



**POCANTICO HILLS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION (the Board)
PROTOCOLS FOR BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

As we aim to foster and maintain a high degree of trust between the Board, the administrative staff, the teaching staff, and the community, agreement on these protocols can support our efforts.

BOARD & BOARD MEMBER ROLES/AUTHORITY

1. The Board sees itself primarily as a policy-setting body and delegates the administration of the school to the superintendent and staff.
2. The Board ensures that goals and priorities are in place for the District and are updated annually, taking into account suggestions and recommendations from the superintendent.
3. Board members have authority when acting as members of the properly convened board. Board members acting as individuals have no authority to speak for or take action on behalf of the Board.
4. Board decisions are binding on all Board members.
5. The Board annually evaluates the performance of the superintendent.
6. The Board annually evaluates itself, reviews its protocols, and holds itself to standards of best practice.

SUPERINTENDENT'S ROLE/AUTHORITY

1. The superintendent is responsible for the administration of the District and serves as the chief executive officer.
2. It is the superintendent's primary responsibility to provide visionary and inspirational leadership that enables the District to continually improve the educational experiences of children.
3. The superintendent shall have the authority to organize, reorganize and arrange the administrative and supervisory staff, including without limitation, instructional and business office staff, which, in his/her judgement, best serves the school District, subject to the approval of the Board.
4. The responsibility of placement and transfer of personnel shall be vested in the superintendent; selection of personnel shall be subject to the approval of the Board.
5. The superintendent shall suggest regulations, rules, policies and procedures he/she deems necessary to best serve the District.

6. The superintendent is a visible presence in the schools and the larger community.
7. The superintendent provides the Board with the information and analysis it needs to formulate policy and take other appropriate actions.
8. The superintendent creates and sustains a climate of collegiality among member of the staff and parent body.

BOARD MEETING/AGENDA SETTING

1. The Board President is responsible for setting the agenda with the superintendent.
2. The agenda setting meeting will be open to one other Trustee. Trustees will rotate if more than one Trustee requests to be involved.
3. Any Trustee can recommend an agenda item. No agenda item will be unreasonably refused.
4. In determining which meeting an agenda item will be discussed, the Board President and superintendent will consider the time it will take the administration to prepare for the item.
5. The Board should avoid adding agenda items after the agenda has been published. Changing the agenda without leaving time for Trustees, the administration and the community to prepare goes against the idea of no surprises.

BOARD MEETINGS

1. *Board Materials*
 - a. The Board packets and preliminary agenda will generally be distributed to the Board members at least 2 business days prior to the regularly scheduled Board meeting, as practicable.
 - b. The Board packet will include a superintendent's report highlighting pertinent information and noteworthy developments in the District. The report should also include relevant highlights from the other administrators as determined by the superintendent or Board to be necessary for their understanding of District matters.
 - c. Board requests for clarification on agenda items should be answered, to the extent practicable, with sufficient time before meetings in order to ensure Board members understand what is being requested of them so they can fully fulfill their fiduciary duties. To promote efficiency and respect the administrators' time, Board members and the superintendent will discuss and agree in advance about the process for aggregating and submitting questions and requests for clarification.
 - d. Presentations for Board meetings (even if in draft form) will be made available to the Board at least 24 hours prior to the Board meeting.
2. *Discussion*
 - a. The Board President should introduce each agenda item, explain what it is, why the Board is discussing it and what the expected outcome is. Following discussion, the Board President should summarize each discussion – highlighting the main points, decisions made and next steps.

- b. Avoid surprises: Board members will let the superintendent and Board President know, in advance, about issues, errors or omissions which they intend to raise at the next Board meeting, and the superintendent will do the same.
 - c. All Trustees should be given every opportunity to express his/her views and have them discussed. Reasonable efforts should be made to build consensus/compromise and not rush to vote merely because there is a clear majority. Once there has been a fair amount of discussion and all Trustees have been heard and all views have been discussed, it is reasonable for any Trustee to ask if the Board is ready to vote (“Call the question”).
 - d. Consent agenda items should not be discussed. If a consent agenda item requires material discussion, it should be removed from the consent agenda through a Board vote, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.
3. *Guidelines for Public Discussion*
 - a. The Board will follow procedures outlined in District Policy 1230 Public Participation at Board Meetings.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1. Board members shall maintain the confidentiality of all information consistent with District Policy 2160 Code of Ethics, General Municipal Law, the Decisions of the Commissioner of Education and Open Meetings Law.
2. Specifically, discussions in executive session must remain completely confidential.

TENURE

1. A list of untenured staff and their scheduled tenure dates will be made publicly available for the Board and community members.
2. The Superintendent will inform the Board that he/she is going to recommend an employee for tenure two months before the recommendation is reasonably expected to be an agenda item.
3. Trustees will alert the Superintendent of any concerns regarding granting tenure to a specific staff member within a reasonable time of learning about such concern.

