



ARIZONA SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

# School Board Member HANDBOOK



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**Welcome** to the world of school boards! Serving on a school board is a rewarding experience but is not without challenges, namely, getting up to speed on the ins and outs of school board governance. This handbook is intended to give you a baseline understanding of the issues you will face in your role as a board member.

At ASBA, we encourage boards to engage in ongoing professional development to strengthen their ability to effectively govern. Research into board governance has shown that effective boards, that is boards that improve student achievement, demonstrate common characteristics which we at ASBA consider the “pillars” of board service. Throughout this handbook you will see references to those five pillars as signified by the below key.

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## The Five Pillars of Board Service



Conduct and Ethics



Accountability



Vision



Advocacy



Structure

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Look for these symbols in the title pages of each chapter so you know what elements of the Five Pillars you will be studying. You may also be interested in learning about ASBA's Board Self-Evaluation tool that allows boards to reflect on and evaluate their ability to demonstrate competency in these pillars as a board. In short, ASBA is here to help you on your journey as a board member so don't be afraid to reach out.

With appreciation for your service,

Your ASBA Team







# Chapter 1

## Your Arizona School Boards Association

As we move forward in our second century as a state, Arizona has the opportunity and duty to focus renewed spirit and energy to encourage and promote excellence in our public schools. As the liaisons between the community and schools, school boards have a unique role to play in bringing Arizona's bright future to bear. No other elected officials carry this moral and economic responsibility to the degree that Arizona school board members do. When working to peak effectiveness, every board decision is linked back to the success of children in classrooms because, after all, they are our state's future.

The Arizona School Boards Association, one of the longest serving and most respected education organizations in the state, is the partner of school boards statewide in this critically important and rewarding work. A private, non-profit, non-partisan organization, ASBA provides training and leadership development, represents and advocates for the diverse needs of our membership, and provides essential services that support district success to public school governing boards statewide. In short, we work with and for our members to ensure that leaders of locally-governed school districts have all they need to succeed, from the policy that provides a solid operational foundation to state funding that leads to equitable opportunities and access to excellence throughout the state. Our mission is to cultivate excellence in locally-governed school districts so that Arizona has the best schools in every community.

Founded in 1949, ASBA has grown considerably over the decades in service, scope and impact. Today, as it was almost 70 years ago, the organization's board of directors and staff are courageous, creative, mission-driven individuals who strive each day to promote and support elected local leadership of Arizona's public schools. While doing so, we champion excellence and opportunity for all Arizona's students, now over 1 million strong.

As a national federation member of the **National School Boards Association**, ASBA also is active in legislative and legal advocacy at the



# ASBA: Your Association

ASBA members determine our vision, mission, core beliefs and a political agenda, all which drive the association's decision-making processes.

## Vision

The best schools in every community.

## Mission

We cultivate excellence in locally-governed school districts.

## Core Beliefs

The basic life needs of children must be met for them to succeed.

Meeting the unique educational needs of all students must be the foundation of our school systems.

The governance of publicly-funded schools must lie with locally-elected and publicly-accountable governing boards.

The responsibility for student success is shared by students, parents, governing board, district staff and the community.

Public education funding must be broad-based, stable and at a level that assures all students are successful.

Knowledgeable and professionally trained governing board members are fundamental for ensuring student success.

Closing the opportunity and achievement gap is a moral and economic imperative that must be addressed to ensure all Arizona's students are successful.

Systemic inequities must be removed so every student achieves their fullest potential.

## Political Agenda

In addition to these, the ASBA Political Agenda, crafted and approved annually by members, sets the legislative and legal priorities for the association.

<https://azsba.org/advocacy/political-agenda/>

federal level and regularly engages with leaders from other school boards associations around the country.

## Membership

ASBA is a member-driven and member-governed organization. Our members are public school district governing boards. Membership is voluntary, and we are proud that 223 districts - very nearly every district in the state – are members. Dues are determined by formula based on the enrollment and budget of the member district.

Our associate membership category enables accommodation school districts, charter schools, and community colleges to join. Business partners may join as organization affiliate members. These organizations enjoy member benefits, but may not participate in association governance.

## Governance

### ASBA Board of Directors

ASBA is governed by a board of directors comprised of school board members from throughout the state. All members of the ASBA Board of Directors are elected by their peers from member districts.

Every member district has the right to vote in the election of the five officers who form the ASBA Board of Directors Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is comprised of a president, president-elect, treasurer, secretary and past-president, who serve one-year terms.

Seventeen county representatives serve on the ASBA board as well. Member boards in each of Arizona's 15 counties elect their own representative every two years. Maricopa and Pima Counties each have two directors on the board due to their larger student populations. The presidents of the ASBA Black Alliance and ASBA Hispanic-Native Caucus, who are elected by caucus members, each have a seat on the board as well.

If a school board member of an ASBA member district is an officer or director of the National School Boards Association, that individual serves as an *ex officio* member of the ASBA board.

### Direct Member Action

**Setting the Political Agenda:** ASBA member districts shape the association's position on public policy, including legislative and legal advocacy, through the Political Agenda process, which culminates at an annual Delegate



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Assembly during which all member districts have the right to discuss, debate and vote on member priorities.

**Voting on Bylaws:** ASBA member districts are able to impact the “rules for operation” of the association by voting on proposed changes to our bylaws.

**Serving on Committees:** Members may also participate on a variety of committees that make recommendations to the ASBA Board of Directors and members. The budget and financial oversight, governance, legislative, nominating, credentials and equity committees are examples of these.

## **Staff**

ASBA's staff of experienced, mission-driven professionals works under the direction of an executive director, who reports to the board of directors. Staff carries out the mission of the association and works toward the strategic goals set by the ASBA Board of Directors. ASBA owns the central Phoenix building in which its office is located.

## **Member Services**

ASBA provides the services and information necessary for Arizona school boards to fulfill their duties and responsibilities with excellence. We provide training and leadership development, represent and advocate for the diverse needs of our membership, and deliver products and services that support district success. In addition, staff is available to consult with member boards and superintendents as needed on a variety of key leadership, governance and public education topics.

## **Collaboration & Representation**

In poll after poll, in casual conversation and in action, the people of Arizona have said they want our public school system to be successful and vibrant so that all our children are prepared to pursue their dreams. Along with teachers, families and students, many business leaders, policymakers and economists say doing so is imperative to the economic health and well-being of our state. ASBA board and staff actively engage with leaders from across the political, business, civic and nonprofit sectors, often cooperatively with other education organizations. When ASBA is in these rooms, Arizona's school boards are being represented.

## **Professional Development**

Research shows that boards and board members who develop their knowledge of leadership, governance, and issues and topics that impact student success are more effective in achieving positive outcomes for their

students and communities. ASBA offers workshops, conferences and events throughout the year to support this critical growth. Commitment to professional development by individual board members and full boards is recognized annually through ASBA Academy of Board Member Development Awards.

- **New Board Member Orientation:** Packaged in two, full-day workshops, these trainings are foundational for newly elected and appointed board members. They provide a comprehensive overview of board service and are offered the year of and the year following governing board elections. Upon completion of Part One, board members receive a certificate of orientation, which is the gateway to the ASBA Academy of Board Development, our professional development recognition program.
- **Board Operations and Leadership Training Seminar (BOLTS):** We cover the “nuts and bolts” of effective board meetings and governance during this one-day workshop. (This event is offered in multiple locations annually.)
- **Summer Leadership Institute:** At this two-day event, we delve into issues facing governing board members as leaders and provide content to increase leadership competencies.
- **Equity Event:** Issues related to leadership in a diverse world and the board’s essential role in student achievement and closing the opportunity and access gaps are the focuses of this event.
- **Law Conference:** This conference covers both timely and evergreen legal issues that impact board, district and school operations, and features nationally prominent keynote speakers. Legal aspects of public policy that impact public education are discussed as well.
- **Legislative Workshop:** Government and public policy experts, influential policymakers and lawmakers shed light on hot topics and preview the coming legislative session in this fast-paced, one-day event.
- **Annual Conference:** In addition to offering dozens of breakout sessions and nationally prominent keynote speakers over two days, this high energy end-of-the year gathering features celebrations of leadership and educational programs, numerous opportunities for networking and a vibrant exhibit hall.
- **County Meetings:** These regional gatherings bring ASBA to members and provide a collegial setting for building relationships with and learning from members of other district school boards. Recognition of board members for their commitment to professional development also takes place here.

## Keeping You Connected and Up-to-Date

**ASBAConnect:** Every two weeks, members receive our e-newsletter, which features the latest association news and information.

**ASBA Annual Journal:** This magazine-style publication celebrates school board and district leadership and educational programs, and provides an overview of ASBA activities, opportunities and initiatives for the year ahead.

**Legislative Updates:** Members receive daily in-session updates on the current status of K-12 education bills working their way through the system, as well as happenings at the State Board of Education.

**Action Alerts:** We alert members when their voices are urgently needed to influence legislators and policymakers on key bills.

**AZEdNews E-Weekly:** Each week, members receive the latest news on Arizona K-12 education from the staff of ASBA's Arizona Education News Service ([www.azednews.com](http://www.azednews.com))

**Text Alerts:** Sign up to receive our most important announcements directly to your mobile device. To receive text alerts go to [XXXXXXXXXX](#)

## Other Opportunities to

**Learn and Grow:** ASBA offers **pre-conferences** in conjunction with many of its conferences and events. These full- and half-day sessions enable deeper dives into topics and issues of critical importance to Arizona school boards. In addition, the association regularly offers no cost **webinars** on a variety of topics, from governance to public policy, that are available live and on-demand through the online ASBA webinar archive ([www.azsba.org](http://www.azsba.org)).

## Customized Board Support

To assist individual boards in reaching peak effectiveness, ASBA offers on-site and virtual training and neutral facilitation upon request in areas such as goal setting, board practices and protocols, team transitions, collaboration and resolving conflict. This may include facilitation of board retreats and strategic planning sessions, during which it is important for board members and the superintendent to be free to engage in the process.

ASBA also offers a comprehensive, online board self-evaluation tool that yields information intended to help the board celebrate successes, as well as grow and develop, in five pillars essential to effectiveness: conduct and ethics, vision, structure, accountability and advocacy. ASBA staff is available to facilitate discussion around evaluation results and next steps.

### **Policy Services**

Adopting district policy is the job of the school board. ASBA offers a fee-based model policy service to member boards to help them remain in compliance with state and federal laws, policy and legal rulings. ASBA PolicyBridge provides the template for policy, the ability to customize to best serve the students and staff of the district, plus web-based manual access and search capability.

### **Advocacy and Communication**

Guided by the member-developed Political Agenda, ASBA staff leads year-round advocacy efforts on behalf of member boards on issues related to K-12 education and local control of public education at the Legislature and governor's office, before regulatory and policy bodies like the State Board of Education, on state-level committees and task forces, and with Arizona's congressional delegation on issues of strategic importance. ASBA also engages in legal advocacy in the courts when necessary to support and defend public education.

Members are provided with the latest information and resources to take action through regular emails and alerts. In addition, each legislative session, ASBA electronically publishes a comprehensive Legislative Wrap-Up brief with summaries of all bills introduced that impact public education in Arizona and a report on how they fared in the process.

ASBA also advocates in the public arena through robust communications that support the Political Agenda, including media relations, public relations, print and online resources and publications and social media. In addition, ASBA's Arizona Education News Service ([www.AZEdNews.com](http://www.AZEdNews.com)), an online news platform, is an influential, statewide source for the latest news and information about public education in Arizona.

ASBA's data collection and analysis staff is critical to supporting advocacy efforts.

### **Executive Search**

One of the most critical decisions a board will make is hiring a superintendent to manage and be the educational leader of the district. ASBA offers comprehensive executive search services at rates well below the market average. A customized, post-search team transitions session for the board and new superintendent with a member of our ASBA board support team is included in the service.



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## Other Resources for Members

**Issue-Related Resources:** ASBA develops and publishes a variety of issue-related resources for member education, development and advocacy throughout the year on our website ([www.azsba.org](http://www.azsba.org)) on topics ranging from leadership for educational equity to vouchers.

**Surveys:** To support the work of member boards, ASBA conducts two major salary and benefits surveys each year and distributes the results to members. One focuses on superintendent salaries and benefits and the other on teacher and administrator salaries and benefits.

**Handbooks:** To help boards effectively carry out their governance duties, ASBA publishes the “School Board Member Handbook” and the “Open Meeting Law Handbook.”

## FRIENDS *of* ASBA educating arizona

The Friends of ASBA is a 501(c)(4) private, non-profit organization that provides information on high-priority, high-impact policy issues related to K-12 education in Arizona, leading to greater public understanding and support for public education in Arizona. The organization utilizes ASBA's Political Agenda as its guiding document.

As part of its education mission, Friends of ASBA each year publishes a record of how Arizona legislators voted on high-priority education bills. ASBA members are among those who receive a printed copy via U.S. mail. The voting records are also available to the public on the Friends of ASBA website ([www.FriendsOfASBA.org](http://www.FriendsOfASBA.org)). The organization also engages in candidate and ballot measure advocacy. (ASBA is prohibited by state statute, A.R.S. 15-511, from advocating for candidates or ballot measures.)

Ongoing support for Friends of ASBA comes from contributions from public education advocates, who contribute at a variety of membership tiers. All contributors at the \$20 and above level receive a Friends of ASBA pin. Individuals who serve on the boards of ASBA member districts and contribute also receive Friends of ASBA ribbons on all their ASBA conference badges.



# Chapter 2

## **New Board Member Onboarding**

Providing a comprehensive new board member onboarding program and a board professional development plan for the first year of service will ensure the individual is equipped with the working knowledge and tools to serve the students in your district.

To provide you with a starting point, we have included data points we consider important when orienting board members into their new role. Remember, a new board member isn't just a new board member; you now have a completely new board. The new member isn't filling a former member's shoes – they have their own shoes!

The superintendent and/or board are not alone when facing the task of orienting the new board member(s). ASBA provides many resources to our members. Following an election, the association provides professional development opportunities for the new board member, including New Board Member Orientation (NBMO), which is held in board election years the day before ASBA's December Annual Conference. You may locate a current list of board development workshops at [www.azsba.org](http://www.azsba.org). You also may want to consider holding a work/study session and invite ASBA to conduct team transition training for your new board. Remember: one new board member will change the whole board. Having an opportunity to talk about board norms and expectations early on will set you up for success and help you avoid conflict later.

Immediately following the election and/or appointment of a new board member, the superintendent, board president and current sitting board members should call and welcome the new member(s) to the leadership team. We have listed numerous tasks that should follow that phone call. This is not intended to be a complete list as there may be the need to orient a new board member to issues unique to your district, but we hope this will give you the structure to formulate your own new board member onboarding program.

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## Preparing for the New Board Member(s)

- Notify ASBA of the newly elected board members, who they will replace as well as their home mailing address, cell phone number and email address
- Register new board members for the next ASBA New Board Member Orientation (held on even numbered election years the day before the December Annual Conference)
- Organize your district's New Board Member Onboarding schedule (include current administrators, board president and board members) and packets/information to distribute
- Invite the new board member to the district office to meet staff and tour district facilities as part of onboarding

### Quick Tips

## ASBA New Board Member Orientation

ASBA presents two day-long New Board Member Orientation workshops following the general election in even numbered years. One session takes place in December following the election and the second session is in the spring of the following calendar year. Essential information on topics covered in this handbook is presented. Completion of this orientation is the gateway to earning professional development awards through our Academy of Board Development program.

### What Every New Board Member Needs to Know

#### District Information

- District name, address, main phone number, office hours and website
- Map of district boundaries with legislative district overlay
- Contact information including email address and cell phone number for district personnel and board members,
- Organizational chart of the school district
- List of school sites with address, phone number, website, enrollment, special programs, and name of site administrator
- Number of other district owned properties, if applicable
- Student population demographics including:
  - Percentage or number of English Language Learners
  - Number of primary languages spoken at home other than English
  - Percentage or number of students receiving free or reduced lunch
  - Percentage or number of students with special needs
  - Race/ethnicity by population
- Information on enrollment trends
- District transportation overview (district operated or contracted, number of miles and students, etc.)
- District short- and long-range goals, school improvement plans, if applicable, and strategic plan including timelines
- Explanation of the district's overall curriculum program, including local standards and assessments.
- District's educational philosophy
- Most recent student assessment data
- Explanation of the student transportation system
- Conflict of interest forms

#### Board Information

- Explanation of authority and responsibilities of the board, superintendent, administrators and individual board members
- Board policy manual and administrative guidelines (or instructions for accessing) manual for the district and PolicyBridge on the ASBA website
- Instructions on technology tools and log-in information
- Minutes from the past year's board meetings (or direction on how to access online)
- Board meeting procedures utilized by board and explanation of how board meetings are conducted



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- Explanation of the organization of the school board (officers, standing and ad hoc committees, if any, etc.)
  - Explanation of the board's Code of Ethics
  - Master calendar of board meetings/school holidays/district activities and events
  - If the board utilizes the committee structure, committee members could present the appropriate information during the new board member orientation.

### **Financial**

- Current district budget summary: Explanation of how, when and by whom it is prepared; how educational needs are translated into a budget plan, how the money is derived, and the board's role in the process.
- Explanation of the assessed valuation and tax structure of the district.
- Explanation of the funding/budgeting process for school districts.
- Data to address current existing bond indebtedness of the district and when various building debts will expire.
  - Information regarding federal aid to school district's education.
  - Explanation of how the tax rate is determined.

### **Facilities**

- Explanation of construction projects contemplated and in progress
- Description of the district's building maintenance program
- Current district facility survey/plan
- Schedule a tour of schools, if feasible

### **Human Resources**

- District salary schedules and fringe benefit program, and recent salary array data for certificated staff and administration
- Copies of all handbooks including certified, classified, student, and other pertinent district handbooks
- Copy of the district's evaluation criteria and procedures for administrators, certificated and classified support staff
- Copy of the district's staff development program
- Copy of the superintendent's contract, evaluation (including timeline and process), job description, salary and benefits
- Copies of all district's collective bargaining agreement(s), if any, and a brief history of recent collective

### **Professional Development**

- List of ASBA board member professional development opportunities throughout the year

## ASBA Academy of Board Development

ASBA's Academy of Board Development program recognizes school board members for their commitment, through ongoing professional development, to continuous improvement in service to their students, schools and communities.

Professional development provides school board members with focused and structured opportunities to:

- Gain content knowledge and skills required to effectively govern their school districts
- Remain current on issues affecting education and student outcomes
- Acquire critical leadership skills and competencies

ASBA's comprehensive professional development offerings are delivered through workshops, conferences, events, webinars and custom, on-site board trainings, all designed to equip board members to

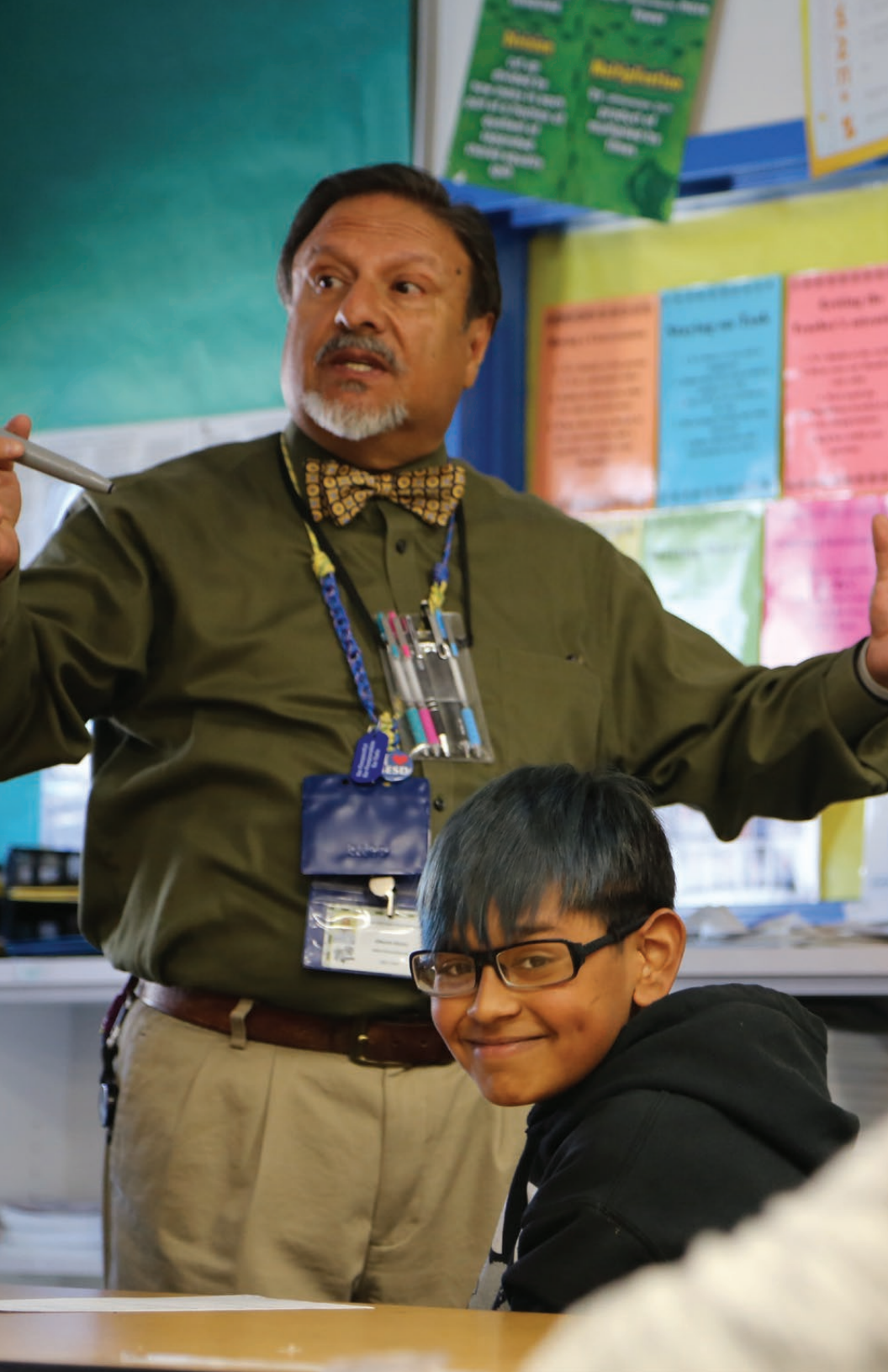
- Support gains in student achievement and greater educational equity
- Develop effective policies and practices
- Engage the community as an advocate for public school education
- Provide responsible district governance as part of a leadership team

ASBA tracks the participation of individual board members in professional development activities and annually presents Academy of Board Development awards for various levels of attainment.

