



Jefferson School District 14J

School Board Operating Agreement

Adopted November 13, 2017

A. Purpose of Agreements

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

B. The Board Job Description

The role of the Board is to set the long-term direction of the District through the District mission, vision, goals, and priorities. The Board accomplishes this by focusing on policymaking, strategic planning, and evaluating success. We are accountable for the education of the District's students, as well as for the financial stewardship of the District. The Board sets priorities annually for its professional development, including self-assessment of the Board's performance.

C. Role of Board Leadership

The role of Board leadership is to manage Board processes, convene meetings, develop the Board agenda (with the Superintendent), ensure that all perspectives are heard at the Board table, and execute documents, as appropriate. The Board Chair serves as the authorized spokesperson for the Board, unless the Chair delegates this responsibility. Board leadership facilitates the orientation of new Board members. The Vice Chair performs these duties when the Chair is not available or able to.

D. The Role of Individual Board Members

As individual Board members, we understand that we have no independent authority. It is when acting as a body in a public meeting that the Board deliberates and makes decisions. We act ethically and avoid seeking personal privilege in our role as Board members. We prepare for and attend meetings on time unless prevented by an unavoidable cause. We strive to make our questions known to the Superintendent ahead of time so he/she can prepare to answer our questions at the meeting. We cast a vote on all matters except when a conflict of interest exists, we respect the confidentiality of executive sessions, and we support the will of the Board once a decision has been reached, even if it is a decision with which we disagree.

E. Meeting Operations and Decision Making

As a Board, we respect the scheduled starting and ending times for our meetings. We deliberate and make decisions in accordance with public meeting laws, and we avoid surprising each other and the Superintendent at Board meetings.

F. Communication

We communicate openly and honestly, respect differences, and assume positive intent. We focus our discussions on issues, situations, and behaviors, not on individuals. We follow the complaint process outlined in policy, and direct members of the public to that process when we receive complaints. When we receive complaints as individuals, we inform the Superintendent as a courtesy. The Chair will respond to emails or written communication to the full Board. We will let the Superintendent know when we intend to visit a school, and we understand that these visits are informational only, not to evaluate programs or instruction.

G. Board or Superintendent Committees

Board Committees: The Chair may assign Board members to Board committees. Board committees are initiated by and/or report to the Board. The meetings of these committees are subject to public meeting laws. Board committees are intended to be advisory to the full Board; they may make recommendations to the Board, but they cannot take official action on behalf of the Board.

Superintendent Committees: Board members may be asked to serve on a Superintendent or District committee. The Board member is a representative of the Board, but will not speak for the full Board or assume any additional authority unless delegated that authority by the Board. Superintendent committees are initiated by and report to the Superintendent, who will make any necessary recommendations to the full Board.

