

*GLOBAL GOVERNANCE COMMITMENT*

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Community members are the owners of the school district. The purpose of the Board, on behalf of the Issaquah School District community, is to see that the Issaquah School District achieves appropriate results for students reflective of overall community values.

*December 14, 2005 – Adoption*

*June 27, 2007 – Update*

*March 12, 2008 – Monitored, no changes*

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The Board will govern lawfully with an emphasis on (a) outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation, (b) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints, (c) strategic leadership more than administrative detail, (d) clear distinction of Board and Superintendent roles, (e) collective rather than individual decisions, (f) the future rather than the past or present, and (g) proactivity rather than reactivity.

Accordingly:

1. The Board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The Board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The Board will be the initiator of governance policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The Board will not use the expertise of individual members to substitute for the judgment of the Board, although the expertise of individual members may be used to enhance the understanding of the Board as a body.
2. The Board will direct, control and inspire the organization through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the overall community's values and perspectives. The Board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside the operational organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects.

The Board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability. Although the Board can change its policies at any time, it will observe those currently in force. To ensure that the board's business meetings are conducted with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, members will:

- a. come to meetings adequately prepared
  - b. generally speak only when recognized
  - c. not interrupt each other; hear people out
  - d. not engage in side conversations
  - e. not repeat what has already been said; e.g. build on prior statements without repetition
  - f. not "play to the audience" or monopolize the discussion
  - g. support the president's efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting
  - h. communicate openly and actively in discussion and dialog to avoid surprises-
  - i. value equal participation of all members
  - j. practice respectful body language
3. Continual Board development will include orientation of candidates for the Board and new Board members in the Board's governance process and periodic Board discussion of process improvement.

4. The Board will allow no officer, individual or committee of the Board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.
5. Monitoring of Executive Limitations policies will be included on the agenda for the purpose of monitoring organizational compliance. As a rule, members will direct any questions or concerns to the superintendent prior to official public presentation.
6. Throughout the year the Board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible. An item may be removed from the consent agenda by an individual member.
7. Thorough self-monitoring of Board performance will be scheduled and conducted according to the Board's annual calendar. Self-monitoring will include comparison of Board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Superintendent Linkage categories.
8. The Board, by majority vote, may revise or amend its policies at any time. In general, a proposed policy revision will be discussed at one session of the Board prior to being approved at a subsequent Board meeting.

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The job of the Board is to represent the citizens and to lead the organization by determining and requiring appropriate and excellent organizational performance.

To distinguish the Board's own unique job from the jobs of the superintendent and staff, the board will:

1. Serve as the link between the community ownership and the operational organization.
2. Establish written governing policies that address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations.
  - a. Ends: What end results are desired for whom and at what cost.
  - b. Executive Limitations: Constraints on executive authority that establish the boundaries of prudence and ethics within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
  - c. Governance Process: Specification of how the Board conceives, carries out and monitors its own tasks.
  - d. Board-Superintendent Linkage: How authority is delegated and its proper use monitored; the Superintendent role, authority and accountability.
3. Define and require demonstration of accountability for successful organizational performance on Ends and Executive Limitations.
4. Advocate for the district and the students it serves, including legislative awareness of the district's viability and its needs.
5. Develop ballot issues for bond and levy elections.
6. Provide complete and accurate public information regarding qualifications and boundaries for school board elections.
7. Name schools and mascots.
8. Appoint a Board committee of two to participate in the state audit exit interview process.
9. *Board member participation in affiliated organizations will be determined by consensus of the Board.*

To complete its work products with governance style consistent with Board policies, the Board will pursue an annual agenda which continually:

- a. Examines student achievement as defined by Ends policies;
- b. Examines organizational performance as defined by Executive Limitations policies; and,
- c. Improves Board performance through Board education and enriched input and deliberation.

1. The Board's annual planning cycle will conclude each year on the last day of ~~September~~ *August* so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing ~~a one-year~~ *at least a 12 month* segment of the Board's most recent statement of long-term Ends.

2. The cycle will start with the Board's development of its agenda for the next year. The ~~annual~~-planning calendar will include:

- a. Consultations with selected groups in the community, or other methods of gaining community ownership input, will be determined and arranged in the first quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.

