

To be considerate of people who may be unable to stay until the end of the Board meeting, schedule special recognitions of students and staff and presentations by speakers and presenters early in the meeting so that they may leave after their involvement in the meeting. Also schedule significant matters and items requiring concentration, analysis and deliberation by Board members and staff early on.

Focus the Agenda on District Goals and the Big Picture

Your challenge as a Board is to avoid drowning in the sea of details and instead focus your agenda on achieving District goals and looking at “big picture” trends that affect the educational well-being of the children in your District. If your meeting agenda doesn't link to District ENDS goals, you may find your Board meeting time consumed by administrative tasks delegated to administration.

Limit the Number of Agenda Items

The number of items on the agenda may adversely affect the length of the meeting. The fuller your agenda, the better your meeting must be organized. The Board President and the Superintendent should estimate the time needed for each presentation or discussion item when planning the meeting agenda to ensure a reasonable meeting length with enough time allocated to discuss each item.

More on Preparing the Agenda

- Determine the ultimate goals of the meeting and the steps to get there.
- Break down the generalized topics in the agenda into specific discussion items to promote logical meeting thought and better control of this flow.
- Organize multiple topic meetings so that related subjects are discussed in order.
- Delineate between action and information items.
- Hold separate meetings for very important topics.
- Select the people who attend, besides the Board.
- Consider the possible barriers and ways to get around or through them.
- Mark each item on the agenda in a MEMO with policy references.
- Have the staff prepare specific, predrafted motions and resolutions where possible.

Getting on the Agenda

Every School Board should have a policy that sets out procedures and conditions for persons who wish to appear before the Board of Education. In developing its policy, the Board should consider that only members of the Board have a right to speak at Board meetings. **Board meetings are public meetings but not meetings of the public.**

A prerequisite to getting on the agenda should be that a person exhausts administrative remedies before bringing the problem to the Board. A Board shouldn't allow a person to use a Board meeting as a forum to complain about a problem until administrators have had a chance to solve the problem. Boards should also consider the following questions during the development of a policy regarding placement on the agenda. This is included in Board Policy GP-13.



Buena Vista School District

Ensuring Every Student Reaches the Peak of Success

To access Board Policy, agenda, minutes, and other Board related information:

<https://www.bvschools.org/page/board-of-education>

List of Education Acronyms

AASA	American Association of School Administrators	LEA	Local Education Agency
ACT	American College Test	LEP	Limited English Proficiency
ADA	American With Disabilities Act	NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder	NCLB	No Child Left Behind
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	NEA	National Education Association
AP	Advanced Placement	- CE	Colorado Education Association
BOCES	Board of Cooperative Education Services	NFHS	National Federation of High School Associations
BOE	Board of Education	NSBA	National School Boards Association
BVCEAF	Buena Vista Community Education Assistance Fund	-CASB	Colorado Association of School Boards
CASE	Colorado Association of School Administration	OCR	Office of Civil Rights
CASBO	Colorado Assoc. of School Business Officials	PERA	Public Employment Relations Act
CDE	Colorado Department of Education	PPRA	Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment
CDEC	Colorado Department of Early Childhood	PSAT	Preliminary SAT
CHSAA	Colorado High School Activities Association	PTA	Parent Teacher Association
CTE	Career and Technical Education	PTO	Parent Teacher Organization
DAC	District Accountability Committee	RFP	Request for Proposal
DHS	Department of Human Services	RFQ	Request for Qualifications
DPF	District Performance Framework	SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
-SPF	School Performance Framework	SBE	State Board of Education
EEOC	Equal Opportunity Employment Commission	SCAP	Student Centered Accountability
ELL	English Language Learner	SMI	Severely Mentally Impaired
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act	SPED	Special Education
ESSA	Every Student Succeeds Act	SRO	State Review Officer
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education	SPMP	Skilled Professional Medical Personnel
FERPA	Family Rights and Privacy Act	STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act	UFLP	Unfair Labor Practice
FMLA	Family Medical Leave Act	UPK	Universal Preschool
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act		
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent or Full-Time Equated		
GED	General Education Diploma		
GT	Gifted and Talented		
HIPPA	Health and Individual Personal Privacy Act		
IB	International Baccalaureate		
IDEA	Individuals With Disabilities Education Act		
IEP	Individualized Education Plan		
LD	Learning Disabled		

Glossary

504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A civil rights statute that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability.

Academic Standards

The written standards established by Colorado that outline what a student should know and be able to do at each grade level. The state assessment system is based on (aligned with) these academic standards.

Accountability Committees (District and school)

Committee created by law that includes parents, teachers and administrators. Makes recommendations about budget and school improvement.