To earn awards through the Academy of Board Development, a board member first must complete ASBA New Board Member Orientation. This foundational one-day session is held in December of even-numbered years.

Learn more at

[www.azsba.org/learning-center-academy-of-board-development](http://www.azsba.org/learning-center-academy-of-board-development)





# Chapter 3

## The Legal Structure of Education in Arizona

The Arizona Constitution establishes our public school system, and as interpreted by the Arizona Supreme Court, grants to every child, ages 6 to 21, a right to a basic education. Article XI, §1, reads:

*“The Legislature shall enact such laws as shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a general and uniform public school system, which system shall include kindergarten schools, common schools, high schools, normal schools, industrial schools, and a university.*

The Constitution also directs the Legislature to

*“make such appropriations, to be met by taxation, as shall ensure the proper maintenance of all state educational institutions, and shall make such special appropriations as shall provide for their development and improvements”* (Article XI, §10)

### Governing Boards

To comply with the Arizona Constitution’s mandate, the Legislature has established a body of statutory laws governing education. This is contained in Title 15 of the Arizona Revised Statutes, entitled “Education.” Laws pertaining to education are also found in other statutes.

The Legislature has provided for school district governing boards consisting of three, five or seven members. The districts governed by these boards are political subdivisions of the state, and the members of these boards are considered public officials. All board members are elected at large except:

- In districts that are under court order to elect members by “wards” or
- Career and technical education school districts (CTEDs) where representation by the board is apportioned by the districts that belong to the CTED.

### Sources of Authority

It is important to remember that school district governing boards may



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function only within the scope of their authority which is established and defined in the following:

- Article XI, Constitution of Arizona
- Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 15 and other titles dealing with governmental bodies
- State and federal judicial decisions
- Attorney General opinions
- Rules and regulations of the State Board of Education

Within this defined authority, a governing board may make its own policies, which become the internal law of the district. Based on these policies, the district administrator may then establish operational standards to manage the day-to-day operation of the school district.

### **Chain of Authority**

These constitutional, legislative, legal and regulatory elements also establish the chain of command and authority that governs education in the state of Arizona. To comply with the requirements of the Arizona Constitution, the state Legislature has established school districts and governing boards to operate these districts. These governing boards in turn establish the policies for their specific districts, which, along with specific regulations, are to be carried out by the district administration.

Other entities, in addition to the governing boards involved in this direct chain of command, affect education.

### **State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Public Instruction**

The State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the Arizona Department of Education have both regulatory power and service responsibility. These powers and duties are listed in the statutes and are quite extensive. They range from the regulation of the number of days that school will be in session and student attendance accounting to the responsibility of the State Superintendent to file an annual report. The State Board of Education has considerable authority in supervising how local districts perform their duties. Importantly, the State Board of Education must tie its authority to a specific grant of authority given to it by the Arizona Legislature.

The State Superintendent of Public Instruction is the publicly elected head of the Arizona Department of Education, in charge of a large staff that oversees

many of the operations of the public schools. The State Superintendent, a constitutional officer, also has the ability to drive the agenda on education reform through use of the bully pulpit and initiatives at the State Legislature and state Board of Education.

### Legal Counsel

The County Attorney is required by law to provide legal counsel for school districts within the county. If a law requires interpretation, the governing board may request an opinion from the County Attorney. When he renders this opinion, the County Attorney will also send a copy to the State Attorney General for his concurrence or revision. The Attorney General may also decline to review the County Attorney's opinion, which has the effect of allowing the district to rely upon the County Attorney's opinion.

It is important to remember that opinions of the Attorney General are just that – opinions – and are not binding upon the courts. Despite this fact, generally it is wise for a governing board to follow the opinions of the Attorney General. The Attorney General is the chief legal officer of the state and, as such, those opinions are given considerable weight. Of more immediate importance to governing board members, actions taken by a school district governing board in reliance upon the opinions of the Attorney General do not result in personal liability for the governing board members, even if a court later rules that the Attorney General's opinion is incorrect. The district itself, of course, could remain liable for any damages assessed by the court.

A school district also has the option of employing private counsel, with or without the consent of the County Attorney. If an attorney is employed with the consent of the County Attorney, he may represent the school district with the powers and duties normally performed by the County Attorney. If an attorney is employed without the consent of the County Attorney, then the County Attorney no longer has the duty to represent the district with regard to any matter for which private counsel was employed.

If your district/board employs legal counsel, it is important to understand that the legal counsel represents the school district and board as a whole, not individuals either on the board or who work for the school district. Because of this, there are protocols in place for who can contact legal counsel in your board policies that ensure that legal counsel is representing the board and district collectively.

ASBA works closely with the Attorney General's Office, County Attorney Offices and school attorneys – through the Arizona Council of School

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Attorneys – to ensure excellent communication is occurring between all parties about legal issues facing our members.

## **Auditor General**

The State Auditor General, in cooperation with the State Board of Education, has established a financial accounting system for school districts, known as the Uniform System of Financial Records (USFR). The USFR is continually updated by USFR Memoranda issued by the Auditor General.

## **County School Superintendent**

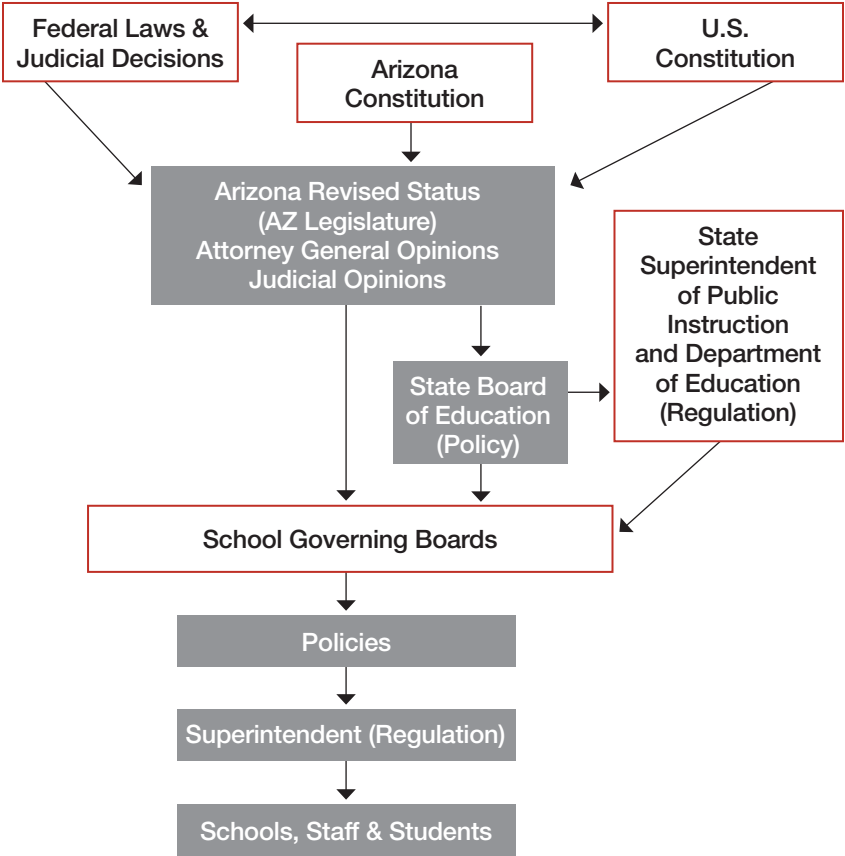
The County School Superintendent provides services to school districts, such as:

- Paying vouchers
- Depositing funds and general bookkeeping activities
- Recording and checking professional certificates and issuing certificates of educational convenience for students not in organized school districts.

In addition, the County School Superintendent operates accommodation schools where necessary, is responsible for governing board elections and fills vacancies on local boards.

The County School Superintendent may fill vacancies either by appointment or by calling a special election. If the County School Superintendent appoints a new board member to fill a vacancy, the term of office of the board member extends only to the next regular election. If the County School Superintendent decides to hold a special election to fill the vacancy, the term of office of the newly elected member is the unexpired term of the board member replaced.

Legal Chain of Authority for  
Arizona School Governing Boards





THIS IS A  
**PEANUT-FREE  
ZONE**  
  
People with allergies who have life-threatening allergic reactions  
may be exposed to peanuts in this facility. Thank you for  
helping us keep this facility safe for everyone.  
Allergies / Tree Nuts Please!

  
Tina





# Chapter 4

## Powers and Duties of the Governing Board



Americans believe in local control of education. Education is a universal, nonpartisan responsibility. Schools should be responsive to the needs of their children and accountable to the citizens of their communities. The primary instrument through which local citizens' interests are expressed, and through which lay control is affected, is the governing board. The governing board, regardless of the size of the school system, is the most direct link between the public and its schools. Thus, the board has the task of representing the public interest in developing policies for the operation of the school system. Sometimes this presents opportunities to improve the school system. Always, it is a job that carries with it heavy responsibilities.

The governing board is charged with the responsibility for policy making and evaluating the operation of the school system. These two tasks are the keys to understanding the role that governing boards play in the governance of Arizona's public schools. Governing boards, by law, are required to adopt policies under which their administrators and teachers operate the schools. Boards also are required to oversee the administration of the schools. This does not suggest that governing boards should be involved in the day-to-day management of the school systems. It does imply, however, that governing boards bear the responsibility of providing clear expectations for the administration of the school system and of representing citizens' interests to the professional staff.

### Statutory Powers

In addition to the general powers enumerated in A.R.S. Title 15, Arizona statutes mention many other specific powers and duties of school district governing boards. Every session of the Legislature adds laws that affect education in the local districts. The existing powers of the governing board may be expanded or restricted by future acts of the Legislature. Governing boards only have those powers enumerated in statute; if a power is not contained in statute in either general or specific terms, it does not exist.

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Members of governing boards are elected by the voters of the local school district to represent the community in educational matters. Instead of exercising complete control at the state level, the Legislature has given much authority to the local governing body, which acts as a board of directors for the school district. It is the board's duty and responsibility to meet the needs of the local community, within the limits of the law.

## Quick Tips

### Did You Know...

Elected board members are required to sign an oath of office prior to the organizational meeting of the governing board. An organizational meeting is required by law to take place by Jan. 15 each year. Some board members also take an oral oath administered by another elected official, although this is not required. Also, new board members must review Arizona's Open Meeting Law at one day prior to taking the oath of office.

## Governing Board Responsibilities

The Arizona School Boards Association believes that the local governing board has the following types of responsibilities:

- The board has a legal responsibility for the conduct of the school in accordance with federal and state laws and regulation.
- The board has a civic responsibility as the controlling body for a very important service to the life of the community.
- The board has a social responsibility toward all people who look to their public schools as the center of growth and development for the young and old alike.
- The board has an economic responsibility, for good schools are essential to economic prosperity.
- The board has an ethical responsibility to discharge its functions courageously and impartially in the interests of *all* of the district's students.

## Specific Authority and Duties of Governing Boards

In Arizona, governing boards are required by law to perform certain duties. Some of the things that boards are specifically required by law to do are:

- Appoint a superintendent or lead executive
- Approve the process for hiring and dismissing school employees
- Adopt a curriculum and standards for promotion and graduation
- Establish and approve a school calendar
- Establish policies for the acquisition, maintenance and disposition of school property
- Approve all contracts for the school system
- Adopt a budget for the fiscal year

In addition, governing boards are granted discretionary authority to take other specific actions if the board deems them appropriate. For example, governing boards may expel students, require students to wear uniforms and authorize travel for school purposes. Board members should carefully review A.R.S. 15-341 and 15-342 (See Appendix C and D), which list the general powers and duties of governing boards and are reproduced at Appendices C and D.

### Delegation of Authority

The authority granted to the governing board by the Legislature may not be further delegated to other groups or persons unless authorized by statute or the common law. For example, only the board may approve the expenditure of district funds or approve the hiring personnel. The board, of course, may and should rely heavily on the advice and recommendations of its administrative staff and consult other groups or persons in the process of reaching its decisions. However, the board retains the legal responsibility to make those decisions.

### The Board Member Role in Brief

The job of a governing board member is generally defined as a “policymaker.” Although it is an accurate definition, it certainly falls short of describing all that board members do.

A policy can be defined as a direction or course of action (within legal limits) the governing board has decided it wants the district to take. The board establishes policies that, if properly executed, will have the desired outcome – improvement of learning and operations. The board will interact with the superintendent and possibly other staff to establish goals, methods and evaluation protocol for obtaining the desired outcome. The board then acts as a whole as an observer, interpreter and evaluator of how well the superintendent is carrying out policy and accomplishing the mission and vision of the district. In short, the board is the navigator giving direction to the superintendent, who steers the ship.

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The Arizona courts have ruled that a governing board may permit a person to carry out nondiscretionary, or “ministerial,” actions without express statutory authority. It is under this doctrine that the implementation of policies or resolutions adopted by the board is typically assigned to the superintendent.

It is important to note that while board members are expected to learn about general matters with regard to education and the operation of their district, they are not expected to become “the experts” within their district – that is left to those who have been tasked with the day-to-day operations, i.e., the administration, teachers and staff. Even if a board member possesses similar qualifications as “the experts,” the role of the board member is limited in comparison. Board members make their decisions from the proverbial 30,000-foot level, while those on the ground are tasked with the day-to-day affairs of the district. Board members who seek to operate at the ground level often fail to “see the forest for the trees” and find themselves quickly in the realm of micromanagement of the district.

Finally, board members should understand that they can act only in their collective capacity as a governing board. **Board members’ decision-making power as public officials is limited to deliberating and voting at board meetings. Actions of the governing board are legal only when taken at a public meeting held in accordance with Arizona’s Open Meeting Laws.**

## Quick Tips

### Board Member Liability

**REMEMBER: The individual power and authority of a single board member is extremely limited. A board member who attempts to speak for the total board, direct members of the staff or makes other individual decisions without board authority is acting outside of statutory intention.**

A board member is immune from personal liability when he or she is acting in an official capacity, at a meeting of the board or board committee, or pursuant to motion of the board. It is recommended that board members only take actions that are within the scope of statutory responsibility and authority.

Moreover, it should be understood that it is a violation of criminal law for anyone, including a school board member, to interfere with or disrupt an educational institution (A.R.S. 13-2911).



### **Board-Superintendent Roles and Responsibilities**

Governing board members are described as “a group of people who voluntarily come together to solve problems, meet common needs and accomplish the goals of the district.” Governing boards were created to keep the “public” in public education. This is a uniquely American concept whereby board meetings are expected to provide a forum for the public’s representatives to be heard, deliberate on key issues and publicly vote.

Ideally, the board exhibits best trusteeship when it exercises its core democratic function by assessing community values and interests and then translating these into the vision, mission and goals of the district.

The board holds the responsibilities of setting the direction of the school district, providing a structure for district success, accounting for district results and advocating for public education in their community.

In general, boards meet publicly to make wise decisions that will positively affect the children in the district. Although governing board members are elected or appointed as individuals, their power to make decisions for a district comes only as a result of a collective vote in a properly posted meeting.

The board and the superintendent, also known as the “senior leadership team,” recognize that the success of the district is directly related to the functioning of this team and a clear delineation of responsibilities. A governing board’s only employee is the superintendent of the district. The governing board hires the superintendent and holds her or him accountable for managing the district in conformity with the board’s policies and state laws (See page 28). Simply put, the board governs, and the superintendent manages.

A governing board is typically judged by how well it conducts business in public meetings. When the public observes the board and superintendent in divisiveness and factionalism, it diminishes credibility as well as effectiveness. Governing boards with a history of achievement and operational excellence place a premium on collaboration by creating operating protocols that spell out the differences between the role of the board and the role of the superintendent. (See Chapter 6 for the Eight Characteristics of Effective Boards and the Five Pillars of Board Service.)

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## BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT TEAM

| The Board | The Superintendent |
|-----------|--------------------|
| Why?      | How?               |
| What?     | When?              |
| How Much? | Where?             |
|           | Who?               |
| Vision    | Objectives         |
| Mission   | Action Plans       |
| Goals     | Regulations        |
| Policies  | Procedures         |
| Monitor   | Implement          |
| Vote      | Recommend          |

## Employment and Evaluation of the Superintendent

In Arizona, the superintendent is the only employee of the governing board, as all other hiring and assignment of employees follows the recommendation of the superintendent. Arizona Revised Statute (A.R.S.) 15-503.A.1 charges district governing boards with employing a chief administrator (who may be a superintendent, a principal or both) with powers and duties as the board prescribes. Although a board can delineate a process that involves staff and public input, the board must make the final decision. Hiring a new superintendent is an important and time-consuming task that includes having information about interviewing in compliance with legal requirements, how to advertise vacancy announcements, recruiting and screening applicants, interviewing candidates, community and district visits, and contract negotiations. ASBA's experienced executive search team is an excellent resource and also available to conduct the search. (See page 7).

The foundation of a positive board-superintendent relationship depends on the board's ability to set clear expectations to guide the work of the superintendent and to communicate on an ongoing basis. The board expectations should be set by the written job description, which should be agreed to prior to employment of the superintendent. A thorough review of board policy should be conducted with the newly hired superintendent and board members soon after employment.

Governing boards must evaluate the superintendent annually. With districts under pressure to raise achievement and work efficiently with diminishing resources, a governing board is dependent on the expert technical

knowledge and leadership of its superintendent to create the action plans for improvements in student achievement and operational excellence. The superintendent needs the authority and support of the board members to make the changes permanent. An effective and timely evaluation process assists the improvement process.

The evaluation is most productive when the board and superintendent have agreed in advance to clearly defined performance expectations as well as the quantitative and qualitative measures to be used for the evaluation. Under Arizona law, up to 20 percent of the superintendent's salary and benefits must be performance based. Governing boards should use a process that addresses measurable goals as well as parent and staff surveys. Periodic reviews should be scheduled throughout the year, building to the end of the year summative evaluation.

Typically and in accordance with A.R.S. 15-503.C., the board and superintendent determine the protocol and process. Evaluations are considered to be open to the public and must be adopted in an open public meeting of the board. Regardless whether the evaluation is written or verbal, ASBA feels it is imperative for the board to provide a document describing goal completion, improvement needed and overall review of superintendent's performance.

ASBA provides custom trainings to assist the board and superintendent in building a strong relationship to ensure appropriate evaluations that lead to district improvement.

### **Building Trust**

Creating a positive environment for students to learn and employees to work begins with building trust. The board must take a leadership role in the district and build trust with each other, the superintendent, employees and the community.

### **Relationship with Superintendent**

In the most successful districts, the board and the superintendent build a relationship based on mutual respect, trust and open communications. Establishing operating protocols helps everyone to know what is expected and what to expect when it comes to communications and meetings. The board hires the superintendent to run the district according to the approved vision, mission and goals and within the policies and regulations established by the board.

Administration of a district is not an exact science. Disagreements can be healthy and lead to better decisions for the district if discussions focus on issues and not on individuals. *The board must remember that direction to the superintendent is with one voice (the collective board), not five.* Trust is built when disagreements are handled respectfully, and the board adheres to its policies and supports the direction it has given.

