

## **GC-1 Global Governance Culture**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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 outcomes for students reflective of overall community values.

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance June 27, 2007 – Update March 12, 2008 – Monitored, no changes February 28, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, no changes April 25, 2012 – Monitored, no changes August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



# **GC-2 Governing Commitments**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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.

- 2.1 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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 may 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. attend and be adequately prepared for all meetings of the Board
- b. generally speak only when recognized
- c. not interrupt each other
- d. not engage in side conversations in person or through electronic means
- e. not repeat what has already been said
- f. not "play to the audience" or monopolize the discussion
- g. support the president's efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting

- h. provide any new data or information to all members at least 24 hours prior to the meeting where it will be discussed
- i. communicate openly and actively in discussion and dialog to avoid surprises
- j. value equal participation of all members
- k. practice respectful body language.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 The Board will allow no officer, individual or committee of the Board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.
- 2.6 Monitoring of **Operational Expectations** policies for organizational compliance and monitoring of the **Results** for reasonable progress will be included on the agenda. As a rule, members will direct any questions or concerns to the Superintendent prior to official public presentation.
- 2.7 The Board will use a consent agenda as a means to expedite the disposition of routine matters. Administrative matters that are delegated to the Superintendent but are required by law to be approved by the Board will also be acted upon via the consent agenda.
- 2.8 Any item may be removed from the consent agenda by an individual member.
- 2.9 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 Culture, Operational Governance, and Board/Superintendent Relationship categories.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 As required by law, the Board Directors shall be members of the Washington State School Directors' Association.

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance June 27, 2007 – Update
March 12, 2008 – Monitored, no changes
February 28, 2009 – Monitored, no changes
March 9, 2011 – Monitored, updated
April 25, 2012 – Monitored, no changes
January 23, 2013 - Monitored, updated
August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes
July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes
November 18, 2015 – Monitored, revised
September 22, 2022 – Monitored, revised
July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



# **GC-3 Board Job Description**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

The job of the Board is to represent the community and to govern the District by establishing expectations for district results and operational performance, and monitoring actual performance against those expectations.

#### The Board will:

- 3.1 Ensure that the Results are the dominant focus of district performance.
- 3.2 Initiate and maintain constructive dialog with students, parents/guardians, the community, and other important stakeholder groups in order to engage them in the work of the Board and the District.
- 3.3 Develop written governing policies that address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations:
  - a. **Results**: The intended outcomes for the students served by the District
  - b. Operational Expectations: Statements of the Board's values about operational matters delegated to the Superintendent, including both actions to be accomplished and those prohibited
  - c. **Governance Culture**: Definition of the Board's own work, the processes it will employ, and conditions within which it will accomplish that work
  - d. **Board-Superintendent Relationship**: The relationship of the Superintendent and the Board, including the specified authority of the Superintendent and the process for monitoring district and Superintendent performance
  - e. **Operational Governance Policies**: Rules governing the legal status and operation of the Board.
- 3.4 Define and require demonstration of accountability for successful organizational performance on **Results** and **Operational Expectations**.
- 3.5 Advocate for the district and the students it serves, including legislative awareness of the district's viability and its needs.
- 3.6 Ensure acceptable Superintendent performance through effective monitoring of **Results** and **Operational Expectations** policies.
- 3.7 Ensure acceptable Board performance through effective evaluation of Board actions and processes.
- 3.8 Serve as final district-level decision-maker for appeals that are brought to the Board under state or federal law, contract or established district procedure.

- 3.9 Annually develop and adopt Budget Development Guidelines.
- 3.10 Develop ballot issues for bond and levy elections.
- 3.11 Provide complete and accurate public information regarding qualifications and boundaries for school board elections.
- 3.12 Name schools and mascots.
- 3.13 Annually determine requirements for earning a diploma from the district for each high school, in addition to those which the state requires.
- 3.14 Determine, by consensus of the Board, Board member participation in affiliated organizations.

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance March 12, 2008 – Monitored, no changes February 28, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, updated March 7, 2012 – Monitored, no changes November 28, 2012 – Monitored, revised August 5, 2013 – Monitored, revised July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes September 22, 2022 – Monitored, revised August 24, 2023 – Revised July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



## **GC-4 Annual Work Plan**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

The Board will follow an annual work plan that includes continual monitoring and review of all policies, engagement sessions with the community, students and other stakeholder groups, and professional development to improve Board performance.