- b. Board development training designed to improve the board's ability to perform the work identified in the Board's job description, including orientation of candidates and new Board members in the Board's governance process, and periodic discussions by the Board about means to improve its own performance.

- c. Scheduled monitoring of all policies.

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*January 13, 2011 – Monitored, updated*

**GP-5**  
**CHIEF GOVERNANCE OFFICER'S ROLE**

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The authority enumerated in this policy constitutes the full and total delegation of responsibility by the Board. The president of the Board provides leadership to the Board, ensures the integrity of the Board's processes, exercises interpretive responsibilities and normally serves as the Board's official spokesperson.

Accordingly:

1. The President's job is to assure that the Board's conduct is consistent with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the organization.
  - A. Meeting discussion content will be on those issues which, according to Board policy, clearly belong to the Board to decide or to monitor.
  - B. Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough, but also timely, orderly, and focused.
  - C. ~~Board meeting debriefings are timely and~~ The Board will conduct periodic self-assessments *to* ensure process improvement.
  - D. The President is empowered to chair Board meetings with all the commonly accepted authority of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.
  - E. The President has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the Board within Ends and Executive Limitations policy areas. Therefore, the President has no authority to supervise or direct the Superintendent.
  - F. The President may represent the Board to outside parties in announcing Board-stated positions and through board delegation.
2. Other duties of the President include:
  - A. Compiling and facilitating the Board's summative evaluation of the Superintendent.
  - B. Executing all documents authorized by the Board, except as otherwise provided by law.

- C. On behalf of the Board, and in concert with the Superintendent *and immediate past president of the Board* developing proposed board meeting agendas consistent with the Board's annual calendar.
3. The President may delegate this authority, but remains accountable for its use.

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The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum.

Accordingly:

1. Board members will represent the interests of the citizens of the entire school district. This accountability to the whole district supersedes:
  - a. Loyalty a member may have to other advocacy or interest groups;
  - b. Interests based upon membership on other boards or staffs;
  - c. Personal interest of any Board member who is also a parent of a student in the district;
  - d. Interests and/or being an employee or a relative of an employee of the district; or
  - e. Interest based upon the member's residence in a director's area.
2. Members must avoid conflicts of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility:
  - a. There will be no business conducted by a member with the organization except to the extent expressly permitted by law and appropriately disclosed. Members will annually disclose their involvements with other organizations, with vendors, or any associations which might be or might reasonably be seen as being a conflict.
  - b. When the Board is to decide upon an issue about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest that member shall absent herself or himself from, not only the vote, but also from the deliberations.
  - c. Board members will not use their Board position to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members, or close associates. Should a Board member apply for employment, he or she must first resign from the Board.
3. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
  - a. Members' interaction with the Superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly Board authorized. Members will not give personal direction to any part of the operational organization or assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints.
  - b. Members' interaction with public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any Board member but the President to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.

- c. Except for participation in Board deliberation about whether the Superintendent has achieved a reasonable interpretation of Board policy, members will not express publicly individual negative judgments of performance of the superintendent or the superintendent's employees.
4. Members will protect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and other matters that may compromise the integrity or legal standing of the Board and district, including matters discussed in executive session.
5. To build trust among members and to ensure an environment conducive to effective governance, individual members will:
  - a. Focus on issues rather than personalities
  - b. Support decisions of the full board
  - c. Exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming each other
  - d. Criticize privately, praise publicly
  - e. Make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the district and one another
  - f. Never embarrass each other or the district

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GP-7  
**BOARD COMMITTEE PRINCIPLES**

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Board committees, when used, will be assigned so as to reinforce the wholeness of the Board's job and so as never to interfere with delegation of responsibility from Board to Superintendent.