## Relationship with Employees

The superintendent is the only employee directly supervised and evaluated by the board. Board members will also have frequent contact with the board secretary and/or the executive administrative assistant to the superintendent. However, board members have no role in the evaluation or supervision of those positions. Board actions will affect employees at all levels. Federal

| <b>Governing Board<br/>GOVERNS</b>   | <b>Superintendent<br/>MANAGES</b>  |
|--|--|
| Sets vision, mission, goals for district   | Manages in alignment with vision, mission, goals   |
| Approves, monitors and reviews budgets   | Recommends budget priorities and prepares budget for approval and ongoing monitoring                                   |
| Approves policies  | Recommends and implements policies   |
| Evaluates progress results   | Monitors and reports on goal progress  |
| Delegates day-to-day operations to the superintendent  | Manages or assigns to designees all operational aspects of the district  |
| Approves construction projects including site acquisition  | Makes recommendation as to construction, renovation and education specifications for district buildings and facilities |
| Appoints staff, approves dismissals and ensures a fair process for identifying employment candidates | Recommends all staff for appointment or dismissal  |
| Evaluates the superintendent   | Ensures the evaluation of all staff  |
| Evaluates and approves academic plans  | Organizes a planned program for academic excellence including assessment program                                       |
| Approves public engagement plan  | Implements strategies to involve parents and community members and creates partnerships                                |
| Represents public interests  | Acts in public interest  |

and state laws, board policies and contractual terms give different employee groups specific rights that must be honored by the board. Board policies reflect these requirements and additionally establish procedures for handling complaints and grievances by employees. Following the chain of command and policy in this area will protect employee rights and minimize potential litigation against the district or individual board members.

Board members are encouraged to get to know staff in the district, remembering that they are not there to supervise or evaluate. Understanding the challenges and rewards of various staff positions will help board members make their higher-level decisions at the board table. Observing firsthand some of the positive things that happen in the district every day helps board members in sharing the good news with the community.

Since Arizona is a right-to-work state, meaning union membership is not compulsory, board members will not have to worry about collective bargaining with employee unions. Many districts do have teams that meet and confer about salaries, benefits and working conditions and make recommendations to the board. The Open Meeting Law allows the board to give direction to their representatives on this process in an executive session.

### **Role of the Board President**

By statute (A.R.S. §15-321 B.), the governing board shall elect a president from among the membership of the board during the organizational meeting of the board. The organizational meeting must be held between January 1st and 15th following the November general election (A.R.S. §15-321 A.). While the statutes are silent on the role of the board president, school districts establish the role of the president in their “B” policies. Typically, the board president is expected to run the board meetings, meet with the superintendent to develop the meeting agendas, representing the whole board in the process, and serve as the spokesman for the board with the media. ASBA publishes a Board President Handbook to help members acclimate to the role of board president.

Choosing a person to serve as the board president should not be taken lightly or passed around based on seniority. The president needs to be a person who can ensure that all points of view have a fair hearing at meetings; someone who is able to control the public and the board at meetings; someone who has the time to commit to additional meetings with the superintendent to plan the agenda; and someone who is able to build the teamwork relationship between the board and administration needed to advance the district toward its vision.



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## Effective Board Presidents

- Possess a good knowledge of meeting rules of order and how to apply them
- Treat all members of the board, administration and public with respect, fairness and dignity
- Keep cool during heated discussions
- Help lead the discussion toward a conclusion by building on points of agreement
- Make sure everyone has an opportunity to be heard at the board table and sets a tone of inclusiveness.

The board president has no additional power compared to other board members and is expected to share his/her viewpoint and vote on each issue presented to the board. Information shared at an agenda setting meeting by the superintendent should be shared with all board members. Like all board members, the president must put self-interests secondary to the interests of the district and the community served.

## Role of the Administrative Assistant to the Governing Board

The administrative assistant to the governing board, sometimes referred to as the board secretary, is responsible for recording, producing, disseminating and archiving the official record of all board meetings and to prepare materials necessary for the board's activities. While this individual supports the work of the board, he or she reports to the superintendent or member of the district staff, not directly to the board.

The administrative assistant must maintain high levels of confidentiality and use considerable discretion and independent judgment in protecting or releasing information. Further responsibilities include assuring that all required notices and records are properly prepared and posted. The administrative assistant should have a strong working knowledge of the Open Meeting Law, records retention requirements and Arizona's Public Records Law.

A typical job description for an administrative assistant includes the following:

- Attend all board meetings
- Ensure the safety and accuracy of all board records and maintain accordingly
- Record and disseminate board minutes

- Provide notice of meetings of the board and/or of a board committee
- Maintain the district policy manual
- Coordinate and track board and superintendent travel/conferences

**Arizona School Administrative Professionals (ASAP)**

ASBA created a separate organization for administrative professionals to support and offer resources to district staff who provide administrative support to governing boards and superintendents. Additionally, ASBA maintains a listerv for ASAP members to share resources and best practices.

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**Board – Superintendent Governance**



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## **The Authority for Boards to Govern Themselves**

Arizona state law specifies where boards shall meet, that a board president shall be selected and that the board shall prescribe rules for its own government.

15-321. Organization; election of officers of the board; meetings; execution of warrants; exemption

- A. For the purpose of organization of the governing board, the board shall meet at the most convenient public facility in the school district. If a public facility is not available within the district, the governing board may meet at any available public facility that is convenient to all governing board members, regardless of the county or school district in which the facility is located. The governing board shall meet between January 1 and January 15 next following the election.
- B. At the organization meeting the governing board shall elect from among the membership of the board a president
- C. For the purposes of regular meetings of the governing board, the board shall meet at the most convenient public facility in the school district. If a public facility is not available within the district, the governing board may meet at any available public facility that is convenient to all governing board members, regardless of the county or school district in which the facility is located.
- D. The board shall prescribe rules for its own government. It shall hold a regular meeting at least once each month during the regular school year and may hold other meetings as often as called. If action has been taken and documents approved at a meeting, they may be signed subsequently by individual board members.
- E. Business shall be conducted at regular or special meetings. Notice of a special meeting, and of the hour for a regular meeting if no hour is fixed by a rule of the board, shall be delivered personally or by telephone.
- F. Notwithstanding section 1-216, if there is a vacancy or vacancies on the governing board, a majority of the remaining members of the governing board constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, except that a single member of the governing board does not constitute a quorum.
- G. An order on a county school superintendent for a salary or other expense shall be signed by the governing board. An order for salary or other expense may be signed between board meetings if a resolution to that effect has been passed prior to the signing at a regular or special meeting of the governing board and the order is ratified by the board at the next regular or special meeting of the governing board.
- H. This section does not apply to county school superintendents in the conduct of an accommodation school.



# Chapter 5



## Arizona Sunshine Laws

School district governing boards are there to reflect the community's vision and values at the most local level. It is the public policy of this state that government be conducted in the open: where the public can observe it and take part in it, to the extent that the law allows. Legendary U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis stated that “sunshine is the greatest disinfectant” in arguing for open government. Arizona has taken that to heart with its open meeting and public records laws, which favor a high degree of openness compared to other states.

In addition to understanding why we have sunshine laws, it's critical that school board members understand the legal importance of following those laws, as they may be personally liable for violating them. While this chapter will merely introduce school board members to Arizona's sunshine laws, it should spark interest to learn a great deal more about these critical components of this democratic system of governance, and we publish an Open Meeting Law Handbook so that new board members can do just that.

### Open Meeting Law

A meeting is defined as “a gathering, in person or through technological devices, of a quorum of members of a public body at which they discuss, propose, or take legal action, including any deliberations by a quorum with respect to such action.” Legal action means a collective decision, commitment or promise made by a majority of the members of a public body pursuant to the constitution, their charter, bylaws or specified scope of appointment or authority and the laws of the state. The term public body includes all school district governing boards and all standing, special or advisory committees or subcommittees of, or appointed by, a school district governing board. [A.R.S. 38-431]

All meetings of school district governing boards must be open to the public, except legally noticed executive sessions. Simply stated, “openness” is the rule and “closed” is the exception.

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## Notices of Meetings

A.R.S. 38-431.01(A) contains the basic statement of the Arizona Open Meeting Law:

All meetings of any public body shall be public meetings and all persons so desiring shall be permitted to attend and listen to the deliberations and proceedings.

In order to ensure that the public has the opportunity to attend meetings of public bodies, the Legislature has established requirements for the prior publication of notices that these meetings will take place. Such notices must be posted 24 hours in advance, should include the date, time and place of the meetings, and must include an agenda of the matters to be discussed or decided at the meeting, or information about how the public may obtain a copy of such an agenda.

There are only two exceptions to this requirement to post notices.

- In the case of an emergency, a meeting may be held with whatever notice is appropriate and possible under the circumstances. If this authority is used, the governing board must post a public notice within 24 hours stating that an emergency session was held and listing the specific matter discussed, considered or decided at the meeting.
- A meeting may be recessed and resumed, with less than 24 hours' notice, if the notice of the initial meeting was properly given and if, prior to recessing, notice is publicly given as to the time and place of the resumption of the meeting or the method by which notice shall be publicly given.

## Agendas

The agenda for a meeting is a list of the specific matters to be discussed, considered or decided at the meeting. Agendas should contain sufficient detail to allow the public to ascertain the nature of the business to be conducted. The portion of an agenda that addresses an executive session must cite more than the specific provision of law authorizing the executive session. It must also include a general description of the matters to be considered yet must not include any information that would compromise the privacy interest of an employer, public officer or appointee or compromise the attorney-client privilege.

Once again, discussion, consideration or decisions on item(s) or subject(s) not on an agenda for a meeting are prohibited at the meeting. Board members



on boards that allow a call to the public should be very careful to ensure that no discussion or consideration of, and no decision about, a question raised by the community member that is not part of the agenda is made. The board should listen to the comments from community members and, if necessary and appropriate, schedule deliberations and discussions about the subject for a future meeting or ask administration to follow up with the member of the community raising the issue or question.

### Minutes

The governing board must ensure that the minutes of all meetings are taken and made available to the public within three working days. The administrative assistant to the board and superintendent typically takes the minutes. More detailed information about board meeting minutes is covered in Chapter 7.

### Executive Sessions

An executive session is a meeting of the governing board from which members of the public are excluded. Governing boards may hold executive sessions, provided that a majority of the members constituting a quorum vote, in a public meeting, to hold the executive session. Executive sessions may be held only for the specific purposes outlined in statute. (See box on page 37.)

The minutes of an executive session must include an accurate description of any instructions given by the public body to its attorney or representative regarding its

- (a) contracts that are the subject of negotiations, pending or contemplated litigation, or settlement discussions conducted to avoid or resolve litigation,
- (b) negotiations with employee organizations regarding salaries, salary schedules or compensation in the form of fringe benefits, and
- (c) negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property.

The minutes of an executive session must be made available to the County Attorney or the Attorney General when investigating alleged violations, as well as to the Auditor General's Office when conducting an audit. Disclosure of executive session information does not constitute a waiver of any privilege, including attorney-client privilege. Any person receiving information about an executive session can disclose that information only to the Attorney General or a County Attorney through an agreement with the public body or to a court. Any court that reviews executive session information must protect the privileged information.

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The minutes and the discussions of an executive session must be kept confidential except from members of the board. Only current governing board members may have access to the minutes of executive sessions, including minutes of executive sessions held prior to the time some or all members joined the board. Officers, appointees or employees who are the subject of discussion under the provisions of A.R.S. 38-431.03 are also eligible to examine the minutes of the portion of the executive session at which they were discussed.

## **Public Participation**

As mentioned earlier, members of the public have a legal right to attend all open board meetings and listen to the deliberations and discussions. The law does not require that boards allow anyone to participate in these discussions or deliberations. However, board members have an obligation to be aware of and may consider the opinions of the community in making their decisions. In order to ascertain such opinions, most boards will provide for one or more periods during the course of a meeting to receive input from the public.

The responsible receipt of the public's opinions is vital to the board's understanding of community concerns. It is up to the president of the board, supported by the other members, to ensure that citizens who desire to address the board have opportunities to do so. Many boards require that citizens who wish to address the board fill out a short form indicating the subjects upon which they desire to speak.

Many times, citizens desire to address the board on controversial or emotional subjects. Such a situation can lead to many heated, and sometimes acrimonious, comments. While this type of comment reflects deeply held convictions, it is the responsibility of the board, and especially its president, to ensure that the board's meeting is conducted with the degree of decorum appropriate for a governmental body.

Board members should constantly remember the restrictions placed on the board by the Open Meeting Law, specifically the requirement that deliberations, discussions and actions of the board must be reflected on the agenda. Board members should never enter into a debate with a community member, even on an agenda item. If the community member is addressing a subject not on the agenda, board members must remember to listen closely to the comments, but reserve any deliberation, discussion or action for later if it is an appropriate item for consideration.

At the end of the call to the public, members of the public body may respond

**Executive Sessions are permitted for:**

1. Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, dismissal, salaries, disciplining or resignation of a public officer, appointee or employee of any public body, except that, with the exception of salary discussions, an officer, appointee or employee may demand that such discussion or consideration occur at a public meeting. The public body shall provide the officer, appointee or employee with such notice of the executive session as is appropriate, but not less than 24 hours for the officer, appointee or employee to determine whether such discussion or consideration should occur at a public meeting.
2. Discussion or consideration of records exempt by law from public inspection, including the receipt and discussion of information or testimony that is specifically required to be maintained as confidential by state or federal law.
3. Discussion or consultation for legal advice with the attorney or attorneys of the public body.
4. Discussion or consultation with the attorneys of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its attorneys regarding the public body's position regarding contracts that are the subject of negotiations, in pending or contemplated litigation or in settlement discussions conducted in order to avoid or resolve litigation.
5. Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations with employee organizations regarding the salaries, salary schedules or compensation paid in the form of fringe benefits to employees of the public body.
6. Discussion, consultation or consideration for international and interstate negotiations or for negotiations by a city or town, or its designated representatives, with members of a tribal council, or its designated representatives, of an Indian reservation located within or adjacent to the city or town.
7. Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to consider its position and instruct its representatives regarding negotiations for the purchase, sale or lease of real property.
8. Discussion or consideration of matters relating to school safety operations or school safety plans or programs.
9. Discussions or consultations with designated representatives of the public body in order to discuss security plans, procedures, assessments, measures or systems relating to, or having an impact on, the security or safety of buildings, facilities, operations, critical infrastructure information and information technology maintained by the public body. Records, documentation, notes, or other materials made by, or provided to, the representatives pursuant to this paragraph are confidential and exempt from public disclosure.
10. Student discipline matter under Title 15.

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to criticism, ask the staff to review a matter or ask that a matter brought up during the call to the public be put on a future agenda.

## Public Records

Arizona's other "sunshine law" is the Public Records Law. Arizona law states that public records and other matters in the custody of a public body or public officer shall promptly be made available to any person for inspection and copying. Moreover, the purpose of this law is to 1) increase the public's access to and knowledge of government; and 2) make government accountable. School districts are "government" and fall under the Public Records Law. School officials must promptly produce records upon request from a member of the public.

So, what records are public? Everything created or received by a public body (a governing board) or public officer (a governing board member) that relates to public business or is created or received in the course of conducting public business (even if on personal computers) if done in:

- Pursuance of a duty
- Required by law to be maintained
- Records of official transactions

Basically, almost all records of a school district – including those created by the board members in pursuance of their duties – are public records. However, some records – though still deemed public records – may be excluded from disclosure under the law. Two big categories are:

- Teacher evaluations (as opposed to evaluations of other school personnel, including the superintendent) and personnel records of personal nature – such as social security numbers, addresses, personal health, etc.
- Student records are a category unto themselves: they are not considered public records at all, under state and federal law.

Board members should know that almost all of their board related e-mail and text message communications will be deemed public records and subject to disclosure, whether the record is maintained on the school district servers, on the board member's personal computer or cell phone. Because there is an affirmative responsibility under public records law to maintain these records under rigidly regulated time schedules, it is strongly recommended that board members obtain a school district provided e-mail address and conduct all school board business using such an account.

Quick Tips

## More About Open Meeting Law

ASBA provides training on the Open Meeting Law at most of its conferences. Additional Open Meeting Law information can be found on the ASBA website and the Agency Handbook from the Arizona Attorney General. Additionally, ASBA offers on site Open Meeting Law trainings as a for-fee service.











# Chapter 6

## Characteristics of Effective Boards

**M**ore than 90,000 citizens are members of local school boards in the United States, all serving as important trustees of the nation's public education systems. In Arizona, approximately 1,200 individuals serve as locally elected school board members.

Effective board members begin with the philosophy that they are there to serve the children of the district by providing the best education possible with the resources that are available. Every decision at the board table should be focused on how this vote will help the district improve educational outcomes for students and how it correlates to the district's vision, mission and values.

It is common for individuals to be motivated to run because of a specific interest or concern, but a singular focus on an issue is unlikely to leave a legacy of improved performance for the students in the community. Board members must balance the needs of students with the demands of employees, parents and taxpayers. This is not always easy, but a systemic view is necessary to be an effective board member.

### Local Boards Can Make a Difference

A significant body of research shows with consistency that the characteristics and practices of school boards have direct and meaningful impact on student outcomes. The National School Boards Association's Center for Public Education identified indicators of school board effectiveness. From this research, it is clear that school boards in high-achieving districts exhibit habits and characteristics that are different from boards in lower-achieving districts.

So, what do effective boards do?

#### Let's take a look at the Eight Characteristics of Effective Boards:

1. Effective school boards commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.
2. Effective school boards have strong shared beliefs and values about what

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is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels

3. Effective school boards are accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.
4. Effective school boards have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.
5. Effective boards are data savvy; they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.
6. Effective school boards align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals.
7. Effective school boards lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
8. Effective school boards take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts.

SOURCE: Dervarics, C, O'Brian, E (January 28, 2011). Eight Characteristics of Effective School Boards.

## Five Key Pillars of Board Service

ASBA utilizes an evidence-based self-evaluation tool to help boards examine their own practice and effectiveness. The self-evaluation tool allows districts to assess their work based on five pillars of effective boards which are shaped by the Eight Characteristics of Effective Boards listed above.. In doing so, they can identify areas of strength and opportunity for growth.

The five pillars of effective board service are:



Conduct and Ethics



Accountability



Vision



Advocacy



Structure

### **Conduct and Ethics**

School boards should provide responsible school district governance by:

- Ensuring the board is accountable and open to the public including seeking divergent perspectives in decision making.
- Respecting the roles and responsibilities of the board and superintendent.
- Adopting policies based on well researched practices that emphasize a belief that every student can achieve at high levels and that support continuous improvement of student achievement.
- Promote healthy relationships by communicating supportively, inspiring, motivating and empowering others and exercising influence in a positive manner.
- Working as an effective and collaborative team.

### **Vision**

Set and communicate high expectations for student learning with clear goals and plans for meeting those expectations by:

- Articulating that all students can learn despite circumstance or resource.
- Leading the development, articulation and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by schools and the community.
- Adopting a collaboratively developed plan focused on learning and achievement outcomes for all students.
- Ensuring non-negotiable goals for student achievement are established and aligned to the district's plan.

### **Structure**

Create conditions district-wide for student and staff success by:

- Providing for the safety and security of all students and staff.
- Employing and supporting quality teachers, administrators and other staff and providing for their professional development.
- Providing for learning essentials, including rigorous curriculum, technology and high-quality facilities.
- Ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for an efficient and effective learning environment.
- Adopting and monitoring an annual budget that allocates resources based on the district's vision, goals and priorities for student learning.

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## **Accountability**

Hold the school district accountable for meeting student learning expectations by:

- Committing to continuous improvement in student achievement at each school and throughout the district.
- Evaluating the superintendent on clear and focused expectations.
- Measuring student academic progress and needs based on valid and reliable assessments.

## **Advocacy**

Engage local community and represent the values and expectations they hold for their schools by:

- Collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse interests and needs and mobilizing community resources.
- Ensuring school board and district transparency through a process that is open and accountable.
- Ensuring district information and decisions are communicated community-wide.
- Soliciting input from staff and a wide spectrum of the community so that a diverse range of interests and perspectives on issues is considered.

## **What Research Tells Us**

Studies by the Iowa Association of School Boards and their research affiliate (the Iowa School Boards Foundation) are among the most cited studies showing that the attitudes and behavior of school boards have a significant impact on student achievement. Many other studies have identified the powerful connection between positive student outcomes and school board effectiveness, and district practices and approaches.

### **The Iowa Lighthouse Study (2001) and (2007)**

- School board actions are a key part of a “culture of improvement” and attitudes and behaviors have significant impacts on student achievement.
- High-achieving districts have boards that: set clear, high expectations for student achievement and school improvement; create the conditions that support successful teaching and learning; hold the system accountable for student success; create the collective will to improve achievement and learn together as a board – superintendent team.
- In high-achieving districts, staff members can link the school board’s goals to building-level goals for student learning and explain how the goals impact classrooms.
- Student achievement improves when school boards focus on achievement rather than administrative issues.