- 4.1 The Board's annual planning cycle will conclude each year on the last day of June so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing at least a 12-month segment of the Board's most recent statement of long-term **Results**.
- 4.2 The cycle will start with the Board's development of its work plan for the next year. The planning calendar will include:
  - a. Engagement with selected groups in the community, or other methods of gaining community ownership input, determined in the first quarter, to be arranged and 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 directors 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
  - d. Adoption of Budget Development Guidelines.
- 4.3 The Board will meet at least once a month to conduct a business meeting, with work sessions scheduled as needed.

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September 22, 2022 – Monitored, revised August 24, 2023 – Revised July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



#### GC-5 Role of the President

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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.

- 5.1 The President's job is to ensure 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. 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 **Results** and **Operational Expectations** 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.
  - g. The President servers as the official spokesperson when soliciting or receiving legal advice.
- 5.2 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. Appointing one of the existing Board members to serve as a New Director Mentor for any newly appointed or elected Board member.
  - d. Appointing two Board members to participate in the state audit exit interview process.
  - e. Appointing a Board member to the FACT (Financial Advisory Core Team).

- f. Appointing one or two Board members (preferably those not in director districts up for election) to conduct an information session for potential Board candidates for office, no later than early spring of each election year.
- g. Appointing two Board members to review applications for the position of Student Representative and to serve on the interview panel.
- h. Appointing one or two Board members to serve as liaison(s) to Student Representatives. These liaisons will onboard the Student Representatives prior to the beginning of their term each year and meet with them at least twice annually.
- i. Appointing two Board members to review and update the ISD School Board Handbook no later than early spring of each election year.
- j. Appointing two Board members to conduct leadership meetings with City electeds, as required.
- k. On behalf of the Board, and in concert with the Superintendent and immediate past president of the Board, developing the board meeting agendas consistent with the Board's annual calendar, considering input from other Directors and including items approved by Board action. In the event that there is no immediate past president, another Board member (preferably a past president) will be assigned to participate in agenda planning by consensus of the Board.
- I. Notifying all Board members of an emergency or crisis in the District, after receiving notification from the Superintendent, in accordance with the administration's Crisis Response Plan. During any Board reorganization, each Board member will notify the Board President of how to be notified during an emergency or crisis.
- 5.3 The President may delegate any of the authority in GC-5, but remains accountable for its use. In the event that the President has not delegated authority and is not available, the Legislative Representative shall assume the chair.
- 5.4 President Pro Tempore: The Legislative Representative shall assume the chair, call the meeting to order and lead the Pledge of Allegiance. The chair shall then call for nominations for President Pro Tempore. Nominations need not be seconded if repeated by the chair, and may be closed by consensus or by majority vote on a motion of closure. The President Pro Tempore shall be chosen by a majority of the members on a voice vote.

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance June 27, 2007 – Updated March 12, 2008 – Monitored. no changes February 28, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, Updated December 14, 2011 – Modified April 25, 2012 - Modified January 23, 2013 – Modified August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes February 7, 2015 – Monitored, Updated September 14, 2016 – Revised and approved May 9, 2018 – Revised and approved May 27, 2021 – Revised and approved April 7, 2022 – Revised April 28, 2022 – Approved the 4/7 revisions September 22, 2022 – Revised July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



#### GC-6 Board Members' Code of Conduct

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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

- 6.1 Board members will represent the interests of the residents of the entire school district. This accountability to the whole district supersedes any of the following:
  - 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 based upon being a relative of an employee of the district
  - e. Interest based upon the member's residence in a director area.
- 6.2 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 pursuant to and in accordance with Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) rules.
  - 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 both the deliberations and the vote.
  - 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.
- 6.3 Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
  - a. Members will not give personal direction to any part of the operational organization.
  - b. Members will not assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints.

- c. Members' interactions with the 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.
- d. 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.
- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 Board members shall comply with all Acceptable Use policies and procedures related to technology resources.

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June 27, 2007 – Update
March 12, 2008 – Monitored, no changes
February 28, 2009 – Monitored, no changes
March 9, 2011 – Monitored, no changes
April 25, 2012 – Updated
August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes
July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes (clerical error correction in 2.b.)
July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



# **GC-7 Board Committee Principles**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

Board committees, when used, will support the work of the Board as defined in policy GC-3, *Board Job Description*, and will never interfere with the operational work of the Superintendent.