Accreditation

The purpose of accreditation is to provide a process for the State Board of Education to fulfill its constitutional responsibility for supervising the state's public schools and to encourage excellence by assessing student performance in relation to state academic standards. Categories of accreditation include: Accredited with distinction, accredited, with improvement plan, Accredited with priority improvement plan, Accredited with turnaround plan, Unaccredited.

Administrative Unit

A sufficiently large school District or BOCES that is responsible for distributing special education funds and delivering education services to students with disabilities.

Alternative Education

Schools or classrooms that are designed to serve students who aren't succeeding in the traditional school or classroom environment. Flexibility is given to these schools related to accountability to support the success of students. They must be approved annually by the Colorado Department of Education

Amendment 23

Constitutional change requiring K-12 funding to increase by inflation plus 1 percent from 2001-2011 and by inflation after that.

Annexation

Joining a school District or parts of a District with a receiving District.

AP

Advanced Placement. The designation of the College Board for college-preparatory courses that high school students can take to earn college credit. Students must master a generally higher level of coursework and pass an accompanying test to earn college credit.

ASCENT Program

Accelerating Students Through Concurrent Enrollment allows student participation in concurrent

enrollment courses directly following their 12th grade year. Students remain in their Local Education Provider (LEP) for one additional year and the LEP receives ASCENT specific per-pupil state funding that is used to pay their college tuition at the resident community college rate. Students receive their high school diplomas at the end of their ASCENT year.

Assessments

Tests or other tools that measure students' skills and knowledge. Formative assessments are used so instruction can be adjusted as needed to improve learning. Summative assessments assess the student's overall mastery of the subject matter.

BEST

Building Excellent Schools Today. This is a state matching-funds program providing financial assistance to local Districts for K-12 capital construction.

Blended Learning

Combination of face-to-face and online student instruction designed to offer more personalized and student-centered learning.

Boardmanship

Describes the skills School Board members need in order to work together effectively and ensure competent governance of a local school District.

BOCES

Board of Cooperative Educational Services. Typically, a BOCES is a group of school Districts that join together for a better and/or more efficient use of funds.

Chartering Authority

The ability of a local Board to determine whether to open charter schools in the school District.

CHSAA

Colorado High School Activities Association.

CIPA

Children's Internet Protection Act.

Classified Staff

School District employees who are not required to have Colorado teaching credentials as a condition of employment. Bus drivers, janitors and cafeteria workers are examples of classified staff.

CMAS

Colorado Measures of Academic Success.

Colorado Growth Model

Collection of data enabling parents, educators and community members to easily evaluate growth in student achievement over time in public schools across the state.

Common Core Standards

Academic standards determined by a coalition of states to establish the common core of knowledge and skills that students should develop in K-12 education in order to graduate from high school prepared for college or careers.

Community Engagement

Approach to community problem-solving. Citizens gather to consider relevant facts and values from varying points of view; listen to each other; consider the underlying tensions, tough choices and varied consequences inherent when addressing public problems; are willing to refine and adapt their opinions and interests; and ultimately seek to come to a conclusion for action based on a reasoned public judgment.

Concurrent Enrollment

The Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act created the simultaneous enrollment of a qualified student in a local education provider and in one or more postsecondary courses, including academic or career and technical education courses, which may include course work related to apprenticeship or internship programs, at an institution of higher education.

Consolidation

Joining two or more school Districts or parts of Districts to create a single new school District.

CORA

Colorado Open Records Act requiring that most public records be available to the public.

CRSA

Colorado Rural Schools Alliance.

CSDSIP

Colorado School Districts Self-Insurance Pool.

CSI Charter School Institute

An agency that can authorize CSI Charter Schools.

Curriculum

The subject matter, skills and processes that are taught so students will achieve identified standards of knowledge and skill. Curriculum is singular and curricula is plural.

DAC

District Accountability Committee.

Design Thinking

An approach to creative problem solving that employs skills of empathy, synthesis, brainstorming, prototyping and that challenge definition. Students utilize their intuitiveness and ability to recognize patterns and construct ideas in order to express themselves in building solutions.

Disaggregated Data

Information that has been sorted according to certain criteria or subdivisions. Test results can be

sorted by groups of students with similar characteristics, such as economic disadvantage, race or ethnicity, disabilities or limited English proficiency. Teachers and parents can then determine how each group is performing.

DOE

Department of Education (Federal).

Drop-Out Rate

The proportion and time at which students leave school before graduating. Reasons may include failing grades, suspension or expulsion, lack of interest, economic hardship, pregnancy, marriage, peer conflict, incarceration, lack of attendance and use of alcohol or drugs.

Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment

Dual credit refers to students completing college-level courses via their high school classes and earning college and high school credit simultaneously. Courses are taught by college approved high school faculty or adjunct college faculty. Dual enrollment refers to students taking courses concurrently at two separate institutions such as their high school and a local community college or university. Students earn college credit through both avenues.