### **Foundations for Success – How Urban School Systems Improve Student Achievement (Snipes, Doolittle and Herlihy, 2002)**

- Fast-moving districts develop a consensus among board members and other leaders on the identification and implementation of improvement strategies.
- School board members focus on decisions “that support improved student achievement rather than on the day-to-day operations of the district.”
- High-achieving districts, the board and superintendent support uniform professional development built on curriculum.
- Fast-moving districts have political and organizational stability as evidenced by low rates of school board turnover.

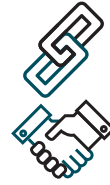
### **Meta-Analysis (Waters and Marzano, 2006)**

- Five specific leadership responsibilities correlate with student achievement: establishing a collaborative process to set goals; establishing “non-negotiable goals” in student achievement and classroom instruction; having the board align with and support district goals; monitoring goals for achievement and instruction and using resources to support achievement and instruction goals.
- High-achieving districts actively involve board members and community stakeholders in setting goals.





# Chapter 7



## Board Meeting Basics

**B**oard meetings are where the work of governing boards happen. When in a legally noticed meeting, the board has the opportunity to discuss issues and the power to make decisions. Used appropriately, the public will view the board room as a place of celebration, planning and accountability.

### Board Meetings

Any time a quorum of board members communicates about an issue related to school board business, it is a meeting. Legal meetings require that the public is informed at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting about what will be discussed or decided.

#### Quick Tips

By law, regular meetings of the board should be “at the most convenient public facility in the school district.” If a public facility is not available within the district, “the governing board may meet at any available public facility that is convenient to all governing board members, regardless of the county or school district in which the facility is located” (A.R.S. §15-321). The statute also allows for “special meetings of the board.” However, no legal action should be taken unless the board is in a public facility in the school district.

### Types of Meetings

- **Regular** – By statute (A.R.S. §15-321 D), boards are required to hold a regular meeting at least once each month during the regular school year. This meeting would follow the format for regular meetings that is outlined in the district’s agenda policy (Policies BEDG and BEDBA). Typically, the regular meeting will include public comment (allowed but not required by law), items for discussion by the board and administration, and items on which board action is required. Many boards also included celebrations or highlights of student and staff accomplishments.



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- **Special** – All meetings that are not regular meetings are Special Meetings. These meetings require agendas and are open meetings. Many boards will use other terms to describe these special meetings such as retreats or work study sessions. A member of ASBA's training team is often invited to facilitate these sessions.
    - **Retreats** are often used as planning meetings, where vision, mission, core values and goals are discussed. These meetings tend to be less formal and may employ the use of a facilitator so that the president and superintendent can participate equally with the other board members. Boards generally bring back information from the retreat to a regular board meeting for discussion and action.
    - **Work study sessions** are used by boards to delve more deeply into a particular issue prior to the item being brought to the board for action at a regular meeting. The less formal nature of the work study allows board members and administrators to interact more easily. Some boards may include a work study session as part of their regular meeting.
    - **Executive Sessions** – Executive sessions are the closed portion of either a regular or special meeting. As described in Chapter 5, the board must take action at an open regular or special meeting to convene into executive session. All decisions and votes are made in the open portion of the meeting. (Note: Student hearings are exempt from the Open Meeting Law.)

## Simple Rules of Order

While ASBA does not recommend adopting “Robert’s Rules of Order,” which is oriented to parliamentary or legislative bodies, it does recommend that boards follow some simple rules of order in their meetings to allow for effective and efficient meetings.

Boards have discretion in what rules of order they wish to adopt. State statute says that “boards shall prescribe rules for its own government” (A.R.S. §15-321 D.).

Each governing board can adopt its own set of rules of order (parliamentary procedures) for use during meetings, such as:

- All motions require a second.
- Only one main motion can be active at a time.
- The board president can make motions, second motions and vote on all motions.

The board president facilitates the meeting by introducing the item, recognizing all speakers, repeating the motion before the vote and summarizing the amendable vote.

Sample motions to accomplish various tasks are shown in the box. The basic concept upon which rules of procedure are built is the concept of relationship of motions, called the order of precedence. The order of precedence tells a member of the board two things: when a motion is in order and in what order to vote on pending motions.

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### Example of a meeting procedure that could be adopted:

| To do this:  | Say this:                                     | Interrupt speaker? | Second required | Is motion debatable | Is motion amendable? | What vote is required  |
|--|---|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Adjourn meeting before business is completed                     | "I move that we adjourn."                     | No                 | Yes             | No                  | No                   | Majority               |
| Recess the meeting   | "I move that we recess until..."              | No                 | Yes             | No                  | Yes                  | Majority               |
| Suspend further consideration of an issue until later in meeting | "I move we table it."                         | No                 | Yes             | No                  | No                   | Majority               |
| End debate   | "I move the previous question."               | No                 | Yes             | Yes                 | Yes                  | Two-Thirds             |
| Study an issue further   | "I move we refer this matter to a committee." | No                 | Yes             | Yes                 | Yes                  | Majority               |
| Introduce business (primary motion)                              | "I move that..."                              | No                 | Yes             | Yes                 | Yes                  | Majority               |
| Amend a motion   | "I move that this motion be amended by..."    | Yes                | No              | No                  | No                   | Majority               |
| Object to procedure or a personal affront                        | "Point of order."                             | Yes                | No              | No                  | No                   | No vote, chair decides |
| Take up a previously tabled matter                               | "I move we take from the table"               | No                 | Yes             | No                  | No                   | Majority               |
| Postponing a motion  | "I move we postpone until..."                 | No                 | Yes             | Yes                 | Yes                  | Majority               |

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## Create an Annual Board Calendar

An annual board calendar that includes which month the board will take required actions, and when it does evaluations and planning, is an extremely useful tool. See Appendix I for an example.

### Planning the Board Calendar

Many boards, superintendents and board administrative assistants find the use of an annual board calendar helpful in ensuring that required and desired items are addressed at board meetings. The policy services group at ASBA publishes an annual calendar of required actions for districts, which includes items that require board action and those that only require administrative action. This is a great tool for developing a district board calendar.

Start by placing on the calendar items that require action by the board (such as financial report approvals). Next, add those items required by board policy – such as superintendent evaluations and board self-evaluations. Then, add those regular items that require board action in your district such as annual goals, review of bonds and overrides, handbooks, codes of conduct, textbook adoptions and district calendars. Be sure to include periodic review of progress toward board and district goals.

Now determine those items that may need to be discussed prior to decisions being made and place these on the calendar as discussion items a month or so before the decision meeting. The calendar can be adjusted as needed to add items that arise during the year. Distributing the calendar to the board helps your board members be prepared for what is on the horizon and ensures that important items do not get overlooked. (See Appendix I for a sample board calendar.)

### Planning the Agenda

Most boards have a policy stating that the agenda will be prepared by the superintendent in consultation with the board president. Generally, the superintendent prepares a draft agenda that is reviewed with the board president. The president's role is to:

- Ensure that the agenda items requested by board members are addressed (either as an agenda item or as information shared with all board members)

- Ensure that the description of the item will be clear to board members and the general public
- Ensure that required actions are taken when needed
- Help the superintendent decide which items could be handled as consent items (typically routine business matters that do not need to be discussed or defended; not for anything controversial)
- Keep the expected time for the meeting to a reasonable length

Board presidents can also assist superintendents in deciding what background or supporting information should be included in the board packet. When the board has the information needed to support the decision, the meeting time can be spent on discussing the merit of the item rather than gathering additional background information.

### Meeting Minutes

Most boards prepare and approve written minutes based on some form of recording. The minutes may be taken in writing or by means of a recording; either may serve as the minutes of the meeting. The minutes of the board's meeting must include the following items:

- The date, time and place of the meeting.
- The members of the governing board recorded as either present or absent.
- A general description of the matters considered.
- An accurate description of all legal actions proposed, discussed or taken, the names of members who proposed and seconded each motion and a record of how each member voted.
- The names of any persons making statements or presenting matters to the board, and a reference to the specific legal action addressed by each person.

The minutes should also contain or have attached to them any information necessary to an understanding of the actions taken. For example, if the board should approve a list of employees to be rehired for the coming year, this list should be attached to and made a part of the minutes. Once written minutes of a meeting are approved by the governing board, this becomes the official minutes (the audio or video recording may be destroyed under the public record retention guidelines published by the Arizona Library and Archives – currently this is three months following the meeting).

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## Board Member Participation

Board members have been elected or appointed to represent their community in the local public schools. Board members are expected to prepare for, attend and participate in as many meetings as possible. A majority of the board must be present to hold a legal meeting. The local community has a right to observe board meetings and see how decisions are made. When a board member's only participation is to vote, it is difficult for the community to understand how the decision was made. When a member is voting against the recommendation, that member should take a moment to explain why he/she disagrees with the recommendation from the administration or the board member making the motion. This is when a board member has the opportunity to convince other board members of his/her position on the item. Board meetings are the only time that a quorum of board members can legally discuss issues with each other. Use the meetings as a time to hear from fellow board members and listen to how each member's point of view might help the board make the best decision.

## Public Participation

Members of the public should be encouraged to attend board meetings. The law requires the public be allowed to speak at board meetings when a budget hearing or closing of a school is on the agenda. In all other cases, whether to allow the public speak at the board meeting is the will of the board. Most school boards in Arizona allow some form of public participation at regular board meetings. (Check your district's policy BEDB to see what your board has approved in this area.) Some boards choose to allow public comment during regular meetings but not during special meetings. This allows the board to concentrate on the reason for the special meeting. Typically, a board will choose one of three types of participation:

- No public comment
- Limited call to the public (only allow public to speak on items that are on the agenda)
- Open call to the public (allows community members to comment on anything within the jurisdiction of the board)

Board members should listen carefully to the comments made, and they may make notes for further reference during the agenda item discussion. The Open Meeting Law does not permit responses to comments about topics not on the agenda. These items can be referred to administration for follow-up or

requested to be placed on a future agenda. Most boards include a time limit of two to three minutes per speaker in their public participation policy. When the policy is consistently followed, community members know what to expect and feel that all will be treated fairly.

### Ethics

Board behavior in and out of the boardroom reflects on the district. ASBA recommends the adoption and adherence to an ethics policy (Appendix A) and code of conduct (Appendix B). Following the policy or code helps build trust in the organization and keeps the district in a positive light in the community.

#### Quick Tips

### Promises and Authority

Board members should not make promises that cannot be kept; remember, individual board members have no authority outside meetings. Individual members can work with their board colleagues in public meetings to gain support for policies, programs and direction.

### Handling Complaints and Criticisms

As a public official, board members need to be prepared to deal with complaints, criticisms and pressure from individuals and groups. Remember that while a parent's concern is doing what is in the best interest of their child, the board member's responsibility is to do what is in the best interest of all the children in the district. Many times, the best response is to listen to the concerns and help direct the individual to the right person in the organization.

Most boards have adopted policies to handle complaints from the public and staff. These policies generally attempt to get problems addressed at the level closest to where the concern is and then work up the chain of command. The board is the last step in the process – not the first. Board members have no authority as individuals to solve most problems and can help the individual by directing him/her to the appropriate administrator. When in doubt, the board member should forward the complaint to the superintendent to address.

The Open Meeting Law does give board members the authority to respond to criticisms made during public comment – even when the topic is not on the agenda. Before responding, consider whether responding will help clarify the situation or just fan the flames and escalate the issue.

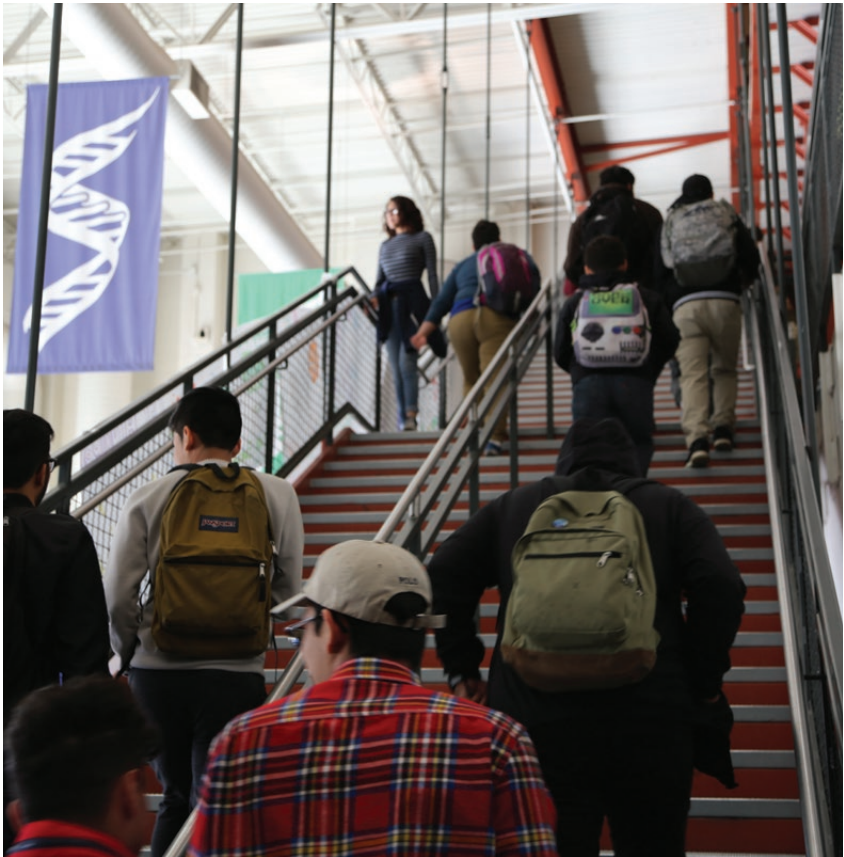
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If a complaint involves a policy issue, then the issue should be addressed by the entire board at a future board meeting, with appropriate guidance from legal counsel and the superintendent.

Quick Tips

## ASBA Executive Search Assistance

ASBA is your one-stop-shop for superintendent searches. From helping your board become search ready, to launching a statewide or nationwide search, to assisting you with a smooth transition post-search – we've got you covered.







# Chapter 8

## Team Leadership for Continuous Improvement



**S**chool board members and the superintendent form the senior leadership team for the district and are the engine that drives the district to continuously improve – academically and operationally. The board has the governance role – setting the direction and establishing goals for the district – while the superintendent’s role is to implement and administer the plan. Successful districts value the contributions from both sides of this team, and the mutual respect exhibited is reflected in:

- Frequent two-way communications
- Support, not “surprises”
- Well-defined roles
- Learning together as a team
- Celebrating positive achievements together

### **District Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and Goals**

To meet the common needs and accomplish the goals of the district, the governing board must have a unity of purpose that begins by agreeing upon the vision, mission and core beliefs of the district. A clear vision and common mission that identify the learning to be achieved can help keep a school district and the efforts of its staff and students on target. A shared vision is critical to a district’s future; it provides the foundation upon which all decisions are made. The vision, mission and core beliefs are used to drive operations and promote high levels of student achievement.

### **District Mission**

The term “mission” refers to the overall purpose of the district. The mission should consist of actions that can be observed by your public. The mission is all about today, the reason for existence of the district and what the district is providing in pursuit of the vision. Employees, parents and community members must be able to view the mission and realize what they are to

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do daily to move the district closer to accomplishing its vision. The mission answers the question, “Why do we exist?”

Samples of Mission Statements:

- **Pittsburgh Unified School District (PA):** To inspire our students, to ensure they achieve equity in academic excellence and to bring students closer together through shared experiences in learning.
- **Wappingers Central School District (NY):** To empower all of our students with the competencies and confidence to challenge themselves, to pursue their passions, to achieve personal success, and to contribute responsibly in a diverse and dynamic world.
- **Elmhurst Community Unit School District 205 (IL):** To meet the educational needs of all students, challenging each to his or her full potential and ensuring a foundation for future success in life.

## What’s Your District’s Mission?

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### District Vision

- Is not a dream; it is a reality that has yet to come into existence
- Defines what student success looks like
- Provides a compelling picture of what the district can become in the future
- Defines how the district would like to be regarded by parents, students and the community
- Is short and concise
- Answers the question, “What are we working to become?”
- Must be inspiring!

The vision should be collaboratively generated by internal and external stakeholder groups. The governing board and superintendent should develop the vision by collecting input from parents, staff and students, and

then taking the input back to board work study sessions prior to adoption in a regular meeting.

The implementation of the vision throughout the district results in “alignment of individual energies” of all who take part. It is important for the administrative staff to work with all employees to develop their own individual vision that is in alignment with the district vision. Leaders who are wholly committed to the district vision will find it much easier to motivate others and direct their energy toward making the vision reality. Board members should use the vision statement as a filter through which all decisions are made and all board votes are taken.

Samples of Vision Statements:

- **El Paso Independent School District** (TX) will be a premier educational institution, source of pride and innovation, and the cornerstone of emerging economic opportunities producing a twenty-first century workforce.
- **The North Canton City School District** (OH), to be recognized as a trusted leading organization for learning.
- **The Madera Unified School District** (CA) Where the futures of children are driven by their aspirations, not bound by their circumstances.

### What’s Your District’s Vision?

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### Core Values

“Core values” refer to the guiding principles and behaviors that embody how the district and its people are expected to operate. Core values reflect and reinforce the desired culture of the district and guide the decision-making of every district employee. It is the duty of the superintendent and other district leaders to nurture the core values by effectively modeling dynamic and moral leadership. One example of a core value that drives behavior in a district

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is, “We Treat People Well.” This simple statement can be etched in one’s memory and retrieved when collaborating with others or even when encountering a tense situation.

Core Value Samples:

- Democracy: We respect and value the views of others and encourage participatory decision-making.
- Diversity as an Asset: Our success depends on the diverse backgrounds, knowledge, skills, creativity, dedication and motivation of our students, staff, parents and community members.
- Focus on Results: We will promote systemic thinking, articulated processes for continuous improvement and use of data to monitor progress.
- Positive Intent: We will seek out others with the presupposed notion they are operating with good intentions. We will be problem-solvers and work towards win-win situations. We will be active listeners and find the positives in others and situations. We will communicate with positive intent and use strategies to build this in others.
- Responsible Citizenship: We care about our school and community. We participate in community activities and work to preserve and enhance our environment.

As a new member of the district leadership team or a member desiring to discover how the vision, mission and core values were developed, you should ask the following questions:

- How did the district develop the vision, mission and core values? How long have they been serving the district? Who was involved in the process? How was consensus reached? Who actually wrote the words?
- How widely does the district distribute the vision, mission and core values? How are new employees made aware of it? How does the district reinforce them with parents and students?
- How do the vision, mission and core values guide district decisions? (How do board members and administrators model behaviors congruently?) What kind of systems and processes has the district developed to ensure that the district lives up to these statements?

## What is a vision? What is a mission?

**Vision** is defined as the act or power of imagination; mode of seeing or conceiving

A **mission** is a preestablished and often self-imposed objective or purpose

### District & Board Goals

Setting goals is crucial for the work of boards. It is how boards and districts stay focused on the immediate needs of the district and how they demonstrate accountability to their community. While districts establish district goals as part of an annual process, board goals may be overlooked. This may be because boards see the district goals as their goals. However, board goals are unique to the board. Board goals are established to aid the board in their own continuous improvement so that they may better support the work of the district.

#### District

The governing board and superintendent set the direction of the district by mutually adopting district goals that align with the vision, mission and core beliefs. Member boards often invite ASBA to facilitate these sessions so that all participants are free to focus entirely on the discussion. A good method for developing goals is to have a goal-setting retreat or study session that begins with a report from the administrative team. Prior to the retreat, the administrative team may have met several times to review achievement data and identify the most critical needs of the district, then narrowed the needs to a “vital few.” The governing board should review the rationale for choosing the “vital few,” make recommendations for changes, additions or deletions and adopt goals for the year. Once adopted, the superintendent and administrative team work with all stakeholders to focus resources, professional development and best practices to achieve the goals.

#### Board

Boards are encouraged to self-evaluate annually to identify opportunities for board development and increased board effectiveness. Effective boards demonstrate key leadership qualities (See Chapter 6) which support student success. Establishing board goals adds a level of accountability that demonstrates to your community that continuous improvement applies to all levels of district leadership. Boards may choose to develop their own evaluation tool or utilize ASBA’s Online Board Self-Evaluation tool.

Goals should not be lost. It is important for your goals to be emphasized and reported out on throughout the year. Methods to ensure visibility is to print the goals on every agenda and create “placemats” for all at the board table with the district’s vision, mission and core beliefs. Additionally, the board can set quarterly review dates to determine if action plans are “on track,” “behind plan,” “institutionalized” (accomplished) or “dropped” (due to lack of resources or changes in direction).

