

## **Board-Superintendent Relations**

### **Sequim School District School Board Protocols 2015-2016**

Successful organizations are the result of effective and dynamic leadership. To assure a quality operation, leaders must agree on basic ways of working together. Operating principles define the beliefs, values, and methods of working together.

The manner in which the Board and Superintendent conduct their business becomes a model throughout the District for students, teachers, parents, and staff.

The following principles outline a philosophy of cooperative behavior that is agreed upon by the Board and Superintendent in the Sequim School District. As leaders of the district we are committed to upholding these principles.

### **Communication/Cooperation and Support**

Open communication requires trust, respect, and a fundamental belief in goodwill among board members and the superintendent. We will work to minimize misunderstandings and reduce conflict by:

- \* Supporting each other constructively and courteously.
- \* Maintaining confidentiality.
- \* Focusing our discussions on issues, not personalities.
- \* Encouraging constructive disagreement.
- \* Expressing our opinions and positions on issues honestly and openly while being sensitive to others' opinions.

The board president will be the official spokesperson for the Board.

The superintendent will be the official spokesperson for areas of district operation.

### **Board Meetings**

1. The public may have input to the Board of Directors at study sessions and at regular board meetings.
  - A. Study session public comments may be received at the discretion of the board.
  - B. At regular board meetings, there will be a public comment section at the beginning of the meeting.
2. Board members and staff will not debate or argue with public during board meetings. If the board is questioned by the public during the public comment section, the board president may do the following:
  - A. Ask the superintendent to take note and answer the person later.
  - B. Factual responses to simple questions may be given by the board President or the Superintendent.
  - C. Board Members may ask clarifying questions.
  - D. Thank the public for making comments to the board.
3. Changes to the minutes should be communicated to the superintendent's secretary or the Superintendent prior to the meeting.

4. Board agendas will be developed by the board president and the superintendent. Board members requesting items for the agenda will contact the Superintendent or Board President and the Board President will respond to the requestor.
5. All materials for the meeting will be provided to the board and public 48 hours in advance. Board members will review all material provided and seek clarification or additional information as needed prior to the board meeting. When possible, board members will discuss agenda items they have concerns about with the superintendent and/or board president prior to the board meeting.
6. Board members requesting information from staff at board meetings will do so through the Superintendent.
7. Members will give their full and undivided attention to the business at hand. There should be no texting or emailing or side bar conversations during the meeting. Members should refrain from parking lot conversations after the meetings.
8. Once a final decision has been made on a proposal, board members and the superintendent will individually and collectively publicly support successful implementation.
9. All discussions that occur during executive sessions are privileged and shall not be shared with anyone unless it is the express decision of the board to do so.
10. Meetings will begin on time and will utilize Roberts Rules of Order.

## **Interacting with Citizens and Staff**

When a Board member is contacted by a community or staff person who has a complaint, he/she will:

- \* Listen to the individual concern.
- \* Inquire if the individual has discussed the issue with the person immediately responsible. If this has not been done, tell them how to contact the appropriate person.
- \* Be cautious of giving the appearance of agreeing with the person, sometimes just listening makes people think you are on “their side”. Remember that anything you say might be understood as the “position of the Board.”

Board members shall contact the superintendent directly when they hear concerns in the community regarding issues relating to district administration, programs, or personnel.

Board members should stop in the office prior to visiting schools.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Board members should do the following:

- \* Access WSSDA Annual Conference, regional meetings, online trainings, and educational information sessions.
- \* Utilize professional organization information and be informed on all decisions to be considered.

We accept the challenge of pursuing a common intent through a review of opinion and fact, to an end that is understood and defensible by all. Once a final decision is reached, each member will support the decision and aid in its implementation.

As members of the Sequim School Board, we agree to the Protocols presented above and we are willing to commit to them and to sign in agreement: