



**Responsible Office:** Office of the Board of Trustees and Superintendent

## **BOARD POLICY 9115**

### **MEETINGS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

#### **PURPOSE**

The Board of Trustees (“Board”) believes the work of the Washoe County School District (“District”) is strengthened when done with full transparency and trust of the community. The Board welcomes the attendance of all members of the community - students, staff, parents, and the general public - at all of its public meetings. This policy will outline the way in which this will be accomplished.

#### **POLICY**

##### **1. Governing Principles**

- a. To accomplish its job of informed oversight in a Balanced Governance Model, the Board shall produce and follow an annual calendar, as outlined below, which focuses agenda topics on goal progress checking of District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards. Accordingly, the Board shall, with a focus dedicated to student achievement:
  - i. Prepare and update a perpetual calendar that includes a schedule of formative assessment reports, bi-annual governance policy reviews, community linkage activities, Board assessment, Board and staff training, policy related briefings and analysis, public policy reviews, and other relevant issues. (See Board Policy 9081, Formative Monitoring of the Superintendent and Strategic Goals)
  - ii. Finalize its District Values, Mission, Vision, and Strategic Goals for the following year by the last day of February so that administrative planning and budgeting can take place.
  - iii. Develop the Board’s annual agenda through consideration of:
    1. the review of student progress toward accomplishing the District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards;
    2. the role of the Board in financial oversight and approval of the annual budget;

3. the role of the Board in operational oversight of the District, which may include annual reports of the roles, responsibilities, success, and areas in need of improvement;
  4. knowledge gained through reports from external stakeholder committees;
  5. results from the Organizational Monitoring System and the District Strategic Team;
  6. Board-directed consultation with selected stakeholder groups in Washoe County; or
  7. other Board-approved methods of gaining input from the people of Washoe County.
- iv. Attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible.
  - v. Decide Superintendent contract modifications, if requested, only after a review of formative assessment reports received in the last year.
- b. Board members shall conduct effective and productive meetings focused on open dialogue and policy actions intended to check the progress and improve achievement of the District Vision, Strategic Imperatives, and Support Strategies. Board members shall conduct their Board meetings in a professional manner with appropriate decorum through:
    - i. Well-attended meetings and well-prepared participants.
    - ii. A well-planned agenda that is focused on progress checking and discussion of the District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards.
    - iii. Keeping discussion centered on the agenda and staying focused on progress checking and discussion of the District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards.
    - iv. Balanced participation with everyone participating and no one dominating.
    - v. Sharing viewpoints in a clear, concise manner.
    - vi. Accomplishing work in an atmosphere of trust and openness with respect and courtesy.
    - vii. Monitoring policies to facilitate accountability and assurance of policy implementation fidelity.

- viii. Comply with the Balanced Governance Progressive Response Protocol. (See Board Policy 9051, Board Conduct, Ethics, and Operational Protocols)

## 2. Governing Practices

- a. Meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be open to the public pursuant to Nevada's Open Meeting Law. A meeting that is closed pursuant to a specific statute may only be closed to the extent specified in the statute allowing the meeting to be closed. All other portions of the meeting must be open to the public and the Board of Trustees must comply with all other provisions of this chapter to the extent not specifically precluded by the specific statute.
- b. Closed or Executive Sessions
  - i. Closed or Executive Sessions of the Board of Trustees may be convened for the following areas of discussion and deliberation to the extent permitted by law, unless agreed by the Board of Trustees to the contrary.
    - 1. Meetings considering the character, alleged misconduct, professional competence or physical or mental health of a person, except a member of an elected body.
    - 2. Meetings or proceedings involving negotiations or informal discussions with employee organizations, mediation, fact-finding, arbitration, or meetings between the Board and its management representatives.
    - 3. Proceedings involving discipline of a student.
  - ii. Before convening in executive or closed session, the President will publicly announce the general purpose for excluding the public from the meeting place and the time when the public session will reconvene. The executive or closed session may be extended to a stated later time by announcement of the President.
  - iii. Any discussions conducted in executive or closed session shall be regarded as confidential and shall not be discussed with other persons outside of such meetings unless specifically so authorized by the Board.

c. Requests for Agenda Items

- i. An item requested by a member of the Board, which is approved by the President or Vice-President of the Board, may be placed on an agenda of a meeting or work session, as appropriate, of the Board;
- ii. Additionally, at the request of any two or more members of the Board of Trustees, an item may be placed on a future Board agenda for its proper consideration.