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## Establishing a Process for Continuous Improvement

*“High performing schools engage in more collaborative decision making, work harder to connect professional development to student achievement data, and make more efficient use of time and resource. None of these activities is possible, or at least possible to do well, without serious planning.”*

– The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (CSRI)

*“When school districts apply the principles and techniques of continuous improvement over time, positive and lasting changes in all parts of the system (including student learning) are dramatic.”*

– BALDRIGE IN EDUCATION

It is essential that every governing board in Arizona have a plan to secure significant improvement in student achievement. Sustained student and, therefore, school improvement can only be achieved when a school district has a clear vision and common mission that identifies the learning to be achieved and the efforts of the staff and students to remain on target.

A shared vision is critical to the district’s future, as it provides the underlying foundation upon which all decisions are made. Improvement occurs following effective planning built around goals that educators, parents and other community members know and support. School site councils, bargaining units, special support programs and all school providers must align their goals and actions with the district’s efforts for improvement.

Once the district’s expectations are deployed throughout the district and the community, the superintendent can begin to create the system for continuous improvement. The effort should focus on raising expectations and closing achievement gaps. Planning efforts should always include an initiative to build data systems that measure student growth and successes and inform teachers and principals about how to improve instruction.

## Developing Sustained Improvement

To develop sustained improvement, the following questions need to be answered:

- What do we expect all students to know and be able to do in each course or grade or subject? (These are partly defined by state standards adopted by the State Board of Education.)

# Chapter 8

## Team Leadership for Continuous Improvement

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- How do we select and develop the leaders and teachers needed to ensure that each learner in our district achieves these learning goals?
- What programs, strategies, materials and time allocation do we use to teach the necessary content and skills to students?
- How do we know if students learned what we said they should learn?
- If students are not learning what is expected, what do our instructors do about it?
- Are systemic inequities impacting our progress?

There is no single model for achieving success. The key is to establish successful processes that are observable, repeatable and sustainable that help schools to move forward in a culture that embraces continual school improvement as a core value. A crucial role of the governing board is to ensure that the superintendent and administrative staff have the support needed to make change.

Some of the work will need to be in partnership with other schools and agencies, and some will require mingling district and community resources. Beyond the classroom, districts must have policy, leadership and resources instituted for ensuring continuous student improvement.

Governing board members may need to revisit current policies using the lens of addressing barriers to learning with the intent of both realigning existing policy to foster better practices and enacting new policies to fill critical gaps.

### Best Practices for Continuous Improvement

According to the *Colorado Learning Foundation Guidebook for Best Practices in Closing the Achievement Gap*, the following are best practices to ensure continuous improvement:

- Culture of high expectations and accountability for all students
- Targeted assessments and intensive use of disaggregated data to identify gaps in opportunity and access
- Individualized support for struggling students
- Active engagement of teachers in school leadership and decision-making
- Substantial time for collaborative planning and options for professional development
- Commitment to core academics and standards, but not at the expense of other important learning in the arts and humanities



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- Stable and consistent leadership
  - Small learning communities of educators
  - Flexibility to use resources to support student needs and reinforce school culture
  - Economically integrated student bodies

It is essential for all teachers, administrators, support staff, parents and community members to share the responsibility for ensuring that all children have excellent, equitable educational opportunities. It all starts with the governing board acknowledging that student success is at the heart of their role.

## **When the Board Team Is Divided**

A board-superintendent team can be effective even when all members do not agree, if the members of the team are respectful in their disagreements and move forward with the decision after the vote is taken. Disagreement can build faith in the board if the public sees that healthy debate leads to good decisions. Unfortunately, sometimes disagreements between board members or between board members and the superintendent can dominate board meetings and change the team's focus from student achievement to board politics.

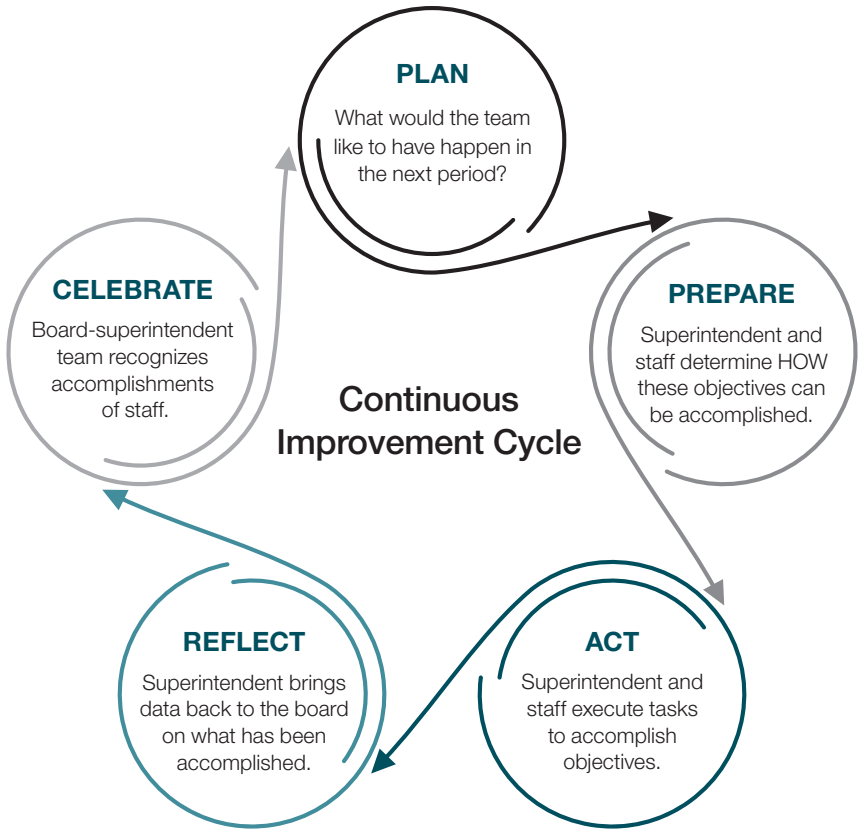
There is a difference between healthy discussion and division on a board. Division can be seen when:

- Votes almost always split along factional lines, despite the issue
- Members have deep philosophical differences about how school districts should run and function
- Personalities dominate discussion, not issues
- There is little to no interest in functioning as a team

A board divided is not a positive outcome for the district and can lead to parents finding other schools for their children, and key staff looking for other, less toxic, employment opportunities. The Arizona School Boards Association can be a resource at times like this. A neutral facilitator can help refocus the team on its vision, mission, core values and goals.

## **Management by Planning**

The governing board-superintendent team is the engine that drives continuous improvement in the district. This is done through a regular cycle of Planning, Preparing, Acting, Reflecting and Celebrating.







# Chapter 9



## Developing and Following Sound Policy

**G**overning boards in Arizona are mandated by Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) 15-341 to prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for the governance of the schools. ASBA Policy Services advises districts regarding policy needs and maintains adopted district policies online. As laws change and new opinions are issued by the courts and legal officers, ASBA sends suggested revisions to the district for compliance.

Customization is done based on district and board requirements. ASBA provides the template for policy and works with each subscriber to tailor specific items to best serve the students and staff of the district. Web-based manual access and search capabilities are also provided through ASBA PolicyBridge.

### What Are Policies?

Following are two definitions that describe the term policy:

1. A high-level overall plan embracing the general goals and acceptable procedures, especially of a governmental body
2. A definite course or method of action selected from among alternatives and in light of given conditions to guide and determine decisions

Policies serve a purpose similar to that of a navigational guide. Imagine trying to reach a long-distance destination without a compass or map. Likewise, written board policy informs every one of the board's purpose, intent, authority and limitations.

Laws and policies are essentially created in one of three domains:

- Mandatory – requiring certain decisions or actions
- Restrictive – prohibiting certain decisions or actions
- Permissive – granting the right but not a requirement for a decision or action

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On some occasions, two or all three of the domains are included in a single law or policy.

## Policy Development and Adoption

Policy adoption is one of the most crucial roles of a school district governing board. Within its powers, as granted by the Legislature, the board's policies define the direction and structure of a school district, including such matters as the setting of goals, assignments of authority and creation of controls for governing and managing the school system. The policies of a governing board are similar to the ordinances of a city or the statutes enacted by the Legislature. So long as policies are lawful, they prescribe the rules by which a school system functions and is held accountable to the public.

Typically, policies and regulations fit within one of three categories: compliance, philosophical or good practice. Usually, the greatest portion of the documents relate to the school system's compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, agency rules, attorney general opinions, case law rulings and so forth.

ASBA's policy services provide school districts with model policies that are regulatory or "compliance driven" in nature. Districts may tailor the model policies to "fit" their school district, as long as the policy remains in compliance with the law. If a district changes a policy in a substantial way, ASBA may remove our copyright simply to indicate it no longer reflects the model. School districts that modify their policies should always consult with their legal counsel before the governing board approves them.

All of the categories are important and serve valuable purposes as policy components. None of them, especially those setting out the vision and mission of the school system and the desired educational objectives, should be considered of lesser importance. The policies of the governing board, administrative regulations of the superintendent/chief executive officer

### Quick Tips

#### Did You Know...

More than 220 Arizona school district policy manuals can be accessed electronically on ASBA's PolicyBridge at <http://azsba.org/policybridge/>?

and exhibits pertinent to the policies and regulations form the collection referred to as the district's Manual of Governing Board Policies and Administrative Regulations.

Although a board is comprised of individual members, its authority is vested in a quorum of its members and policies are established through official actions taken at a legally convened meeting. Policies continue in perpetuity, having endless duration, until they are revised or rescinded through the same authority and means by which they were created. Important cautions are to be taken in the adoption of new policies, or the revision or rescission of existing policies. A careful analysis must be made not only of the intended effect of that singular policy, but also the collective effect due to its relationship and interaction with and upon other policies of the board.

Care must be taken to assure that policy actions of the board do not create violations of the law, dissonance with administrative practices or conflict with other policies. The ideal course of action is for all perceived conflicts to be resolved or accommodated in advance of formal actions by the board. Action may need to be taken to refine one or a number of other policies to ensure that policies are aligned.

Rather than being just a compilation of independent documents, the whole manual is greater than the sum of its parts. To read, understand and appropriately apply a policy, one must pursue and blend provisions that affect each referenced policy. Policies should display the legal references authorizing or requiring the policy as well as cross-references to related policies.

In the developmental process, governing board members may express a variety of opinions and beliefs on the value, need for, significance and probable effects of a proposed policy or revisions to a policy. When board members consider policy adoption or policy revisions, discussion, deliberation and action in public is mandated. As elected representatives, the board should provide sufficient time for public input. The vote of the members may alter the wording of the policy, but the board's attention to the matter will result in action being taken, even if the decision is to leave the policy as is.

The adoption or revision of a policy officially occurs when a quorum of board members agree as demonstrated by their votes at a legally convened meeting. Once the vote has taken place and the outcome is known, the minority positions should defer to the will of the majority and support the outcome of the vote. When policy has been established, the minority positions should shift their efforts and energy to achieving the best possible outcomes



## Policy Advisories

When new laws are passed by the Congress or State Legislature, or a legal ruling changes the interpretation of the law, ASBA Policy Services prepares policy models reflecting the new laws and sends these with a Policy Advisory explaining the need for a policy change to districts subscribed to ASBA Policy Services.

for the policy. In future considerations, other positions may take precedence, nevertheless, the board has a policy that guides district decision making.

The crafting of, revisions to and rescission of policies is typically one of the most difficult tasks of the governing board and of individual members. The principal resources available to boards and the administrators are ASBA Policy Services and the district's legal counsel. Policy Services researches and develops recommended manual document models. These are sent to board members and superintendents as ASBA Policy Advisories. However, the recommended documents, with or without particular customization, only become official statements when policies are adopted by the board and regulations are accepted by the administration.

Policy Services provides consultation on matters related to the district's policies and regulations. The district's attorney provides legal advice and guidance upon which the board should rely as is necessary and appropriate to a given circumstance.





# Chapter 10

## Budgeting for Success



The Arizona State Legislature determines funding levels and limits for Arizona’s public schools. The job of the governing board is to allocate those revenues in a manner that reflects the priorities of the district and community and enables the superintendent and staff to effectively accomplish the district’s mission.

To carry out the budget process effectively, school board members must know the limits of the district’s funding (commonly called revenues), as well as the sources and categories of revenue, and the type of expenditures for which each revenue category can be used.

### The District Budget

The district budget is a statement of the board’s priorities for the school year. It expresses anticipated expenditures for regular education, special education and transportation. It also lists the types of expenditures within each category.

### Expenditure Categories

Expenditures fall into two main categories: Maintenance and Operations (M&O), and Capital Outlay (commonly referred to as simply “capital”).

Maintenance and Operations expenditures make up the bulk of the budget and include employee salaries and benefits, supplies, utilities, maintenance and repair, and miscellaneous expenditures not of a capital nature. Capital Outlay expenditures include “stuff,” such as instructional software, textbooks and library books, buses and other district vehicles, furniture and furnishings, land and buildings and improvements to land and buildings.

### Developing and Adopting the Budget

Arizona school districts operate on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year. An annual expenditure budget must be adopted by the school board at an official public meeting prior to July 15 each year. The board must also hold a public hearing prior to the adoption of the budget.

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The work of preparing the budget typically starts at least six months before adoption. Many districts start to develop preliminary budget projections for the coming fiscal year as early as November. A calendar listing major milestones in the budgeting process is a useful aid employed by some district business managers and superintendents to guide work toward adoption.

One of the first steps for the board in the early stages of the budget process may be to assess existing programs for relevance and effectiveness in relation to district goals, and consider new programs or priorities for the year ahead. Smart budgeting is one of the many reasons to have a thoughtful and well-designed strategic plan for your district.

Since employee salaries and benefits are a major portion of the district budget, often accounting for about 85-90 percent of expenditures, decisions in this area are critical to completing the budget process. The number of employees and the salary level for employees are major issues in the development of most school district budgets.

## **Monitoring the Budget**

The district staff and governing board will spend many hours preparing and adopting the district budget. Embedded in the school board's responsibility for the district's financial health is the responsibility to monitor expenditures throughout the year to ensure compliance with the adopted budget. This is accomplished through periodic reports from the superintendent or business manager on the status of expenditures relative to the budgeted amounts.

In addition, situations may arise during the year that require expenditures that were not anticipated when the budget was adopted. These might include emergency building repairs, judgements, etc. This will require adjustments by the district to make the required expenditures without exceeding the adopted budget or the allowable budget limit imposed by the state.

Expenditures above the budget limit, save a few limited exceptions (which must be approved by the county board of supervisors), will result in penalties for the district, some severe. Districts that exceed their budgets will have the next year's budget reduced by the amount of overspending. Districts with repeated, significant over-expenditures may be placed in receivership, a status that removes control of district finances from the board and gives it to a third party chosen by the state. The State Board of Education is charged with making the decision to place a district into or take it out of receivership.

### **Budget Accountability**

The adopted expenditure budget also is used as the foundation for the annual financial report (AFR) that every district is required to submit by Oct. 15 to the Arizona Department of Education. The report for the prior fiscal year includes estimated and actual revenues (funding), and expenditures and fund balances. By Nov. 15, the district must also publish the annual financial report for the school district either in a newspaper of general circulation, by sending it to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) for posting on the department's website, or even mailing it to each household in the school district.

The superintendent of public instruction, the chief administrator for ADE, is required to compile the annual financial reports and provide them to the governor and Legislature by Jan. 15.

The Arizona Auditor General also uses the district's annual financial report and other district data to prepare an annual, legislatively-mandated report on how every district allocates its funding, dividing it into seven categories: instruction, instruction support, student support and administration, as well as transportation, food service and plant operation. This is known as the "classroom spending report" or the "dollars in the classroom report" and is highly scrutinized by the Legislature and others.

### **State Funding & Revenue Limits**

The district's expenditure budget is developed within the constraints of its available revenues.

The majority of district funding – or revenues - comes from within the state. Arizona law sets out the funding formula which limits the overall amount a school district can receive from the formula and the amounts to be raised from local property taxes and state funds. Therefore, the formula also limits what a school board can budget to fund the district's educational program and the supports and infrastructure necessary to provide it.

This system was put in place by the Legislature more than 35 years ago and was designed to "equalize" spending between school districts and reduce local property taxes, especially those for homeowners.

School districts receive a "per pupil" amount of money each year that is allocated by the state's legislative body. They receive some additional funds to cover English-language learners and students with disabilities. Elementary and high school students are funded at different levels in the formula. Some districts get more funding for having more experienced teachers or their location in a rural or remote area. These additional funds are known as "weights." Therefore, funding is said to be based on a district's "weighted student count."

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In addition to this per pupil funding, districts receive formula funding for capital costs like textbooks, technology (known as District Additional Assistance or DAA) and transportation.

School boards may also ask their communities to enhance this funding through the passage of bonds and overrides, which are funded by additional local property tax levies.

Two major calculations, the Revenue Control Limit (RCL) and District Additional Assistance (DAA) are the methods for determining this funding. The calculations to establish each district's budget limit for RCL and DAA are set by the Legislature and determined by the statutory formula (See Page 73). Both RCL and DAA may be used in maintenance and operation or capital outlay, however, the intent of DAA is for capital purposes. (Two prior capital funding programs were combined to create one new fund, DAA, and its allowable uses were expanded to include maintenance and operation.)

DAA is calculated on an unweighted student count. In other words, the same amount is budgeted for every student.

## **The Revenue Control Limit**

The primary determinant of the district's Revenue Control Limit is the number and classification of students who attend district schools. The student count for every school district is calculated on the 100th day of school each year. A base, per-pupil amount is set by the Legislature in the current fiscal year. Through application of adjustment factors (weights), some students are funded at higher amounts than others to account for additional educational services needed. The amount of the adjustment factor varies depending on the characteristics of a student. Such characteristics include students with certain types of disability, students in grades kindergarten to third, and high school students. Kindergarten students receive only 50 percent of the funding provided for other elementary students because they are assumed to be half-day students, even if the district only offers full-day kindergarten.

The district's Teacher Experience Index (TEI) and transportation route miles also are part of calculating the RCL. More experienced teachers typically have higher salaries, which the TEI factor aims to address. The amount of miles district school buses drive annually to transport students is also considered.

Districts with fewer than 600 students are eligible for a small school adjustment to the RCL. Remote districts receive an additional per-pupil adjustment to their RCL.

### **The Equalization Formula: Where School District Funding Originates**

The state equalization formula is applied to determine the mix of revenues used to fund a district's RCL and DAA: local property taxes (collected by the county), the state general fund or a combination of the two.

To make this determination, a legislatively determined property tax rate, called the Qualifying Tax Rate (QTR), is applied to the primary assessed valuation of property within the district. If this rate produces as much as or more than the total RCL for the district, then full RCL funding comes from local property taxes. If, for example, the product is 30 percent, then 30 percent of the RCL funding comes from local property taxes and 70 percent comes from the state general fund. In all cases, the Revenue Control Limit is the same. Only the mix of funding sources is different.

### **Revenue Outside the RCL**

Certain other items specifically allowed by law can be added on top of the RCL to determine the district's actual budget limit or maximum expenditure limit. This revenue is said to be "outside" the RCL.

A common example is budget overrides approved by voters within the district. State law allows school boards to ask their communities to allow the district to expend funds beyond the RCL. Those additional funds are generated through property taxes levied on property owners in the district. The period of approval is limited to seven years. Maintenance and operation (M&O) overrides are most common. They are restricted to a maximum of 15 percent of the RCL. Boards may also request special program overrides of up to 5 percent of the RCL. However, the combination of M&O and special program overrides may not exceed 15 percent. To extend any override past the original term, voter re-approval is required.

Among the other ways in which districts may increase their maximum budget limit outside the RCL are proceeds from the sale, lease or rental of school property; revenues generated through local property tax by the district to comply with a court order of desegregation or an administrative agreement with the U.S. Office of Civil Rights; tuition received from other districts, the state or private individuals; the amount of unused budget capacity from the previous year.

Since 1991, state law has prohibited any additional items placed outside of the Revenue Control Limit that are funded by local property taxes.

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## Other State Revenue Sources

**Classroom Site Fund:** These funds are generated by a state sales tax of .6 cents and certain school trust revenues and annually budgeted to school districts through a state formula based on student count. All school districts receive this funding. Classroom Site Fund monies must be used for instructional purposes, with a minimum of 40 percent going to teacher compensation. The Classroom Site Fund was established by the passage of Prop. 301 in 2000 and renewed by the Arizona Legislature in 2018 until 2041.

**Instructional Improvement Fund:** Beginning in 2003-2004 school year, all school districts began receiving monies generated by tribal gaming. The funds are budgeted to districts based on student count. Districts may use up to 50 percent of these monies for teacher compensation and class size reduction. The remainder must be used for instructional improvement programs.

**Building Renewal Grant Fund:** School districts may apply to the School Facilities Board for these funds for primary building renewal projects, including major renovations and repair of a building, upgrades to building systems and infrastructure costs.