Accordingly:

1. Board committees are to help the Board do its job as defined in policy GP-8, not to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the Board by preparing policy alternatives, implications and recommendations for Board deliberation. In keeping with the Board's broader focus, Board committees normally will not have direct dealings with current District operations.
2. Board committees may not speak or act for the Board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in policy in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the Superintendent.
3. Board committees cannot exercise authority over staff. Because the Superintendent works for the full Board, he or she will not be required to obtain approval of a Board committee before an executive action.
4. Board committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Board committees are to evaluate specific issues in the context of the entire enterprise. A Board committee that has helped the Board create policy on some topic will not be used to monitor organizational performance on that same subject.
5. *A two (2) person work group of Board members (sometimes referred to as a sub-committee) is not considered a Board committee.*
6. ~~5:~~ Committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an *ad hoc* capacity.
7. ~~6:~~ This policy applies to any committee which is formed by Board action in accordance with section GP-8 of these policies and regardless of whether the committee includes Board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Superintendent.
8. ~~7:~~ All legal requirements for the operation of the school district—local, state, federal—will be followed.

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**GP-8**  
**BOARD COMMITTEE STRUCTURE**

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A committee is a Board committee only if its existence and charge come from Board action, regardless of whether Board members sit on the committee. Unless otherwise stated, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.

The only Board committees are those listed in this policy, as follows: None.

Board committees:

1. Name:
  - a. Purpose/Charge:
    - 1)
    - 2)
  - b. Membership:
    - 1)
    - 2)
  - c. Reporting Schedule:
  - d. Term:
  - e. Authority Over Resources:

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*March 18, 2009 – Monitored, modified*  
*January 13, 2011 – Monitored, no changes*

Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the Board will invest in its governance capacity.

Accordingly:

1. Board skills and resources will be sufficient to assure governing with excellence.
  - A. Training and retraining will be used appropriately to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase existing member skills and understandings.
  - B. Outside monitoring assistance will be arranged so that the Board can exercise confident control over organizational performance. This includes, but is not limited to, the fiscal audit.
  - C. Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to ensure the Board's ability to listen to the viewpoints and values of the Issaquah School District community.
2. Costs will be prudently incurred, though not at the expense of endangering the development and maintenance of superior capability.
3. Annually, the Board will develop and approve a budget for training, monitoring, and advocacy responsibilities for the coming year. Additional member commitments or expenditures require approval of the Board.

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*PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING BOARD MEMBER VIOLATIONS*

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The Board and each of its members are committed to full compliance with the provisions of the Board's policies. In the event of a member's violation of policy, the Board will seek remedy by the following process:

- a. Conversation in a private setting between the offending member and the Board president or other individual member;
- b. Discussion in a private session between the offending member and the full Board; (as permitted by law)
- c. Possible removal from any leadership or committee positions to which the offending member has been appointed or elected;
- d. Public censure of the offending member of the Board.

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GP-11

LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATIVE JOB DESCRIPTION

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The authority enumerated in this policy constitutes the full and total delegation of responsibility by the Board. The Legislative Representative facilitates opportunities for the Board to actively follow legislative developments and serves as the board's liaison to local, state and national legislators.

Accordingly, the Legislative Representative will:

1. Review WSSDA legislative proposals with the board *no later than the first meeting in September* prior to the annual Legislative Assembly.
2. Provide legislative updates periodically at board meetings. Share information as appropriate.
3. When appropriate, obtain board support *by the last meeting in April* for a legislative proposal to be submitted to the WSSDA Legislative Assembly and support that proposal at the Assembly.
4. Represent the board at state legislative meetings (e.g., the Legislative Assembly, the Olympia WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conference and any area or regional workshops).
5. *The Legislative Representative or designee will represent the District at the WSSDA delegate assembly. The Board will discuss issues at the Board meeting prior to the WSSDA Conference.*
6. ~~5.~~ Contact legislators at appropriate times when legislative issues require it.
7. ~~6.~~ Establish contacts with stakeholder groups and the local press in order to explain or clarify Issaquah School Board positions on legislative issues.
8. ~~7.~~ Monitor legislative developments at both the state and federal levels and make recommendations for action to the Board as appropriate.
9. ~~8.~~ Schedule meetings with legislators and the Board, perhaps in conjunction with other school boards and/or with other stakeholder groups.
10. ~~9.~~ The Legislative Representative will be elected by a majority vote of the Board for a two-year term in May of odd numbered years.

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