



Working Agreements

Purpose

The Board is the educational policy making body for Willamette Education Service District (WESD). In order to effectively meet the ESD's challenges, the Board and Superintendent must function together as a leadership team. To ensure effectiveness among team members, group agreements must be in place. The following are some of the group agreements for the WESD Board and Superintendent.

The Board Job Description

Board members will:

1. Work with members of the Board and the Superintendent in a cooperative and collaborative partnership aligned toward a common mission;
2. Select, support and evaluate the Superintendent;
3. Periodically evaluate the Board's leadership and governance;
4. Ensure the ESD is fiscally sound and all practices are legally accountable;
5. Focus on policy making, planning and evaluation, rather than day to day operations;
6. Make decisions as a whole Board only at properly called meetings. Board members recognize that individual members have no authority to take individual action in policy or ESD and school administration matters;
7. Give careful consideration to all issues brought by individuals and special interests, actively solicit input and listen to all perspectives, operate as representatives and make decisions in the best interest of the whole district;
8. Support decisions of the majority after honoring the right of individual members to express opposing viewpoints and vote their convictions;
9. Recognize and respect the Superintendent's responsibility to manage the ESD and to direct employees in ESD matters;
10. Value the role we play in the community and represent and advocate for the ESD, when possible, by attending community functions;
11. Ensure proactive communication with the public.

Meeting Agreements:

Board members will:

1. Contact the Board chair or Superintendent to request an item to be placed on an agenda;
2. Uphold the legal requirement for confidentiality on all matters arising from the Board meeting Executive Session;
3. Ensure action items are placed at the beginning of the agenda and are accompanied by a detailed report in the Board packet to ensure that Board members can make informed decisions;
4. Start meetings and end meetings on time, allowing adequate time for discussion;
5. Attend regularly scheduled Board meetings and provide notification if unable to attend a meeting;
6. Cooperate in scheduling special meetings and/or work sessions for planning and training purposes;
7. Cast a vote on all matters except when a conflict of interest arises.

Communication Agreements:

Board members will:

1. Communicate directly with the Superintendent when a question, or a concern or complaint is voiced by a staff member, student, parent or community member;
2. Communicate directly with the Superintendent or Board chair prior to meetings of the Board to address questions and/or concerns about agenda items;
3. Communicate one on one, when an individual concern arises, with the Superintendent or other Board member, as appropriate;
4. Not have the authority as an individual Board member to speak for the Board, except for the Board chair, or designated spokesperson;
5. When required to make findings of fact, or when involved in possible litigation, no Board member will have personal contact with parties who have a personal interest in the findings and in the Board's decision prior to the time the decision is made;
6. Request information through program directors and the Board members will share the request with the Superintendent.

Annual Planning and Evaluation:

The Board will:

1. Set priorities annually as a Board for the Board professional development;
2. Participate in annual self-assessment of the Board's performance;
3. Participate in establishing annual expectations and goals for the Superintendent;
4. Objectively evaluate the Superintendent's performance and provide appropriate feedback.

Role of the Board Chair:

The chair's responsibility is to speak for, and about, the Board and describe the Board's process and positions. The chair will to convene meetings, develop the agenda with the Superintendent, and execute documents, as appropriate.

Expectations of the Superintendent:

The Superintendent will:

1. Work cooperatively with Board members as a team;
2. Respect and acknowledge the Board's role in setting policy and overseeing the performance of the Superintendent;
3. Work with the Board to establish a clear vision for the ESD;
4. Work with the Board to establish priorities for the ESD and identify areas of focus for improvement within the agency;
5. Provide data to the Board members so that informed decisions can be made;
6. Maintain and demonstrate knowledge of Oregon Education Law, ESD policies and procedures;
7. Inform the Board of all critical information including relevant trends, anticipated media coverage or critical external or internal change;
8. Distribute appropriate information to all Board members;
9. Communicate with Board members promptly and effectively;
10. Ensure timely distribution of the Board packet;
11. Respect the confidentiality requirement of Board meeting Executive Sessions;

12. Treat all Board members professionally;
13. Communicate to the Board members if a problem or issue is observed developing with the individual Board member;
14. Conduct and provide the Board with a copy of a self-assessment one meeting prior to the Board's evaluation of the Superintendent's job performance;
15. Represent the ESD by being visible in the community;
16. Provide follow-up information to Board members on concerns and issues they have referred to the Superintendent;
17. Assure, in conjunction with the Board chair, a timely orientation of new Board members;
18. Will maintain and monitor a comprehensive communications plan;
19. Will actively solicit partnerships with the Oregon Department of Education, the Oregon School Boards Association, the business community, social services, higher education and the Confederation of Oregon School Administrators.

END OF POLICY

Legal Reference(s):

[ORS 334.125](#)