**Emergency Deficiencies Correction Fund:** School districts may apply to the School Facilities Board for monies to correct facility deficiencies that threaten the functioning of the district, the preservation or protection of property or public health, welfare or safety. The cost of the correction must exceed the school district's current year budget.

## Federal Assistance

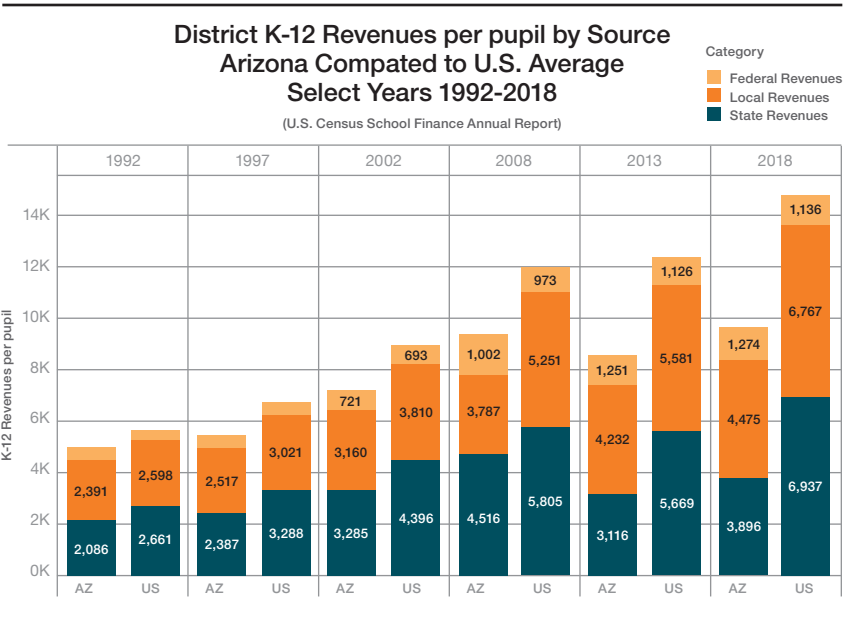
While the U.S. Constitution leaves the responsibility for public K-12 education with the states, there is a compelling national interest in the quality of the nation's public schools. As such, the federal government, through the U.S. Department of Education, provides assistance to the states to supplement state funding. The share of federal funding has risen in the past two decades. In 1991-1992, the federal share of K-12 spending in the U.S. was 5.7 percent. In 2016, it was 8 percent, according to the most recent U.S. Census data. In Arizona, federal assistance accounts for 13.7 percent of K-12 funding.

Most districts receive categorical federal funding. The two main federal education programs are Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). Title I provides funds to public schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children have the supports and assistance needed to meet challenging state



academic standards. IDEA requires school districts to provide a free and appropriate education to students with disabilities and funding to assist in that requirement.

Districts may also apply for and be awarded federal education grants for a variety of other purposes.



### Capital Funding and the School Facilities Board

Capital funding has seen major changes in recent decades. In 1998, in response to an order from the Arizona Supreme Court to reduce inequities among school districts, a new system, called Students FIRST (Fair and Immediate Resources for Students Today), was put in place to create minimal adequacy guidelines for school facilities and provide state dollars to bring public schools around the state up to those standards. The School Facilities Board was established and given the responsibility to evaluate the capital needs of school districts and to distribute monies for building renewal, building deficiencies and new construction. The members of the board are appointed by the governor. The superintendent of public instruction is an advisory, non-voting member. The state is currently the defendant in a lawsuit that alleges it has not met its capital funding obligations, including those that resulted from Students FIRST.

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## How the Budget Impacts Local Taxpayers

Your budget impacts the primary and secondary tax rates of property owners in the school district. The tax rate for a school district is set to provide any portion of local funding required by the state equalization formula to meet the RCL (see page 73). Local taxpayers are also obligated to fund voter approved district overrides and bonds through property taxes.

The property tax rates set are based on the value of property in the district and the percentage necessary to tax those values to generate the legally approved and required amounts. This means a district's budget may remain stable from one year to the next, but, if property values decrease significantly, the tax rate may increase to raise the same amount. Likewise, if property values increase, the tax rate may decrease to generate the same amount from one year to the next.

The tax rate is set by the County Board of Supervisors using budget and other information provided by the district and in cooperation with the County Superintendent of Schools. Information must be provided in August. The Board of Supervisors officially sets the tax rates and the county notifies property owners shortly thereafter.

If the revenue budget is not prepared accurately, the district may have a tax rate that generates more than the amount actually required to fund the budget. Conversely, errors can result in the district having less revenue than needed.

A school district may receive both primary and secondary property taxes, based on the items included in its budget. The primary tax rate is for maintenance and operations and capital outlay overrides, and for adjacent ways, which enables a school district to budget for and levy a property tax for the cost of improving any public way adjacent to school district land, such as sidewalks, sewers, utility lines, roadways and other related improvements. The secondary tax rate is for budget and capital outlay overrides, desegregation expenses (to comply with a court order or an agreement with the U.S. Office of Civil Rights) and debt service only.



## Chapter

# 11

## Student Success in Your District



“School board members serve their local communities as stewards of public trust charged with making decisions that ensure all students have access to high-quality learning experiences in efficient and well-managed environments.”

*What School Boards Need to Know: Data Conversations*, National School Boards Association

A significant body of research shows that the school boards in districts with high-achieving students are effective because they strategically choose to make academic progress for each and every student a top priority. In addition to taking on this responsibility through a board’s vision, mission and goals, state and federal law give school boards responsibilities in the area of student success. School boards are becoming more proficient at utilizing data to drive their decisions in an effort to increase student success. Examining the data trends of specific groups of students give superintendents and school boards the information they need to ensure students are provided an equitable educational experience with each student getting what they need to succeed.

Public school districts and charter schools are subject to the federal Elementary and Second Education Act (ESEA), amended and reauthorized in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Arizona public school districts and charter schools must also comply with the state’s A-F letter grade accountability system, which has student success as its foundation.

### Academic Standards

The student success portion of state and national accountability systems is based on students’ mastery of state standards in Math and English/ Language Arts. The Arizona State Board of Education sets the academic standards for all public schools in Arizona.

Standards define what we expect students to know by the end of each school year. Curriculum and instruction decisions, including which textbooks

## Curriculum v. Standards: The Means to an End

### **Standards are the end.**

- Set at the state level.
- Define what we expect all Arizona students to know.

### **Curriculum is the means.**

- Chosen at the local level.
- The plan for day-to-day teaching to ensure mastery of the standards.

and programs to use to make sure students master the standards, are made locally by governing boards in consultation with school and district administrators. Instructional decisions regarding student progress throughout the year are made by teachers and instructional leaders in the classroom.

Arizona's current standards in Math and English/Language Arts were adopted by the State Board of Education in 2010 and revised in 2016. They are considered more rigorous than the state's previous standards in those areas and intended to prepare all students for college and career. They are called Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.

Arizona has academic standards for science, social studies, foreign and native language, early learning, career and technical education, English language proficiency, the arts, physical education, educational technology, and health education as well. All are reviewed and, if needed, revised periodically by the State Board of Education.

## **Federal Accountability**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), amended by Congress most recently in 2015 as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), requires each state, including Arizona, to establish state-level academic standards. It also requires each state to administer a standardized student assessment in math and reading that meets certain federal requirements. Data from this assessment is used to monitor how public school students, schools and districts are performing academically.

For Title I schools, the results are used by the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to determine how students in each school are progressing academically. Title I schools whose students are not progressing must take action to support struggling students.

Under federal guidelines, Arizona schools are implementing reforms designed to improve and maintain teacher quality, hold schools accountable for growth in student success, close achievement gaps, and produce students who are prepared for college and career. Many of these reforms use student success as a primary measure of success.

### State Accountability

Arizona currently administers several standardized assessments to students each year. These assessments have been adopted by the State Board of Education. All Arizona public schools, including district schools and charter schools, are required to properly administer them. These include a statewide, standards-based assessment for general population students, one for special needs children, called the Multi-State Alternate Assessment, and one for English Language Learners (AZELLA).

AIMS, the standards-based assessment given to students in grades three through high school since 1999, was phased out in 2015-16.

In Spring 2015, schools began administering a new standards-based assessment to measure mastery of the more rigorous Math and English/ Language Arts standards adopted by the State Board of Education. Now called AZM2, it is taken by students in grades three, eight and ten through school year 2020-2021. School districts and charter schools can choose to give the test on computers or using paper and pencil. Results from this assessment are used in both state and federal student success accountability.



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Additionally, districts may have high school students take an approved college entrance exam (ACT, SAT, etc.)

Beginning in school year 2021-2022, the State Board of Education plans to implement a new statewide assessment for grades 3-8, while a single nationally recognized college entrance exam selected by the Board will replace the statewide assessment in high school. Districts will also be able to offer additional college entrance/readiness exams to high school students if they meet state board criteria. The implementation of this plan is dependent on the agreement of the U.S. Department of Education.

## **District and School Letter Grades**

In 2010, the Arizona Legislature enacted Arizona Revised Statute §15-241 (A.R.S. §15-241) to create the A-F Letter Grade accountability system which was adopted in June 2011 by the State Board of Education. Letter grades are given annually by the Arizona Department of Education to school districts, as well as individual public schools, both district and charter. Letter grades were introduced as a tool for parents to use in determining how well a school is performing when deciding which educational environment best meets their children's needs, and for schools to use to identify both areas of strength and areas that need improvement.

Following the passage of ESSA, the State Board of Education approved a revised A-F Letter Grade system that includes data on student academic growth and proficiency on the statewide assessment, and sought to add other, less standardized test-dependent factors such as success in combating chronic absenteeism, number of students on-track to graduate, and advanced coursework participation. Due to changes in the assessment system and the suspension of testing in Spring 2020 due to COVID-19, this system has really only been used for one full academic year, and is likely to undergo further revision.

## **School Report Cards**

In accordance with Arizona Revised Statute §15-746, each school shall distribute an annual report card that contains a list of 18 required categories including such data as academic goals and progress, attendance, average class size, per pupil expenditure, percentage of students that have graduated and school calendar.

Additionally, schools are required to distribute the report cards to parents of pupils enrolled at each school no later than the last day of school of each

fiscal year, and shall present a summary of the contents of the report cards at an annual public meeting held at each school. Each school shall give notice at least two weeks before the public meeting that clearly states the purpose, time and place of the meeting. The information is sent as the school report card. Failure to submit the information that is necessary may make the district ineligible to receive monies from the Classroom Site Fund.

The Arizona School Boards Association Policy IKAB (Report Cards/Progress Reports) is recommended for adoption by districts.

### **Teacher and Principal Effectiveness**

Student achievement plays a significant role in the evaluation of effectiveness of Arizona's teachers and principals. In 2010, the Arizona Legislature passed a law requiring the State Board of Education to develop a framework for teacher and principal evaluations that includes quantitative data on student academic progress that accounts for between 33 percent and 50 percent of each evaluation outcome. In 2019, the Legislature reduced that requirement to a maximum of 33%. and returned control of evaluation to local boards. The quantitative data used for evaluation may be state test scores, or other valid and reliable sources chosen by the district. In addition, there are a number of statutory references that impact retention, performance compensation and incentive/consequences.

### **Move on When Reading**

Early literacy is critical to student success. As such, student success in reading in third-grade has become a heightened focus in recent years.

Arizona Revised Statute §15-704 requires school districts and charters to provide effective reading instruction, with initial screening, on-going diagnostic and classroom based reading assessments, and a system to monitor student progress. Arizona Revised Statute §15-21 requires all school districts and charters with a K-3 program to submit a comprehensive plan for reading instruction and intervention across kindergarten and grades one, two and three. State funding is provided to schools to support the implementation of their K-3 reading plan. Those schools labeled a C, D or F or that have more than 10 percent of their students falling far below grade level on reading must have their plans approved by the State Board of Education prior to receiving funding. The goal is to have all students in Arizona reading proficiently at grade level by the end of third grade.



## To find out more about student achievement requirements, visit these websites:

Arizona Department of Education – [www.azed.gov](http://www.azed.gov)

U.S. Department of Education – [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov)

Arizona Revised Statute §15 – 701, the so-called Move on When Reading law, which went into effect in 2013, states that if data on the third grade statewide reading assessment is available and demonstrates that a student falls far below grade level the student shall not be promoted from the third grade.

There are three exceptions to the retention requirement. In accordance with the law, a school district governing board or the governing body of a charter school is allowed to promote a student who falls far below grade level on the third grade statewide reading assessment only for the following reasons:

- The student is an English Language Learner who has received less than two years of English instruction; or
- A student with disabilities has an individualized education plan (IEP), and the IEP-team, which includes the student's parent/guardian, agrees that promotion is appropriate.
- The student subsequently demonstrates adequate progress toward sufficient reading skills at the third grade level on a collection of assessments approved by the State Board of Education and/or receives approved remedial instruction during the summer or the following school year.

## Making the Connection: Student Achievement and Educational Equity

Student achievement and positive student outcomes are the essential work of school boards. Making sure every student and school gets the *same* resources is not enough. School boards and district leaders must recognize that some students and schools need alternative or additional supports to help them reach the same benchmarks of success as their peers. Boards must act within their capacity to ensure every student has access to what they need to achieve positive outcomes.



## Five Essential Components of Educational Equity

Educators have long employed differentiated learning strategies in the classroom to help individual students achieve. Similarly, today's school board leaders must recognize that they have a critically important role in supporting the varied needs of students as well. It requires a collective commitment by the board to invest in what ASBA has identified as the Five Essential Components of Educational Equity: vision, understanding, action, engagement and accountability.

### Vision

The National School Boards Association defines vision as “the mental picture of what the schools and district would be if everything were perfect.” Similarly, when it comes to equity, the board must establish a shared and clearly articulated belief of what an equitable system would look and feel like.

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## **Understanding**

Boards must enhance their understanding of the current realities of students to identify what opportunities are needed and where there are disparities. Reviewing community data and disaggregating district data (data broken down by demographic groups) on achievement, discipline, and opportunities is a critical first steps towards understanding. Still deeper understanding happens when districts create opportunities to gain additional insights into the experiences of those impacted by our education system.

## **Action**

Equipped with a clear vision and enhanced understanding of your district community, boards have a responsibility to act. This includes setting expectations and making decisions that support educators in closing opportunity gaps. Allocating funding and making policy are two areas where boards can have significant impact on achieving greater equity.

## **Engagement**

Boards must also have trusting and collaborative relationships with the many communities they serve to be successful in these endeavors and model this for district staff. This requires removing barriers and actively and routinely seeking out representative voices to share in the decision-making process. Authentic engagement happens when students, families and community take an active and collaborative role in tackling the challenges facing them. Educational equity is not something we gift our communities, it is something we build with them.

## **Accountability**

As in all decisions, school boards must hold themselves and the superintendent accountable for addressing equity. Once a district has established a commitment to equity and has worked with its communities to set goals, they must demonstrate their progress in a way that is transparent to all – especially those to who are directly impacted by the district's actions. Be consistent, be honest, and stay committed. This is a journey, not a sprint.

ASBA offers many tools and resources to assist member districts in the pursuit of greater equity.

### Foundational Premises of Educational Equity

- Student achievement and positive student outcomes must be the central focus of the work of school boards.
- Opportunity gaps exist in every school and in every district.
- School boards are responsible for setting the expectations and making decisions that support educators in closing opportunity gaps.
- School boards must have trusting and collaborative relationships with the many communities they serve to be successful in these endeavors and model this for district staff.
- Educational equity is an ongoing journey, not a fixed destination.









# Chapter 12



## Board – Community Relations

Communication is the cornerstone of any effort to build community awareness of and confidence in the governing board and the schools. Earning that public confidence in the schools is critical if district goals are to be achieved. Effective communication and community engagement are imperative to build public support and successfully mitigate challenges.

### Board Member's Role in Communications

It is important to understand your role as a board member and the superintendent's role to institutionalize effective communication to all stakeholders.

#### The Board Member's Role

- Holds the superintendent accountable for good communications.
- Is an ambassador for the school district within the community.
- Helps keep the community informed.
- Encourages a positive relationship between the district and the community.
- Educates parents, staff and community members on district protocol for addressing escalating issues through the proper chain of command.

#### The Superintendent's Role

- Keeps the public informed about the purpose, goals, methods and progress of the school district.
- Is the chief public information officer and the first point of contact with the media, unless the superintendent has designated another member of staff to fulfill this role.
- Is responsible for ensuring that all employees practice good communications and customer service.

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## **Communications Director (if applicable)**

- Oversees the communication of the district's position on related issues and use of mass communication techniques to communicate complex subjects to diverse audiences in written, verbal and on-camera formats.
- Oversees all district strategic marketing strategies, promotional materials, publications and public relations campaigns.
- Establishes and maintains partnerships with businesses and community groups for district initiatives.
- Interfaces with schools and the community to provide district information.

## **Communication Goals**

New board members should schedule time to become familiar with the district's communication goals, implementation strategies and measurements as part of a district's strategic plan.

Some of the goals in developing a reliable and measurable communications program can include the following:

- To ensure the district has a systematic, two-way communication plan for the district that considers equitable access for all students and families
- To gain public support for the total school system, including requesting input from all stakeholders
- To develop and maintain working relationships with all stakeholders

Board members should also familiarize themselves with the communication resources their school districts currently utilize for parents and community members. Communication resources for internal and external audiences that may be currently in place can include:

### **Mass Notification System**

Many school districts utilize a mass notification system such as Blackboard Connect, School Messenger or others that have the capability to phone, text and e-mail directly with parents and employees about emergency situations, school events and important issues.

### **District Website**

The website is a critical hub where information pertinent to the district is housed. It is often where new families form their first impression of the school district, making an attractive, easy-to-navigate and information rich site



essential. It is most effective when other communication tools and strategies are used to drive staff, families and the community to the site.

**Print/Electronic Communications**

Publications are handy educational tools that remain with the target audience for future reference and consultation (newsletters, annual report, financial report, magazine, etc.).

**Where Respondents Prefer to Get Information**

Respondents rated common media on a 4-point scale (1=Least preferred to 4=Most preferred) for where they prefer to get information about schools. Average scores for each group are displayed.

|  | Parent | Non-Parent |
|--|--------|------------|
| E-mail from the district/school  | 3.8    | 3.5        |
| District/School e-newsletters or news updates via email                                | 3.4    | 3          |
| District/School websites   | 3.3    | 3.4        |
| Online parent portal (Online access to grades, attendance, assignments, etc.)          | 3.4    | 2.7        |
| Telephone messaging system/voice-messaging system/emergency parent notification system | 3.3    | 2.7        |
| District/School print newsletters/publications   | 2.7    | 2.7        |
| Text messages  | 2.6    | 2.1        |
| Newspaper  | 2.1    | 2.7        |
| PTA/PTO meetings/newsletters   | 2.2    | 2.1        |
| Newspaper websites   | 2      | 2.5        |
| Community forums/town halls  | 2      | 2.3        |
| Television   | 1.9    | 2.6        |
| Television station websites  | 1.9    | 2.3        |
| Attendance at school board meetings/board minutes                                      | 1.8    | 2.1        |
| Radio  | 1.7    | 2.2        |
| Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, etc.)  | 1.8    | 1.8        |
| District/Education cable TV channel  | 1.6    | 2.1        |
| Other  | 1.3    | 1.6        |

Electronic/Internet-based sources like email, e-newsletters, district websites, and parent portals tended to be the most preferred information sources.

Source: K12 Insight

## Differentiation by parental age on school-to-home digital communications vehicles

| Digital communications vehicles            | All parents | “Elementary school parents” Under 40 years of age | “Secondary school parents” Over 40 years of age |
|--|-------------|---|---|
| Text messaging                             | 55%         | 59%   | 51%   |
| Mobile app                                 | 30%         | 37%   | 25%   |
| Auto phone message about child’s academics | 23%         | 33%   | 26%   |
| School or district Facebook account        | 17%         | 23%   | 12%   |
| Class blogs                                | 15%         | 20%   | 13%   |

Source: K12 Insight

### Traditional Media

The media will always accept new information about programs, achievements, events and other timely related news through a media release, advisory or direct e-mail. It may not always get published in print or posted online, but it’s important to keep media outlets updated on district initiatives. ASBA’s Arizona Education News Service is an excellent source for sharing your news ([www.azednews.com](http://www.azednews.com)).

### Social Media

Districts of all sizes rely on numerous communication avenues to reach families, including email newsletters, text notifications, website alerts, the website in general, and of course, social media. Social media has quickly earned a spot at the top of the list for necessary communication tools with both its simple user interface and ability to reach target audience where they spend their time.

### Marketing Tools

Some school districts create comprehensive, integrated marketing plans to effectively communicate mission, values and messages in ways that speak to their target audience. These tools can include a wide variety of ideas such as social media ads, bus ads, promotional fliers, school program postcards, newspaper or magazine ads and more.