- 7.1 Board 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.
- 7.2 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.
- 7.3 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.
- 7.4 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.
- 7.5 A two (2) person work group of Board members (sometimes referred to as a subcommittee) is not considered a Board committee.
- 7.6 Board committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an *ad hoc* capacity.
- 7.7 This policy applies to any committee which is formed by Board action and regardless of whether the committee includes Board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the Superintendent.
- 7.8 All legal requirements for the operation of the school district—local, state, federal—will be followed.

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance October 10, 2007 – Monitored March 18, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, updated April 25, 2012 – Monitored, no changes August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes September 14, 2016 – Revised and approved July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



#### **GC-8 Board Committee Structure**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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 Board 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:**

#### Name:

- 1. Purpose/Charge:
  - a.
  - b.
- 2. Membership:
  - a.
  - b.
- 3. Reporting Schedule:
- 4. Term:
- 5. Authority Over Resources:

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## **GC-9 Cost of Governance**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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

- 9.1 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.
- 9.2 Costs will be prudently incurred, though not at the expense of endangering the development and maintenance of superior capability.
- 9.3 Annually, as part of the overall budget approval process, the Board will approve a budget for training, monitoring, and advocacy responsibilities for the coming year. Additional member commitments or expenditures require consensus of the Board.

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance March 12, 2008 – Monitored, modified March 18, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, no changes April 25, 2012 – Monitored, no changes August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes May 9, 2018 – Revised and approved December 12, 2019 – Revised July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



# **GC-10 Process for Addressing Board Member Violations**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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:

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

December 14, 2005 – Adoption of Policy Governance March 12, 2008 – Monitored, no changes March 18, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, no changes April 25, 2012 – Monitored, no changes August 5, 2013 – Monitored, no changes July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



## **GC-11 Role of the Legislative Representative**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

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. The Legislative Representative will be elected by a majority vote of the Board for a two-year term in December of even-numbered years, or at any other time that a vacancy occurs.

#### The Legislative Representative will:

- 11.1 Review WSSDA legislative proposals with the Board no later than the first meeting in September prior to the annual General Assembly.
- 11.2 Provide legislative updates at board meetings. Share information as appropriate.
- 11.3 When appropriate, obtain Board support prior to the published deadline for a legislative proposal to be submitted to the WSSDA General Assembly and support that proposal at the Assembly.
- 11.4 Represent the Board at state legislative meetings, including the WSSDA General Assembly, the WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conference and any area or regional workshops.
- 11.5 Contact legislators at appropriate times when legislative issues require it.
- 11.6 Establish contacts with stakeholder groups and the local press in order to explain or clarify Issaguah School Board positions on legislative issues.
- 11.7 Monitor legislative developments at both the state and federal levels and make recommendations for action to the Board as appropriate.
- 11.8 Schedule meetings with legislators and the Board, perhaps in conjunction with other school boards and/or with other stakeholder groups.

February 6, 2008 – Addition to Policy Governance March 18, 2009 – Monitored, no changes March 9, 2011 – Monitored, updated April 25, 2012 – Monitored, no changes August 5, 2013 – Monitored, modified July 31, 2014 – Monitored, no changes September 22, 2022 – Monitored, revised July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



## **GC-12 Student Representatives**

Policy Type: Governance Culture

The Board recognizes that its primary responsibility is to serve the students of the Issaquah School District through goal setting, program development, financial affairs, operating policies, systematic reviews of the school programs, and advocating on behalf of students and schools. In order to be effective, the Board needs to understand the experiences and priorities of its students.

- 12.1 The Board has created non-voting advisory positions to act as Student Representatives to the Board. There will be eight total positions with the goal being two positions each (a first-year and a second-year) for Gibson Ek, Issaquah, Liberty, and Skyline High Schools. If there are not sufficient qualified applicants from each school, the Board and interview team can recommend students from any high school to get to a total of eight Student Representatives.
- 12.2 Four Student Representatives will be selected each spring prior to the term they will serve as representatives. The term of office will be two years, beginning in July of the application year and concluding at the end of June. The overlap of terms will allow for mentorship by the second-year representatives.
- 12.3 The role and responsibilities of the Student Representatives will be as follows:
  - a. To provide student voice to the Board and to District administration
  - b. To serve as liaisons by collecting student voices from their schools and bringing that voice to discussions at Board meetings
  - c. To review the Board meeting agenda prior to each meeting, including the reading of materials linked to the agenda
  - d. To attend as many as possible regular School Board meetings which occur during the term of office
  - e. To be very familiar with (including historical performance), collect student body input on, and report out to the Board on one, two or three **Operational Expectations** (OE(s)), to be assigned by the Board
  - f. To provide reports to the Board during the scheduled Student Input portion of the Board meeting agenda and during the discussion of the OE(s) assigned to them
  - g. To participate in discussions at regular open meetings of the Board when applicable (but not to make motions or vote)
  - h. To report back to the student body about the Board deliberations and actions that are relevant to the student body