ELL

English language learners. Involves programs or approaches used to teach English to those who do not speak English as their first language. Formerly known as Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

ESEA

Elementary and Secondary Education Act reauthorized by ESSA.

ESSA

Every Student Succeeds Act.

Ex Officio

Literally means "by virtue of one's office". The term refers to the practice that allows a member of an official group, such as a School Board, to designate someone to fill a certain role at the group's request.

Executive Session

A private portion of a meeting of a School Board or other governing body that can be held only for purposes specified by law and from which the general public and press are excluded.

Fiduciary

The concept of stewardship, referring to a person or persons having duties, on behalf of others, that require good faith, trust and special confidence. Fiduciary duty is to act for someone else's benefit, while subordinating one's personal interests. The term is often used in conjunction with managing money or property for another, using a very high standard of care. A School Board acts as the community's trustee of public funds for the schools and therefore has a fiduciary responsibility for using those funds for the benefit of the community.

Fiscal Year (FY)

All financial accounts are to be completed by the end of the 12-month period known as the fiscal year, which begins July 1 and ends June 30.

FTE

Full-time equivalent. Refers to a full-time position.

Gallagher Amendment

Enacted in 1982 as an amendment to the Colorado Constitution. It set forth the guidelines for determining the actual value of property and the valuation for assessment of such property.

GED

General Education Development test is a nationally recognized measure of high school level knowledge and skills. In Colorado, GED has been replaced by the "high school equivalency examination".

Good Faith

The duty to act in a fair and equitable manner, without coercion, intimidation or threats of coercion or intimidation.

GPA

Grade point average.

Grievance

A formal, written complaint from an employee regarding working conditions or violation of Board policy.

Gifted Education

Refers to children identified with above-average intellectual potential.

HB

Abbreviation preceding legislative bill originating in the State House of Representatives, "house bill."

HIPAA

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Protects the privacy of individually identifiable health information.

Home School

A school conducted by parents or legal guardians for their own children.

ICAP

Individual Career and Academic plan. This is required for all students by Colorado law.

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

A federal law that requires states to provide all eligible children with disabilities a free, appropriate public

edu-
cation (FAPE) from infancy through age 21, consistent with a state's more specific legal provisions.

Individualized Education Program (IEP)

A written instructional plan for students with disabilities who are designated as special education students under federal law.

International Baccalaureate (IB)

The IB program is offered at the elementary, middle and high school levels and can be school-wide or course specific. IB classes and assessments involve research, writing and hands-on evaluations challenging students to apply what they've learned through scenario-based testing. College credit is earned based on high school IB exam scores.

J or JT

At the end of the school District name. Joint, crosses county lines.

JBC Joint Budget Committee

Made up of members from both the House of Representatives and Senate.

Licensed Staff

Within a school District there are employees who, by law, must hold certain Colorado credentials as a condition of employment. This level of personnel includes teachers, principals and others.

Mill

One thousandth of a dollar, a mill is a rate similar to a percentage (a percentage is one hundredth). One mill = .001/\$1, or one tenth of one penny.

Mill Levy

A tax rate, measured in mills, representing the portion of a property's value collected by a government entity's tax (called a levy) to fund its budget.

NAEP

National Assessment of Educational Progress. Often referred to as the Nation's Report Card, NAEP is a standards-based test that is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education as a means for measuring student achievement so that student performance in one state can be compared with that of another. NAEP exams are given to a representative sample of the student population in grades 4, 8 and 12 in every state.

NASB

National Association of State Boards of Education.

National School Lunch Program

Formerly known as the federal free or reduced lunch program, meals are provided free or at a low cost to children who are determined eligible according to federal guidelines based on family income.

NCAA

National Collegiate Athletic Association.

P20

A name for education involving preschool through higher education.

PBIS

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. A program used by many Districts.

PERA

Public Employees' Retirement Association. Manages pensions and other benefits for public employees.

Policy

A general statement a School Board or other governing authority adopts to indicate a desired condition, direction or belief.

Policy Governance

Policy Governance is a governance model that some School Boards use to provide policy leadership. It is a system of interrelated principles that uses policies to express Board values and perspectives in all areas with clear authority and accountability for all significant roles.

PPOR

Per pupil operating revenue.

PPR

Per pupil revenue.

Professional Learning

Ongoing, systemic learning activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators to achieve specific objectives toward the goal of increasing student achievement. PGPs, or Professional Growth Plans, are an essential component of professional learning in BV Schools.

Public Engagement or Involvement

The sustained, active interest and participation of parents, community members and other taxpayers in supporting and improving schools.

Quorum

Defined by statute or in the bylaws of a Board or other governing body as the number or proportion of members that must be present in order to conduct business. Commonly, a majority of members constitute a quorum.