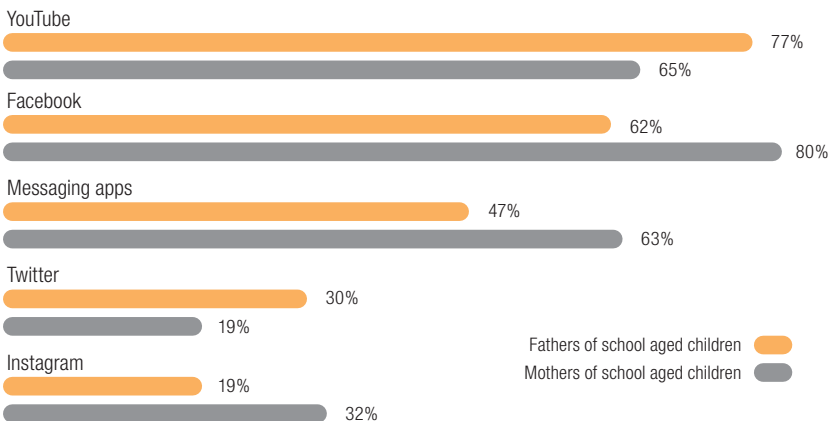
## Supporting Policies for Specific Communication Objectives

The board should develop communication policy with input from the superintendent and communications director (if applicable). Each type is important and should be used equitably at appropriate times to accomplish the desired results.

The suggested objectives for which the board should strive are:

- Establishment of a media relations policy based on honesty and fairness.
- Recognition of schools as an integral part of the community.
- Development of the concept that schools are strengthened through shared ideas, not only within the school system but also by engaging community resources.
- Participation of parents and other community and governmental agencies and resources in school programs.
- Approval of a rational plan for the community's use of school facilities and grounds after school hours.
- Development of guidelines for distribution of materials, conduct of promotions and contests, and solicitation of funds from school personnel or students.
- Prior acceptance of a crisis communication plan for any type of disaster or early school dismissal.

## Parents' personal usage of social media tools



Source: Project Tomorrow 2016

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Each of these situations offers the board an opportunity for positive public exposure. Policies designed to cover these situations will result in the board's positions being understood by the public.

## **Relationship with the Community**

Board members are elected by the community to represent their collective values at the board table. An individual member must consider all stakeholders – internal and external – when deciding issues in the best

### **Communication & Community Engagement Model Policy**

Here are a few ASBA policies, contained in the “B” section of our model policies that focus on communication and community engagement initiatives.

#### **BA School Board Operational Goals**

The governing board is responsible to the people of the district and therefore, should be aware of opinions and attitudes in the community and of identified district needs.

#### **BAA Evaluation of School Board/Board Self-Evaluation**

The Board may meet at least annually for the purpose of appraising its functioning as a Board and to evaluate board performance. Areas of Board operations and relationships that may be appropriate to consider during the evaluation can focus on board member relationships and board-community relationships.

#### **BBA/BBAA Board Powers and Responsibilities**

School governing board basic functions necessary to the discharging of its responsibilities: legislative, executive, and appraisal.

#### **BCA Board Member Ethics**

Board members will strive to improve public education by modeling ethical conduct as a representative of the district.

#### **BE School Board Meetings**

Using social media as a one-way electronic communication by board members that involves discussion, deliberation or official district business can propose legal action during official meetings of the board.

#### **BEDH Public Participation at Board Meetings**

All regular and special meetings of the board shall be open to the public.

#### **BHC Board Communications with Staff Members**

Official communication between the board and employees.

#### **BHD Board Communications with the Public**

Official communication between the board and the community.

interest of the students of the community. The support of the community is essential for having successful outcomes for the students in the district. As an ambassador for the district, community members will expect the board members to be well-informed and to assist them in finding their way through the administrative layers of the district. Districts should have communications plans established for getting information out to both internal and external stakeholders.

Building support for students is a continuous process – not something done just when it is time to pass a bond or an override. In today’s information age, the public expects to have access to information when they want it. The more open and honest a district is with its public, the more likely it will be able to build support for the district’s schools and students.

### **Community Engagement**

Because improvement of education elevates the economy and culture of any community, excellence in education is a goal that should be shared by the whole community. As a body representing the community, the district should have an ongoing plan for identifying community resources to help accomplish the district’s educational plans. Many districts find ways to engage community and businesses as partners for education. Here are a few things board members can do to help engage the community in support of the district:

- Know your district programs, successes and celebrations and be proactive in sharing them
- Attend a diverse range of district and school related events such as longevity and retiree receptions, groundbreaking ceremonies, school dedications, etc.
- Tell 10 success stories for every criticism you hear or share
- Be familiar with your district’s current community engagement opportunities and ensure they are reflective of the diversity of your community
- In coordination with the district superintendent, develop opportunities for the board to solicit feedback from the community
- Build relationships with diverse opinion leaders in your community and have them on speed dial and in your email distribution list
- Add to your district’s database of key audience members every time you meet someone new by sharing copies of the business cards you collect with the superintendent’s office

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- Coordinate with your superintendent to make sure your district is represented on other key community boards, groups, commissions and committees
  - Invite your local, state and federal representatives to school and district event and activities, in coordination with your superintendent
  - Work with your local economic development teams to make sure public schools are represented fairly and on par with private or charter options when new businesses are recruited or new executives come to town

## **Issues/Crisis Management Communications**

Board members should understand the importance of the district developing, reviewing and institutionalizing emergency response or crisis management plans. A crisis management plan addresses any situation that threatens the safety of students and staff, and/or the integrity or reputation of your schools or district.

It is important to also establish an internal process with your superintendent to identify how information will be communicated to the governing board during an emergency. Creating a process from the school level to the superintendent to the governing board level will help keep everyone informed and updated during an emergency.

Elements of a crisis plan include:

- Type of incident(s) the plan will address
- Chain of command
- Roles and responsibilities
- Crisis headquarters and command post
- Lockdown, evacuation and relocation plans
- Maps and facilities information
- Accountability and student release procedures
- Communications plan
- Arrangements for support services including law enforcement agencies and contact information.

It is important to understand your role as a board member, the superintendent's role and the supporting roles of district administrators, such as the district crisis team, play in crisis management situations.

### **The Board Member’s Role in a Crisis**

- Set student and staff safety and good communication as priorities.
- Ensure that policies are in place to support those priorities.
- Appropriately direct resources so that policies can be administered successfully, and administrators and staff can carry out the process.
- Set the expectation for situation de-briefing for the board by the superintendent.

### **The Superintendent’s Role in a Crisis**

- Ensure that all staff (district and school level) are trained in the district approved Emergency Management plan including provisions for intervention/response and post-emergency activities.
- Ensure that all crisis team members know and understand their duties and responsibilities.
- Make a determination that an emergency exists and puts the emergency management plan into action.
- Act as the “public information officer” for the district *unless* he or she designates the duty to another person.
- Keep the governing board updated during the situation.

## **Media Relations**

The media influences all those the district seeks to influence, which includes students, staff, parents, elected leaders, businesses, voters and students. Newspaper, radio and television reporters aren’t the enemy; they are key communicators whose jobs are to keep the public informed about issues of interest, including education.

Coverage can be distilled into five basic content categories:

- Political or policy decisions that affect people in your community
- Accountability
- Conflict
- Breakthroughs/firsts
- Human interest

In an effort to create a unified voice for all district communications, it is important that media efforts be coordinated through the superintendent’s



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office or communications department (if applicable). The superintendent has the responsibility of keeping the public informed as to the purpose, goals, methods and progress of the educational program.

Mastering the art of working with the media can help board members and administrators create better images for their districts and public education. If the district expects support from the news media, it should systematically and consistently provide the kind of information that fulfills media needs and meets their deadlines. Media coverage may influence education's overall image shared by parents and others in the community.

Who are the three people who should be prepared to comment? Typically, the superintendent and/or designated member of staff should respond to the media. If comment from the board is important, the board president typically fills that role. Board members can guide the media and act as a liaison to ensure district communication is provided by doing the following:

- Help reporters understand the district's procedures for handling media requests.
- Help reporters understand governing board meeting procedures and protocol.
- Direct reporters to information that is publicly available (on the district website, for example).

### **The Superintendent's Role with Media**

- The superintendent should be the first point of contact with the media unless another district-level staff member has been assigned this responsibility.
- Accuracy, reliability and leadership in this area will develop confidence and understanding, creating better relationships between the district and the community.
- Follow district protocols when asked to comment on behalf of the board or district.

### **Communications Director's Role with Media (if applicable)**

- Is first point of contact for news media, if designated as such by the superintendent.
- Is specially trained in public relations and media relations.

- Collect contact information and supporting systems for regularly sharing positive school and district news with the media.
- Orient them to other ways the district communicates.

### **Social Media Use by a Board Member**

When board members use social networking sites, it is important that they are mindful of the obligations that come with being a representative of the school district when posting comments and engaging in online conversations with the general public. Board members should strive to avoid being placed in a position of perceived conflict of interest, take no private action that will compromise the board or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law; and remember always that their first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.

As a school board member, it's important you consider the following guidelines:

#### **Personal vs. Professional**

Every time you communicate, whether it's in person or on social media, you shape public opinion about you, your governing, your school district and public education. Statements like "Tweets are my own and don't reflect my school district's views" don't hold true for school board members.

#### **Professional Boundaries**

Maintaining professional boundaries on social media is critical to sustaining public trust and ensuring relationships with staff, parents and the community remain professional. Keep your posts positive and don't engage in negative or critical conversations online. Move these conversations offline and help direct the conversation to your superintendent or appropriate district employee.

#### **Privacy and Confidentiality**

Safety is the overriding concern regarding information posted online. Familiarize yourself with the social media tool's privacy settings. Settings can change without notice so you will need to check them frequently. This often occurs when platforms are updated. Also, please remember that utilizing social media accounts in reference to board actions constitutes a public record that is subject to public records requests.

#### **Absolutes**

Weigh whether posting puts your effectiveness as a board member at risk. Working in education requires that we be respectful of our students, families, staff and fellow board members.





# Chapter 13



## Legislative Advocacy

Representing and advocating for the diverse needs of our membership and the students served by our member boards is one of ASBA's three key functions, alongside providing training and leadership development and providing products and services that support district success. The ASBA Political Agenda, determined annually by members, is our guide. Advocating for students in your school district and throughout the state of Arizona is inherent in your role as an elected policy maker. As a board member, you are an ambassador for your schools and students. You have unique expertise about your school district and students that makes you a natural leader and best suited to inspire others to use their passion for public education to influence policymakers and help shape the future of education in Arizona.

### Getting Involved in Grassroots Advocacy

Advocacy is the support of an idea or cause; the act or process of defending or maintaining a cause or proposal; and/or the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy decisions. Most advocacy in the political world is accomplished through lobbying, which allows you to provide invaluable information about public education. Lobbying is gentle pressure relentlessly applied. Lobbying is considered a “contact sport” – you have to get on the court rather than sit on the sidelines in order to be effective. Lobbying – and politics – is also about power. How power is distributed, the capacity to institute or block action and the capacity to affect the actions of those who have the power all play a role in effective advocacy.

Advocacy can come in many different forms – from direct lobbying to working with others as part of a coalition. Anytime you are working to influence decision-makers to create policy, you are advocating. Generally, advocacy for public education is focused on the Arizona Legislature because this is where many important decisions – including the state budget, are made. However, it is important to remember that many other decision-makers need to hear

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from you, too. City councils, the State Board of Education, and business and community groups all need your expertise and passion for public schools.

## **Understanding the Issues**

There are many resources available to assist your advocacy efforts at the Legislature and in the community. Start with the ASBA website ([www.azsba.org/advocacy](http://www.azsba.org/advocacy)) to get the latest news from the Arizona Capitol with the Daily In-Session Updates and review all education legislation in the Comprehensive Brief. You can also join ASBA on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/ASBAFans](http://www.facebook.com/ASBAFans)) and Twitter (@azsba and @azsba\_GR) and get the latest updates about issues facing public schools in Arizona while connecting with other advocates statewide.

## **Federal Advocacy Institute**

The Federal Advocacy Institute provides a mechanism for the collective voice of school board members throughout the country to support the National School Boards Association (NSBA) policy agenda.

The Advocacy Institute is held annually in January or February in Washington, D.C.; however, Advocacy Institute members work throughout the year – calling, emailing, writing and visiting – to develop strong relationships with federal legislators. Advocacy Institute members influence the outcome of national debate due to their extraordinary understanding of how to make federal policy work in the local setting.

## **Effective Lobbying Guidelines – Working with your Legislators**

To make informed education policy decisions, legislators need clear and concise information from education advocates. Locally elected school board members are in a unique position to let their legislators know how state-level policies would work (or not) in public schools.

### **Quick Tips**

#### **What Is Advocacy?**

Advocacy is the support of an idea or cause; the act or process of defending or maintaining a cause or proposal; and/or the deliberate process of influencing those who make policy decisions.

Personal, detailed letters or emails provide an invaluable source of information for your legislator. When writing or emailing your legislator, explain who you are and why you are writing. Then give your position on the bill and explain how it would impact your local district. Finally, ask your legislator to take some specific action (i.e. vote) on the bill. Email is quickest, however, written correspondence is more personal and valuable. Depending on the urgency of the matter, it will impact your decision regarding what method to utilize.

Phone calls are an effective and quick way to communicate with your legislator – and often the most time-efficient in the face of a critical vote. You can find your legislator's direct number on the Arizona Legislature's website or by calling 1-800-352-8404 and asking for your legislator's office.

It is rare to actually get your legislator on the phone so you will likely be speaking to the legislator's office staff who track phone calls related to the legislative process. Briefly state the reason for your call; it is best to call on one issue at a time in order to increase effectiveness. Share your position on legislation in concise language and then ask that your support be shared with your legislator. Finally, remember to say thank you, the office staff fields many calls from constituents.

You could also consider signing up for the Request to Speak (RTS) system. The legislature has developed a way for constituents to state their position on pending legislation through RTS. This service allows you to sign in, select your position on bills, specify your availability to speak to the issue and leave comments about your position. Although you can only establish an account in the RTS at the Capitol in Phoenix, ASBA has developed a method to collect your information to establish an account for you in the RTS system. To complete that form visit, <https://azsba.org/advocacy/request-to-speak/>

You can meet with your legislators during session at the Capitol and/or when they return home to your legislative district. Most legislators are at home Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays during session. Consider inviting your legislator to visit a school or schools in your district so they can see education in action. When making an appointment with your legislator, let them know who will be attending, what issues will be discussed and approximately how much time is needed for the meeting. Meeting directly with your legislator allows you to speak personally about your district – and convey your passion for public education to your legislator. Remember to be respectful yet persistent in asking for your legislator's support. If at all possible, get a commitment before you leave the meeting. (And remember to say thank you!)

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Lobbying your legislator does not end with an appointment or phone call on a specific bill. To truly have the most impact, you need to establish an ongoing relationship. Becoming an education advocate that your legislator respects and looks to for accurate, concise information is invaluable in your ability to influence their thinking.

To establish this relationship, look for opportunities to include your legislators in community events. Invite them to special events at your schools or hold a town hall on education. Make a point of calling or emailing your legislators to check in, rather than just contacting them when you need them to do something.

Finally, share the good news! Let your legislators know about all of the good things happening in your district – and why their continued support is crucial for the education of these students.

## Quick Tips

### Online Access to the Legislature

The Arizona Legislature’s website, [www.azleg.gov](http://www.azleg.gov), allows you to search for bills (see instructions below) and watch live proceedings. From the Legislature’s homepage, click on “watch live proceedings” and a box will open allowing you access to the Senate and House floor and all hearing rooms.

#### **Searching for a Bill on [www.azleg.gov](http://www.azleg.gov)**

##### **By Bill Number**

- Select the correct session
- Type the bill number in the Bill# Search box (ex: SB1001)
- Click Search
- Click either Bill Status HTML or Bill Status Text to see the bill’s status

##### **By Bill Subject**

- Click the Bills link located on the blue navigation bar to the left of the ALIS Online homepage
- Type in a keyword in the Search Phrase box
- Click Search

You can check ASBA’s position on a bill at <https://azsba.org/advocacy/legislative/legislative-positions/>



## **Appendix A**

### **Code of Ethics for School Board Members**

The ASBA Board endorses the following code for local school board members:

As a member of my local Board of Education, I will strive to improve public education, and to that end I will:

- Insofar as possible, attend all meetings of the Board, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
- Recognize that a board member should endeavor to make policy decisions only after full discussion at publicly held Board meetings;
- Render all decisions based on the available facts and my independent judgment, and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups;
- Encourage the free expression of opinion by all Board members, and seek systematic communications between the Board and students, staff and all elements of the community;
- Work with other Board members to establish effective Board policies and to delegate authority for the administration of the schools to the Superintendent;
- Communicate to other Board members and the Superintendent expression of public reaction to Board policies and school programs;
- Inform oneself about current educational issues by individual study and through participation in programs providing needed information, such as those sponsored by my state and national school boards association;
- Support the employment of those persons best qualified to serve as school staff, and insist on a regular and impartial evaluation of all staff;
- Avoid being placed in a position of conflict of interest, and refrain from using my Board position for personal or partisan gain;
- Take no private action that will compromise the Board or administration, and respect the confidentiality of information that is privileged under applicable law, and
- Remember always that my first and greatest concern must be the educational welfare of the students attending the public schools.



## Appendix B

### Code of Conduct

Establishing norms and Expectations as a board is a way to document an agreement amongst board members on how the board will operate in its role as a decision-making body while maintaining effective relationships with school administrators, staff and community members.

A school board member has no legal powers unless participating at a legally noticed school board meeting, or acting on behalf of the school board after the board formally grants authority to do so. Thus, it is essential that every school board member work as a member of the broader leadership team to perform board duties and act in a manner consistent with their norms and expectations.

*Board members can demonstrate personal commitment to the norms by signing their document signifying agreement to uphold them both in letter and spirit.*

Many school boards post a copy of the signed norms in places the public can view them. This public display of the school leadership team's commitment sends a powerful message and sets the tone for how the business of education will be conducted in the community.

As citizens of the United States, board members have certain constitutional rights, including freedom of speech that cannot be taken away, whether or not you choose to sign or agree to the norms.

### Examples of Potential Norms & Expectations

#### Board Governance

- Attend all scheduled board meetings, insofar as possible, and review advance materials about the issues to be considered on each agenda.
- Review essential facts, consider others' ideas and then present personal opinions during board deliberations but, once the board vote has been taken, support board decisions regardless of how individuals voted.
- Act only as a member of the board and do not assume any individual authority when the board is not in session, unless otherwise directed by the board.
- Expect an equitable amount of board meeting time be spent both learning about educational programs and conducting the business of the board.

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- Maintain a priority board focus on increasing student achievement and ensuring efficient use of education resources.

## **Board-Administration Relations**

- Refer complaints, requests and concerns to the superintendent or other appropriate staff members.
- Avoid making commitments that may compromise the decision-making ability of the board or administrators.
- Maintain open and candid communication with the superintendent.
- Recognize that a board member's responsibility is to see that schools are well run, but not to run them.

## **Board Member Relations**

- Retain independent judgment and refuse to surrender that judgment to individuals or special interest groups.
- Voice opinions respectfully and maintain good relations with other board members, administrators, school staff and members of the public.

## **Personnel Relations**

- Individual board members shall not give directives to any school administrator or employee, publicly or privately.

## **Community Relations**

- Consider the needs of the entire community and vote for what seems best for students.
- Encourage collaboration between the school and community.

## **Board Preparation and Training**

- Be informed about educational issues through individual study and by participating in board development opportunities such as those sponsored by the Arizona and National School Boards Associations.
- Support new school board members by sharing your experience and knowledge.
- Ensure that adequate board orientation and team-building opportunities are available for board members and administrators.

## Appendix C

### General Powers

#### A.R.S. §15-341.

#### General powers and duties; immunity; delegation

A. The governing board shall:

1. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for the governance of the schools that are not inconsistent with law or rules prescribed by the state board of education.
2. Exclude from schools all books, publications, papers or audiovisual materials of a sectarian, partisan or denominational character. This paragraph does not prohibit the elective course permitted by section 15-717.01.
3. Manage and control the school property within its district, except that a district may enter into a partnership with an entity, including a charter school, another school district or a military base, to operate a school or offer educational services in a district building, including at a vacant or partially used building, or in any building on the entity's property pursuant to a written agreement between the parties.
4. Acquire school furniture, apparatus, equipment, library books and supplies for the use of the schools.
5. Prescribe the curricula and criteria for the promotion and graduation of pupils as provided in sections 15-701 and 15-701.01.
6. Furnish, repair and insure, at full insurable value, the school property of the district.
7. Construct school buildings on approval by a vote of the district electors.
8. Make in the name of the district conveyances of property belonging to the district and sold by the board.
9. Purchase school sites when authorized by a vote of the district at an election conducted as nearly as practicable in the same manner as the election provided in section 15-481 and held on a date prescribed in section 15-491, subsection E, but such authorization shall not necessarily specify the site to be purchased and such authorization shall not be necessary to exchange unimproved property as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 23.