d. Accommodations. In order to provide meaningful access to individuals wishing to attend a meeting of the Board, the District shall make reasonable efforts to assist and accommodate persons with physical disabilities who desire to attend.

e. Public Comment

- i. The Board recognizes that its deliberative process benefits greatly from public input and perspective. At the same time, it wishes to organize its agendas and use its meeting time effectively and ensure an equitable allocation of time to speakers.
- ii. It is the policy of the Board that members of the public shall be provided the opportunity and shall be encouraged to be heard at Board meetings. Public comment at Board meetings is particularly appropriate for matters dealt with directly and exclusively by the Board (e.g. District Values, Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Balanced Governance Model Standards).
  1. Additionally, in order to be responsive to more personal and specific public concerns, the Board will encourage issues to first be directed to the appropriate staff members and worked through the organizational chain-of-command prior to bringing matters to the Board. In order to honor the seriousness of individual concerns, the Board will ask the Superintendent to report back to the individual Board member on the outcome of the issue in a timely manner.
  2. Board members who believe the Superintendent has not reported back to them in a timely manner or with an acceptable response to the complaint or concern shall address their concern using the Balanced Governance Model Progressive Response process. (See Board Policy 9051, Board Conduct, Ethics and Operational Protocols)

- iii. During the Board meeting, any individual or group may address the Board of Trustees concerning any subject within the Board's jurisdiction. A completed "Citizen's Request To Speak" card must be submitted to designated District staff at the meeting.
  1. During the discussion of an item on the agenda, the Board President will invite the person to come forward and speak.
  2. If an item is not on the agenda, but an interested person(s) wishes to be heard by the Board of Trustees, the Board President will invite the person to come forward and speak during specially designated "Public Comments" segments of the meeting. The Board cannot take action on an item not specifically noted on the agenda.
  3. Any comment by an individual will be limited to three (3) minutes per agenda item and/or "Public Comment" segment. The time limit may be altered at the discretion of the President of the Board.
  4. Questions from individuals or groups are to be asked of the Board of Trustees as a whole and may not be asked of any individual member of the Board or administrative staff.
  5. Individuals or groups making comment to the Board of Trustees shall be courteous and maintain appropriate public behavior. Boisterous conduct and remarks which are discourteous, abusive, profane, slanderous, or obscene will not be tolerated. The President of the Board may terminate the right of any speaker to continue if this policy is violated.
  6. Correspondence and Written Comments
    - a. Correspondence and written materials submitted by the public for consideration by the Board of Trustees shall be attached to the minutes of the meeting of the Board under the following conditions:
      - i. Correspondence and written materials provided to the Board Meeting Recording Secretary during the public comment period of a Board meeting;
      - ii. Correspondence and written materials on an item specifically listed on the agenda received

by the Board Meeting Recording Secretary in advance of the meeting up to the Call to Order of the meeting; and,

- iii. Correspondence and written materials on an item not specifically listed on an agenda shall not be included in the minutes but will be provided to the members of the Board as general correspondence.

## **DESIRED OUTCOMES**

1. Through this policy, the community shall feel welcome to attend meetings of the Board of Trustees and to participate in a transparent form of governance.

## **IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES & ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

1. This policy reflects the goals of the District's Strategic Plan and aligns/complies with the governing documents of the District, to include:
  - a. Board Policy 1505, Visitors to District Property
  - b. Administrative Regulation 1520, Trespass Warnings
2. This policy complies with Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) and Nevada Administrative Code, to include:
  - a. Chapter 241, Meetings of State and Local Agencies.
  - b. Chapter 288, Relations Between Governments and Public Employees, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 288.220, Certain proceedings not required to be open or public.
  - c. Chapter 386, Local Administrative Organization, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 386.330, Meetings; quorum; broadcast of meetings on television authorized.
  - d. Chapter 392, Pupils, and specifically:
    - i. NRS 392.467, Suspension or expulsion of pupil: Procedure; limitation.
    - ii. NRS 392.656, Inapplicability of Open Meeting Law to development committee, school committee and certain meetings of State Board related to crisis and emergency response.

3. This policy complies with federal laws and regulations, to include:
  - a. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”).
  - b. The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (“IDEA”).

**REVIEW AND REPORTING**

1. This document shall be reviewed bi-annually as part of the policy review process.

**REVISION HISTORY**

Date	Revision	Modification
1/14/2014	1.0	Adopted (Merged Former Board Policies 9017, 9018, 1120, 1130)
10/25/2016	2.0	Revised: to align with Balanced Governance principles; number changed from 9034
8/28/2018	3.0	Revised: to update process for public submission of comment in ways other than orally at a meeting