

North Chicago CUSD 187
FOP and IA Board Agreements
September 12, 2017

Unity of purpose

We affirm the unique role of public education, whereby each community collectively pools its resources for the common good through the education of its students. Therefore, we seek to uphold and improve public education for our community.

- We want to build trust and move the district forward.
- We want to become an effective team.
- We want to understand our individual jobs and collective responsibilities.
- We want to be a team with a common, focused direction.
- We want to create a district culture that supports positive change.
- We want to perpetuate a positive district culture that survives in the face of board member and staff turnover.

*Please refer to the PRESS Policy Reference Manual:
2:20 Powers and Duties of the School Board
2:80-E Board member Code of Conduct*

Concerns from the community and staff (“Customer” concerns)

- Members will listen carefully, remembering they are only hearing one side of the story.
- Members will then direct that person to the person in the district most appropriate (Chain of Command) who is able to help them resolve their concern.
 - Community members, depending on the concern, should be directed to the teacher, principal, or superintendent.
 - Staff members can be directed to their principal, the superintendent, or their union representative.
- Members handling concerns in this manner will clarify that one member has no individual authority to fix a problem.
- Members will call the superintendent if they think this is an issue of concern.

Agenda development

1. Board members who wish to have an item placed on the agenda will contact the superintendent and “cc” their board chair at least seven days prior to the meeting.
2. Prior to the meeting, the board chairs and superintendent will confer on the agenda.
3. No staff time will be spent researching an agenda item until a majority of the board members have agreed to discuss the agenda item.

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No Surprises

- No one (superintendent or board members) gets surprised at any time – in the meeting or between meetings.
- The truth of no surprises is respect for all participants and the process.

Speaking with one voice

- Board members have an obligation to express their opinions and respect others' opinions.
- Board members understand the importance of speaking with one clear voice to both the superintendent and the community.
- No single board member has the authority to direct the superintendent or the staff. Direction must come from a consensus of board members at a legally convened meeting.
- The superintendent is accountable only to the FOP and IA boards.
- Board members have the right to disagree with the decision of their board, but will support the board in its decision by abiding by the will of the majority.
- No individual board member, other than the FOP or IA Chair, has the authority to act or speak on behalf of the boards without the consent of the boards.

Asking questions about items on upcoming meeting agendas or questions in general

- Whenever possible, members will email or call the superintendent with questions on the agenda prior to the meeting.
- Members understand that although they are asking the question(s) prior to the meeting, they have a right to ask the question(s) at the meeting as well.
- Members who didn't call ahead with a question because their question is based on the discussion at the board table may want to preface a question with, "I didn't have a chance to call ahead of time," or "I just thought of this question so the superintendent may need to get back to me with the answer" when appropriate.

Communicating with staff

- In keeping with Foundational Principle #3, The Board Employs a Superintendent, board members will communicate directly **only** with the superintendent. Board members understand that they will be directed to the superintendent when making a request to a staff member.
- Board members communicating with other staff in their role as parent/grandparent will remember the neon sign that reads "BOARD MEMBER" and will not overstep their parent/grandparent role.

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Visiting campuses

- Board members who plan on visiting a school in their role as a board member will call the superintendent prior to their visit.

Board member request for information

- Individual board members will self-monitor to ensure one person's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals.
- Board members will ask only what they “need” to know, and not what is “nice” to know.
- If one board member’s request is estimated to take a great deal of staff time to prepare the information, at the discretion of the superintendent, the request will go to the full board for consensus.
- One member’s request for additional information results in all members receiving or having the same access to the information. (“One gets, all get.”)

Use of email and texts

- Board members will be judicious in their use of email texts, and understand that most emails and texts are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and as such can be made public.
- Board members will use their district email address for all district business.
- Board members are aware that text messages for district business and text messages sent during a board meeting are subject to FOIA regulations.
- In compliance with the Open Meetings Act, Board members will not “reply to all” to any district email.
- Board members will not email other board members stating their thoughts or opinions.

Closed session meetings

- Board members respect the confidentiality of privileged information and will not divulge conversations, discussions, or deliberations that take place during a closed session meeting.
- Board members understand that to divulge closed session information not only damages the relationship of the team, but has the potential for far reaching consequences which may impact future district operations.

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Communicating with the media

- The board chairs are the spokespersons for their individual boards to the media.
- The superintendent is the spokesperson for the district.

Participating during public forums

- The purpose of a town hall meeting is to devote a separate meeting (not part of the board's business meeting) to informing and hearing from the public.
- Board members will listen carefully, understanding most questions should be answered by a staff member.

Behavioral expectations

- Start with the common belief that everyone has good intentions.
- Create a safe environment for the productive exchange of ideas.
- Sincerely listen and seek to understand the viewpoints of others.
- Solve problems through a collaborative process where all participants support the decision and actively work toward its implementation.