

Series 9000 - By Laws of the Board

0. Roles of Board and Members (Powers, Purposes, Duties)

F. Commitment to Democratic Principles Relating to Board Communications and Interactions

The ~~Suffield~~ Board of Education recognizes the need to maintain open communication between itself and staff. Communications with staff deal with three general areas – administration, policy, and philosophy. While the Board recognizes the necessity for board-staff communications, it also recognizes that administrative matters must be dealt with through the Superintendent.

Staff Communications to the Board

All formal reports to the Board or any Board committee from administrators, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members shall be submitted through the Superintendent. ~~This necessary procedure shall not be construed as denying the right of any employee to appeal to the Board from administrative decisions on important matters, provided the Superintendent shall have been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is~~

~~Any staff appeal to the Board must be~~ processed in accordance with the collective bargaining clause on complaints and grievances, Board's policy on complaints and grievances (CF 4135.4 and 4234.4 Complaints/Grievances). ~~Staff members are also reminded that Board meetings are public meetings that allow an opportunity for observation and participation of Board deliberations of staff concerns.~~

Board Communication to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent. The Superintendent will employ all such media as are appropriate to keep staff fully informed of the Board's concerns, priorities, and actions.

Visits to Schools

Individual Board members have no authority in the school system. Individual Board members interested in visiting schools or classrooms in a Board-related capacity will make arrangements for visitations through the Superintendent, ~~with notification to the Board Chair and/or building administrators~~. Such visits will be considered as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. ~~Official visits by Board members will be conducted with notification to the Board Chair, the Superintendent, or his/her designee. Consistent with current volunteer policy,~~ Board members are required to adhere to current the sign-in or identifications procedures.

~~Individual Board members will:~~

~~Contact the Superintendent to request a school visit with administration and include grade(s) and the purpose of the meeting. With the knowledge of the Board Chair, the Superintendent will schedule the requested school visit with the building administrator in a timely manner. The Superintendent will simultaneously inform all Board members and invite all members to participate.~~

Volunteering in Schools

~~Board members must recognize that a well intentioned volunteer activity may be misconstrued as having a supervisory or administrative purpose. In volunteer situations, Board members are expected to clarify their role as a volunteer with no supervisory purpose. Consistent with volunteer policy, Board members are required to adhere to the sign-in and identification procedure.~~

Social Interaction

Any social interaction and/or discussion between a Board and staff member is to be considered informal. Individual Board members have no special authority except when they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board or vested with special authority by Board action. Board members are expected to avoid discussion(s) of: matters that are, or have the potential of becoming the subject of an executive session; information and data contained in personnel records protected by the Privacy Act or delineated in the Student Privacy Act; contested issues that may require final resolution by the Board.

Board Liaisons

~~In consultation with the Superintendent, the chairperson of the Board of Education may assign board members to district staff committees as Board liaisons at the next regular board meeting following the annual reorganization meeting. Board members may meet periodically with those staffing groups to which he/she may be assigned. The purpose of board liaisons is to foster positive relations between board and staff members. Those visits are designed to be opportunities for the board and staff members to share what is currently of interest to any member of either group. Items of concern should be directed through the appropriate chain of command, ultimately ending with the Board of Education. Individual Board members must remember that they have no special authority except when they are convened at a legal meeting of the Board.~~