COMMUNICATION

1. *Intra-Board Communication* – by telephone, email, or in person – is essential, but should be consistent with guidelines for public and executive session decision-making and Open Meetings Law.
2. *Board/Superintendent Communication* (outside of agenda setting or Board packets):
 - a. The Superintendent will keep the Board informed through routine email communication and should include anything that a reasonable person would consider important. The goal is that Board Trustees should never be surprised by information coming from community members.

- b. The Superintendent will communicate with the Board more frequently and as soon as practicable any information which is considered too important to wait for the next regularly scheduled communication.

3. *Superintendent/Trustee Communication*

- a. The Board has an expectation that communication between individual Trustees and the Superintendent should be encouraged. Although, Trustees should be mindful not to take up too much of the Superintendent's time. If the communication (outside of agenda setting or Board packets) between a single Trustee and the Superintendent are becoming time consuming, the Board president may request that Board members follow the agreed upon procedure for aggregating and submitting questions to the administration.
- b. Trustees should inform the rest of the Board if he/she plans to contact the Superintendent.
- c. The Board shall be informed of all Trustee/Superintendent communication that relates to the business of the Board.

4. *Board/Non-Superintendent Communication:*

- a. The Board should be informed of all Trustee/non-Superintendent staff communication that relates to the business of the Board.
- b. When contacting staff as a parent, it is a best practice to say, "I am calling as a parent."

5. *Board/Attorney Communication:*

- a. The Board President represents the Board on matters with the District's attorney and is authorized to communicate with the District's attorney at any time.
- b. No Trustee should communicate with the District's attorney without first getting approval from the Board, which shall not be unreasonably withheld.
- c. The full Board should be informed of all communication with the District's attorney.

6. *Administration/Attorney Communication:*

- a. The Board should be informed when the administration is in communication with the District's attorney regarding current and pending/potential litigation.
- b. Outside of the above, the administration should feel free to communicate with the District's attorney without informing the Board.

7. *Board/Community Communication:*

- a. Consistent with District Policy 1400 Public Complaints, Board members will direct parents who call with concerns to work up through the hierarchy talking to the teacher, the principal, and the superintendent before involving Board members.
- b. Board members will bring other more general substantive criticisms, complaints or suggestions to the Board President, who in turn will assure circulation to the full Board and refer them to the superintendent. The superintendent does the problem-solving, with staff assistance as

- necessary. Board members do not attempt the problem-solving including the fact finding.
- c. If a community member brings a concern to the entire Board through email, phone, public comment or otherwise, all statements or responses shall come from the Board President, or his/her designee.
8. *Board/Media Communications:*
- a. Consistent with District Policy 1130 Media Relations, all official statements of Board positions, as well as responses to media inquiries, come from the Board president and/or superintendent, or their designee.

CONTRACTS

1. The board should review “red-lined” versions of the final contract – in addition to the final contract.
2. For contracts with administration, PHTA and CSEA, the Board should meet with the District’s attorney to discuss the attorney’s recommendations.

**BOARD OF EDUCATION
CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT DATES**

MONTH	ACTION ITEMS
July	<p>Annual Reorganization meeting</p> <p>Review prior year's budget surplus</p> <p>Review current and pending/potential litigation</p> <p>Review most recent audit report and action items</p> <p>Review tenure schedule</p> <p>Allocate money to other Reserves before District issues tax warrant</p> <p>Discuss process for handling and aggregating Board member questions on agenda items or otherwise</p> <p>Schedule Board Member Retreat</p>
August	
September	<p>Review and Determine Board Goals</p> <p>Communicate and file superintendent review process, as required by law</p>
October	<p>Feedback on current year's Budget (i.e. Facilities, Summer recreation, Tuition, debt service)</p> <p>Review Board Protocols</p>
November	Board hear presentation on prior year's Objective Measures of Success
December	Board/Teacher Leader & Administration Budget Forum
January	<p>Superintendent to provide list of material Budget issues and concerns</p> <p>Status report on Reserves (monthly thereafter)</p> <p>Status report on expected Budget surpluses</p>
February	Budget: Administration present draft budget
March	Evaluate Objective Measures of Success
April	
May	Conduct Superintendent Review Process
June	Allocate money to tax certiorari reserve no later than June 30

	Pool Mid-Season Check In
Ongoing	<p>Review and update policies regularly.</p> <p>The Board will prioritize hosting regular community forums to encourage community feedback.</p> <p>Each board member is encouraged to walk through the School with the Principal once per year.</p> <p>Each board member is encouraged to walk through the School with the Facilities Director once per year.</p> <p>Strive to have more informal conversations with the Superintendent to discuss any areas of concern.</p>