R or RE

At the end of a school District name, reorganized.

READ Act

The Colorado READ Act establishes a process for Districts to identify K-3 students who read below grade level and work with their parents to provide extra reading support before students reach the

fourth grade.

Referendum C

Approved by Colorado voters in 2005 to temporarily override TABOR limits on state revenues and allow the state to keep and spend excess of TABOR revenues it collected for five years.

Referred Measure

Any ballot question or ballot issue submitted by the General Assembly or the governing body of any political subdivision to the eligible electors of the state or political subdivision.

Regular Board Meeting

A scheduled Board meeting that is held at least monthly during the school year, but may also be held when school is not in session.

Remediation

The process of providing extra instruction to help a student improve in a particular subject area identified in the student's Academic Improvement Plan (AIP).

RIF

Reduction in force occurs when a teacher's contract is canceled as a result of budget or program cuts.

Root Cause

Statements that describe the deepest underlying cause, or causes, of performance challenges. They become the focus of major improvement strategies.

RTI

Response to intervention.

Rules/Regulations

Mandates issued by the State Board of Education or other state and federal agencies to guide, require or limit school District operations. Rule regulations stem from state statutes or federal law and may identify procedures for carrying out the requirement.

SB

Abbreviation preceding bills originating in the Colorado State Senate, "senate bill."

SB 09-163

Educational Accountability Act; passed in 2009.

SB 10-191

Educator Effectiveness law; passed in 2010.

SB 15-213

Bill removes governmental immunity if the District fails to take reasonable care to guard against an incident of school violence. The Claire Davis School Safety Act.

SCAP

Student Centered Accountability Program. An accountability system of which Buena Vista School District is a founding member. It is a group of rural Districts who value accountability for the purpose of continuous improvement, should include multiple outcome and input measures, and should reside primarily with local Boards of Education.

School Board

The local legislative unit of school District governance charged with operating the District according to the mandates of laws and regulations.

School District

A defined geographic and government area, overseen by a locally elected School Board and managed by a Superintendent in which the public schools serve students who either live within the area's boundaries or enroll through school choice or a legal transfer from a different school District.

School-Community Partnership

A voluntary relationship between a school and a community group or business that meets the needs and uses the resources of both partners for their mutual benefit.

School-Wide Programs

Comprehensive school improvement programs accessible to all students, particularly those who are low achievers and at risk of failure. The programs are funded by a school's Title I money, which is based on an enrollment of at least 40 percent low income students.

Special Board Meeting

A Board meeting convened for a special purpose by the proper procedures to decide a specific item of business.

SPED

Special education for students with disabilities.

SRO

School resource officer.

Standards-Based Test

An assessment that shows how a student's performance compares to some standard of knowledge or skill. A criterion-referenced test (CRT) is a standards-based test.

State Board of Education

Authorized by the Colorado State Constitution to provide general supervision of public schools. Comprised of seven elected officials representing Colorado's congressional Districts for six-year terms.

Statutes

Laws created by state or federal legislation.

STEM

Science, technology, engineering and math. STEM promotes competencies toward careers in STEM fields to ensure our nation stays strong and competitive in the global economy. STEAM includes the arts.

TABOR

Taxpayer's Bill of Rights. This provision in Colorado's Constitution limits revenues and requires voters to approve tax increases.

TLCC

Teaching and Learning Conditions in Colorado. An anonymous statewide survey of licensed school-based educators to assess teaching conditions at the school, District and state level.

The College Board

A mission-driven not-for-profit organization connecting students to college success and opportunity through the SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) and Advanced Placement (AP) program.

TIF

Tax Incremental Funding. An economic-development funding program that permits municipalities to use tax revenues resulting from economic development to fund new public construction.

Title I

The largest federal aid program for elementary and secondary schools. Funding is based on the number of low-income students enrolled in a school. Title I money pays for extra educational services for children who are behind or at risk of falling behind in school.

Title IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 states: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Turnaround

Schools and Districts not meeting expectations in achievement, growth and postsecondary workforce readiness, as determined by the School and District Performance Frameworks, are assigned a plan type of Priority Improvement or Turnaround.

UIP

Unified Improvement Plan. Used to streamline improvement planning components of state and federal accountability requirements. Shifts from planning as an "event" to planning as a component of "continuous improvement". The plans also provide a mechanism for external stakeholders to learn about schools' and Districts' improvement efforts.

UPK

Voter approved legislation making limited hours of preschool available for all four years in the state of Colorado

WBL

Work Based Learning. Experiences that support students in career readiness that range on a spectrum of career exploration/guest speakers to internships and apprenticeships

BUENA VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT
B O A R D O F E D U C A T I O N

District Office 113 North Court St
Buena Vista, CO 81211
719.395.7099