- i. To adhere to the rules and regulations pertaining to Board members
- j. To attend special meetings or Board retreats if requested/invited
- k. To participate in Board training sessions, when invited, such as the WSSDA Annual Conference and Legislative Conference. (When these occur on school days, Student Representatives will follow the established prearranged absence procedures at their high schools.)
- 12.4 Student Representatives will not hold voting rights, make motions, hold Board office, or attend closed Executive Sessions.
- 12.5 All Student Representatives are expected to participate in an onboarding meeting held prior to the beginning of their term, with one or two Board members serving as liaisons. This meeting will include reviewing expectations and responsibilities and assigning of **Operational Expectations** by the Board. Attendance is also expected at two additional check-in meetings to be held in the fall and the spring.
- 12.6 Student Representatives will refrain from committing any group (ASB, school administration, a club, athletic program, etc.) to any position or action.
- 12.7 Any student interested in serving as a Student Representative must apply for the position. The application and selection period will occur annually in April. To apply, the student must submit, prior to the deadline:
  - a. The completed electronic application
  - b. Recommendations from two staff members.
- 12.8 In order to qualify to serve as a Student Representative, the student must be:
  - a. In grade 10, 11 or 12 during their term of office
  - b. Enrolled in the High School which they represent (or living within the school boundary)
  - c. In good standing, including but not limited to passing 6 of 7 classes, attending regularly, and not under any school discipline
  - d. A strong communicator, able to represent the student body in providing input to the Board and to communicate with the student body at large as they take information back to their school.
- 12.9 If any of the high schools have multiple qualified applicants, interviews will be conducted to select the Student Representatives. Two Board members will screen the applications and select up to four candidates per school to be interviewed. Interviews will be conducted by a panel consisting of:
  - a. Two Board members
  - b. One Activities Coordinator
  - c. One ASB Executive Board officer from that high school
  - d. One Civics/Government teacher from that high school
  - e. One current student representative.

- Based on the feedback from the panel, the Board Liaisons to the Student Representatives will recommend four first-year candidates to the Board for its approval at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Board will vote on the approval of the returning second-year representatives at the same meeting.
- 12.10 The High School Activities Coordinators will serve as the advisors for the Student Representatives.
- 12.11 The Student Representatives serve at the discretion of the Board. The Board may remove a Student Representative for failure to fulfill their duties, for failure to maintain good standing in academics, attendance or behavior, or for behaviors the Board deems unacceptable as a member of the Board of Directors or embarrassing to the District.
- 12.12 In the event that a Student Representative is unable to complete their term of office, the Board may appoint another Student Representative at its discretion.

April 7, 2022 – Addition to Policy Governance
May 26, 2022 – Revised
April 27, 2023 – Revised
May 11, 2023 – Revised
July 11, 2024 – Converted to Coherent Governance



#### GC-13 Role of the New Director Mentor

Policy Type: Governance Culture

Each newly-elected or appointed Issaquah School Board member will be assigned a New Director Mentor by the Board President. The New Director Mentor will help new directors to understand the policies and procedures of the Board and the Administrative Regulations of the District.

#### The New Director Mentor will:

- 13.1 Arrange a meeting with the new director to review the ISD School Board Handbook. This review should include discussion of:
  - a. The roles of the School Board and the Superintendent in a Coherent Governance district
  - b. School Board Governance Policies (GCs, BSRs, Results, OEs, and OGPs)
  - c. The cadence of a typical board meeting
  - d. Training opportunities and expectations
  - e. The Board's annual calendar.
- 13.2 In conjunction with the Superintendent, arrange meetings with the new director and each cabinet level staff member.
- 13.3 Arrange for the new director to take Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) and Public Records Act (PRA) training within 90 days of taking the oath of office.
- 13.4 Review educational equity training requirements which must be completed within two years of their election.
- 13.5 Review Public Disclosure Commission (PDC) requirements.
- 13.6 Provide the new director with a copy of the book, *Good Governance is a Choice*, by Randy Quinn and Linda Dawson, and review the basics of Coherent Governance.
- 13.7 Check in with the new director prior to the first few board meetings.
- 13.8 Be available to the new director to address any questions or concerns.