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10. Construct, improve and furnish buildings used for school purposes when such buildings or premises are leased from the national park service.
  11. Purchase school sites or construct, improve and furnish school buildings from the proceeds of the sale of school property only on approval by a vote of the district electors.
  12. Hold pupils to strict account for disorderly conduct on school property.
  13. Discipline students for disorderly conduct on the way to and from school.
  14. Except as provided in section 15-1224, deposit all monies received by the district as gifts, grants and devises with the county treasurer who shall credit the deposits as designated in the uniform system of financial records. If not inconsistent with the terms of the gifts, grants and devises given, any balance remaining after expenditures for the intended purpose of the monies have been made shall be used for reduction of school district taxes for the budget year, except that in the case of accommodation schools the county treasurer shall carry the balance forward for use by the county school superintendent for accommodation schools for the budget year.
  15. Provide that, if a parent or legal guardian chooses not to accept a decision of the teacher as provided in paragraph 42 of this subsection, the parent or legal guardian may request in writing that the governing board review the teacher's decision. This paragraph does not release school districts from any liability relating to a child's promotion or retention.
  16. Provide for adequate supervision over pupils in instructional and noninstructional activities by certificated or noncertificated personnel.
  17. Use school monies received from the state and county school apportionment exclusively for payment of salaries of teachers and other employees and contingent expenses of the district.
  18. Make an annual report to the county school superintendent on or before October 1 in the manner and form and on the blanks prescribed by the superintendent of public instruction or county school superintendent. The board shall also make reports directly to the county school superintendent or the superintendent of public instruction whenever required.

19. Deposit all monies received by school districts other than student activities monies or monies from auxiliary operations as provided in sections 15-1125 and 15-1126 with the county treasurer to the credit of the school district except as provided in paragraph 20 of this subsection and sections 15-1223 and 15-1224, and the board shall expend the monies as provided by law for other school funds.
20. Establish bank accounts in which the board during a month may deposit miscellaneous monies received directly by the district. The board shall remit monies deposited in the bank accounts at least monthly to the county treasurer for deposit as provided in paragraph 19 of this subsection and in accordance with the uniform system of financial records.
21. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for disciplinary action against a teacher who engages in conduct that is a violation of the policies of the governing board but that is not cause for dismissal of the teacher or for revocation of the certificate of the teacher. Disciplinary action may include suspension without pay for a period of time not to exceed ten school days. Disciplinary action shall not include suspension with pay or suspension without pay for a period of time longer than ten school days. The procedures shall include notice, hearing and appeal provisions for violations that are cause for disciplinary action. The governing board may designate a person or persons to act on behalf of the board on these matters.
22. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for disciplinary action against an administrator who engages in conduct that is a violation of the policies of the governing board regarding duties of administrators but that is not cause for dismissal of the administrator or for revocation of the certificate of the administrator. Disciplinary action may include suspension without pay for a period of time not to exceed ten school days. Disciplinary action shall not include suspension with pay or suspension without pay for a period of time longer than ten school days. The procedures shall include notice, hearing and appeal provisions for violations that are cause for disciplinary action. The governing board may designate a person or persons to act on behalf of the board on these matters. For violations that are cause for dismissal, the provisions of notice, hearing and appeal in chapter 5, article 3 of this title shall apply. The filing of a timely request for a hearing suspends the imposition of a suspension



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without pay or a dismissal pending completion of the hearing.

23. Notwithstanding sections 13-3108 and 13-3120, prescribe and enforce policies and procedures that prohibit a person from carrying or possessing a weapon on school grounds unless the person is a peace officer or has obtained specific authorization from the school administrator.
24. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures relating to the health and safety of all pupils participating in district-sponsored practice sessions or games or other interscholastic athletic activities, including:
  - (a) The provision of water.
  - (b) Guidelines, information and forms, developed in consultation with a statewide private entity that supervises interscholastic activities, to inform and educate coaches, pupils and parents of the dangers of concussions and head injuries and the risks of continued participation in athletic activity after a concussion. The policies and procedures shall require that, before a pupil participates in an athletic activity, the pupil and the pupil's parent must sign an information form at least once each school year that states that the parent is aware of the nature and risk of concussion. The policies and procedures shall require that a pupil who is suspected of sustaining a concussion in a practice session, game or other interscholastic athletic activity be immediately removed from the athletic activity and that the pupil's parent or guardian be notified. A coach from the pupil's team or an official or a licensed health care provider may remove a pupil from play. A team parent may also remove the parent's own child from play. A pupil may return to play on the same day if a health care provider rules out a suspected concussion at the time the pupil is removed from play. On a subsequent day, the pupil may return to play if the pupil has been evaluated by and received written clearance to resume participation in athletic activity from a health care provider who has been trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and head injuries. A health care provider who is a volunteer and who provides clearance to participate in athletic activity on the day of the suspected injury or on a subsequent day is immune from civil liability with respect to all decisions made and actions taken

that are based on good faith implementation of the requirements of this subdivision, except in cases of gross negligence or wanton or wilful neglect. A school district, school district employee, team coach, official or team volunteer or a parent or guardian of a team member is not subject to civil liability for any act, omission or policy undertaken in good faith to comply with the requirements of this subdivision or for a decision made or an action taken by a health care provider. A group or organization that uses property or facilities owned or operated by a school district for athletic activities shall comply with the requirements of this subdivision. A school district and its employees and volunteers are not subject to civil liability for any other person or organization's failure or alleged failure to comply with the requirements of this subdivision. This subdivision does not apply to teams that are based in another state and that participate in an athletic activity in this state. For the purposes of this subdivision, athletic activity does not include dance, rhythmic gymnastics, competitions or exhibitions of academic skills or knowledge or other similar forms of physical noncontact activities, civic activities or academic activities, whether engaged in for the purposes of competition or recreation. For the purposes of this subdivision, "health care provider" means a physician who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 13 or 17, an athletic trainer who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 41, a nurse practitioner who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 15, and a physician assistant who is licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 25.

- (c) Guidelines, information and forms that are developed in consultation with a statewide private entity that supervises interscholastic activities to inform and educate coaches, pupils and parents of the dangers of heat-related illnesses, sudden cardiac death and prescription opioid use. Before a pupil participates in any district-sponsored practice session or game or other interscholastic athletic activity, the pupil and the pupil's parent must be provided with information at least once each school year on the risks of heat-related illnesses, sudden cardiac death and prescription opioid addiction.
25. Establish an assessment, data gathering and reporting system as prescribed in chapter 7, article 3 of this title.

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26. Provide special education programs and related services pursuant to section 15-764, subsection A to all children with disabilities as defined in section 15-761.
  27. Administer competency tests prescribed by the state board of education for the graduation of pupils from high school.
  28. Ensure that insurance coverage is secured for all construction projects for purposes of general liability, property damage and workers' compensation and secure performance and payment bonds for all construction projects.
  29. Keep in the personnel file of all current and former employees who provide instruction to pupils at a school information about the employee's educational and teaching background and experience in a particular academic content subject area. A school district shall inform parents and guardians of the availability of the information and shall make the information available for inspection on request of parents and guardians of pupils enrolled at a school. This paragraph does not require any school to release personally identifiable information in relation to any teacher or employee, including the teacher's or employee's address, salary, social security number or telephone number.
  30. Report to local law enforcement agencies any suspected crime against a person or property that is a serious offense as defined in section 13-706 or that involves a deadly weapon or dangerous instrument or serious physical injury and any conduct that poses a threat of death or serious physical injury to employees, students or anyone on the property of the school. This paragraph does not limit or preclude the reporting by a school district or an employee of a school district of suspected crimes other than those required to be reported by this paragraph. For the purposes of this paragraph, "dangerous instrument", "deadly weapon" and "serious physical injury" have the same meanings prescribed in section 13-105.
  31. In conjunction with local law enforcement agencies and emergency response agencies, develop an emergency response plan for each school in the school district in accordance with minimum standards developed jointly by the department of education and the division of emergency management within the department of emergency and military affairs.

32. Provide written notice to the parents or guardians of all students enrolled in the school district at least ten days before a public meeting to discuss closing a school within the school district. The notice shall include the reasons for the proposed closure and the time and place of the meeting. The governing board shall fix a time for a public meeting on the proposed closure not less than ten days before voting in a public meeting to close the school. The school district governing board shall give notice of the time and place of the meeting. At the time and place designated in the notice, the school district governing board shall hear reasons for or against closing the school. The school district governing board is exempt from this paragraph if the governing board determines that the school shall be closed because it poses a danger to the health or safety of the pupils or employees of the school. A governing board may consult with the school facilities board for technical assistance and for information on the impact of closing a school. The information provided from the school facilities board shall not require the governing board to take or not take any action.
33. Incorporate instruction on Native American history into appropriate existing curricula.
34. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures:
  - (a) Allowing pupils who have been diagnosed with anaphylaxis by a health care provider licensed pursuant to title 32, chapter 13, 14, 17 or 25 or by a registered nurse practitioner licensed and certified pursuant to title 32, chapter 15 to carry and self-administer emergency medications, including epinephrine auto-injectors, while at school and at school-sponsored activities. The pupil's name on the prescription label on the medication container or on the medication device and annual written documentation from the pupil's parent or guardian to the school that authorizes possession and self-administration is sufficient proof that the pupil is entitled to the possession and self-administration of the medication. The policies shall require a pupil who uses an epinephrine auto-injector while at school and at school-sponsored activities to notify the nurse or the designated school staff person of the use of the medication as soon as practicable. A school district and its employees are immune from civil liability with respect to all decisions made and

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actions taken that are based on good faith implementation of the requirements of this subdivision, except in cases of wanton or wilful neglect.

- (b) For the emergency administration of epinephrine auto-injectors by a trained employee of a school district pursuant to section 15-157.
35. Allow the possession and self-administration of prescription medication for breathing disorders in handheld inhaler devices by pupils who have been prescribed that medication by a health care professional licensed pursuant to title 32. The pupil's name on the prescription label on the medication container or on the handheld inhaler device and annual written documentation from the pupil's parent or guardian to the school that authorizes possession and self-administration shall be sufficient proof that the pupil is entitled to the possession and self-administration of the medication. A school district and its employees are immune from civil liability with respect to all decisions made and actions taken that are based on a good faith implementation of the requirements of this paragraph.
36. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures to prohibit pupils from harassing, intimidating and bullying other pupils on school grounds, on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, at school-sponsored events and activities and through the use of electronic technology or electronic communication on school computers, networks, forums and mailing lists that include the following components:
- (a) A procedure for pupils, parents and school district employees to confidentially report to school officials incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying. The school shall make available written forms designed to provide a full and detailed description of the incident and any other relevant information about the incident.
  - (b) A requirement that school district employees report in writing suspected incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying to the appropriate school official and a description of appropriate disciplinary procedures for employees who fail to report suspected incidents that are known to the employee.
  - (c) A requirement that, at the beginning of each school year, school officials provide all pupils with a written copy of the rights,

protections and support services available to a pupil who is an alleged victim of an incident reported pursuant to this paragraph.

- (d) If an incident is reported pursuant to this paragraph, a requirement that school officials provide a pupil who is an alleged victim of the incident with a written copy of the rights, protections and support services available to that pupil.
  - (e) A formal process for the documentation of reported incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying and for the confidentiality, maintenance and disposition of this documentation. School districts shall maintain documentation of all incidents reported pursuant to this paragraph for at least six years. The school shall not use that documentation to impose disciplinary action unless the appropriate school official has investigated and determined that the reported incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying occurred. If a school provides documentation of reported incidents to persons other than school officials or law enforcement, all individually identifiable information shall be redacted.
  - (f) A formal process for the investigation by the appropriate school officials of suspected incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying, including procedures for notifying the alleged victim and the alleged victim's parent or guardian when a school official or employee becomes aware of the suspected incident of harassment, intimidation or bullying.
  - (g) Disciplinary procedures for pupils who have admitted or been found to have committed incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying.
  - (h) A procedure that sets forth consequences for submitting false reports of incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying.
  - (i) Procedures designed to protect the health and safety of pupils who are physically harmed as the result of incidents of harassment, intimidation and bullying, including, if appropriate, procedures to contact emergency medical services or law enforcement agencies, or both.
  - (j) Definitions of harassment, intimidation and bullying.
37. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures regarding changing

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or adopting attendance boundaries that include the following components:

- (a) A procedure for holding public meetings to discuss attendance boundary changes or adoptions that allows public comments.
- (b) A procedure to notify the parents or guardians of the students affected.
- (c) A procedure to notify the residents of the households affected by the attendance boundary changes.
- (d) A process for placing public meeting notices and proposed maps on the school district's website for public review, if the school district maintains a website.
- (e) A formal process for presenting the attendance boundaries of the affected area in public meetings that allows public comments.
- (f) A formal process for notifying the residents and parents or guardians of the affected area as to the decision of the governing board on the school district's website, if the school district maintains a website.
- (g) A formal process for updating attendance boundaries on the school district's website within ninety days of an adopted boundary change. The school district shall send a direct link to the school district's attendance boundaries website to the department of real estate.

38. If the state board of education determines that the school district has committed an overexpenditure as defined in section 15-107, provide a copy of the fiscal management report submitted pursuant to section 15-107, subsection H on its website and make copies available to the public on request. The school district shall comply with a request within five business days after receipt.

39. Ensure that the contract for the superintendent is structured in a manner in which up to twenty percent of the total annual salary included for the superintendent in the contract is classified as performance pay. This paragraph does not require school districts to increase total compensation for superintendents. Unless the school district governing board votes to implement an alternative procedure at a public meeting called for this purpose, the performance pay



portion of the superintendent's total annual compensation shall be determined as follows:

- (a) Twenty-five percent of the performance pay shall be determined based on the percentage of academic gain determined by the department of education of pupils who are enrolled in the school district compared to the academic gain achieved by the highest ranking of the fifty largest school districts in this state. For the purposes of this subdivision, the department of education shall determine academic gain by the academic growth achieved by each pupil who has been enrolled at the same school in a school district for at least five consecutive months measured against that pupil's academic results in the 2008-2009 school year. For the purposes of this subdivision, of the fifty largest school districts in this state, the school district with pupils who demonstrate the highest statewide percentage of overall academic gain measured against academic results for the 2008-2009 school year shall be assigned a score of 100 and the school district with pupils who demonstrate the lowest statewide percentage of overall academic gain measured against academic results for the 2008-2009 school year shall be assigned a score of 0.
- (b) Twenty-five percent of the performance pay shall be determined by the percentage of parents of pupils who are enrolled at the school district who assign a letter grade of "A" to the school on a survey of parental satisfaction with the school district. The parental satisfaction survey shall be administered and scored by an independent entity that is selected by the governing board and that demonstrates sufficient expertise and experience to accurately measure the results of the survey. The parental satisfaction survey shall use standard random sampling procedures and provide anonymity and confidentiality to each parent who participates in the survey. The letter grade scale used on the parental satisfaction survey shall direct parents to assign one of the following letter grades:
  - (i) A letter grade of "A" if the school district is excellent.
  - (ii) A letter grade of "B" if the school district is above average.
  - (iii) A letter grade of "C" if the school district is average.

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- (iv) A letter grade of “D” if the school district is below average.
  - (v) A letter grade of “F” if the school district is a failure.
- (c) Twenty-five percent of the performance pay shall be determined by the percentage of teachers who are employed at the school district and who assign a letter grade of “A” to the school on a survey of teacher satisfaction with the school. The teacher satisfaction survey shall be administered and scored by an independent entity that is selected by the governing board and that demonstrates sufficient expertise and experience to accurately measure the results of the survey. The teacher satisfaction survey shall use standard random sampling procedures and provide anonymity and confidentiality to each teacher who participates in the survey. The letter grade scale used on the teacher satisfaction survey shall direct teachers to assign one of the following letter grades:
- (i) A letter grade of “A” if the school district is excellent.
  - (ii) A letter grade of “B” if the school district is above average.
  - (iii) A letter grade of “C” if the school district is average.
  - (iv) A letter grade of “D” if the school district is below average.
  - (v) A letter grade of “F” if the school district is a failure.
- (d) Twenty-five percent of the performance pay shall be determined by other criteria selected by the governing board.
40. Maintain and store permanent public records of the school district as required by law. Notwithstanding section 39-101, the standards adopted by the Arizona state library, archives and public records for the maintenance and storage of school district public records shall allow school districts to elect to satisfy the requirements of this paragraph by maintaining and storing these records either on paper or in an electronic format, or a combination of a paper and electronic format.
41. Adopt in a public meeting and implement policies for principal evaluations. Before adopting principal evaluation policies, the school district governing board shall provide opportunities for public discussion on the proposed policies. The governing board shall adopt policies that:

- (a) Are designed to improve principal performance and improve student achievement.
  - (b) Include the use of quantitative data on the academic progress for all students, which shall account for between twenty percent and thirty-three percent of the evaluation outcomes.
  - (c) Include four performance classifications, designated as highly effective, effective, developing and ineffective.
  - (d) Describe both of the following:
    - (i) The methods used to evaluate the performance of principals, including the data used to measure student performance and job effectiveness.
    - (ii) The formula used to determine evaluation outcomes.
42. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures that define the duties of principals and teachers. These policies and procedures shall authorize teachers to take and maintain daily classroom attendance, make the decision to promote or retain a pupil in a grade in common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school, subject to review by the governing board in the manner provided in section 15-342, paragraph 11.
43. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for the emergency administration by an employee of a school district pursuant to section 36-2267 of naloxone hydrochloride or any other opioid antagonist approved by the United States food and drug administration.
44. In addition to the notification requirements prescribed in paragraph 36 of this subsection, prescribe and enforce reasonable and appropriate policies to notify a pupil's parent or guardian if any person engages in harassing, threatening or intimidating conduct against that pupil. A school district and its officials and employees are immune from civil liability with respect to all decisions made and actions taken that are based on good faith implementation of the requirements of this paragraph, except in cases of gross negligence or wanton or wilful neglect. A person engages in threatening or intimidating if the person threatens or intimidates by word or conduct to cause physical injury to another person or serious damage to the property of another on school grounds. A person engages in harassment if, with intent to harass or with knowledge that the

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person is harassing another person, the person anonymously or otherwise contacts, communicates or causes a communication with another person by verbal, electronic, mechanical, telephonic or written means in a manner that harasses on school grounds or substantially disrupts the school environment.

- B. Notwithstanding subsection A, paragraphs 7, 9 and 11 of this section, the county school superintendent may construct, improve and furnish school buildings or purchase or sell school sites in the conduct of an accommodation school.
- C. If any school district acquires real or personal property, whether by purchase, exchange, condemnation, gift or otherwise, the governing board shall pay to the county treasurer any taxes on the property that were unpaid as of the date of acquisition, including penalties and interest. The lien for unpaid delinquent taxes, penalties and interest on property acquired by a school district:
  - 1. Is not abated, extinguished, discharged or merged in the title to the property.
  - 2. Is enforceable in the same manner as other delinquent tax liens.
- D. The governing board may not locate a school on property that is less than one-fourth mile from agricultural land regulated pursuant to section 3-365, except that the owner of the agricultural land may agree to comply with the buffer zone requirements of section 3-365. If the owner agrees in writing to comply with the buffer zone requirements and records the agreement in the office of the county recorder as a restrictive covenant running with the title to the land, the school district may locate a school within the affected buffer zone. The agreement may include any stipulations regarding the school, including conditions for future expansion of the school and changes in the operational status of the school that will result in a breach of the agreement.
- E. A school district, its governing board members, its school council members and its employees are immune from civil liability for the consequences of adoption and implementation of policies and procedures pursuant to subsection A of this section and section 15-342. This waiver does not apply if the school district, its governing board members, its school council members or its employees are guilty of gross negligence or intentional misconduct.

- F. A governing board may delegate in writing to a superintendent, principal or head teacher the authority to prescribe procedures that are consistent with the governing board's policies.
- G. Notwithstanding any other provision of this title, a school district governing board shall not take any action that would result in a reduction of pupil square footage unless the governing board notifies the school facilities board established by section 15-2001 of the proposed action and receives written approval from the school facilities board to take the action. A reduction includes an increase in administrative space that results in a reduction of pupil square footage or sale of school sites or buildings, or both. A reduction includes a reconfiguration of grades that results in a reduction of pupil square footage of any grade level. This subsection does not apply to temporary reconfiguration of grades to accommodate new school construction if the temporary reconfiguration does not exceed one year. The sale of equipment that results in a reduction that falls below the equipment requirements prescribed in section 15-2011, subsection B is subject to commensurate withholding of school district district additional assistance monies pursuant to the direction of the school facilities board. Except as provided in section 15-342, paragraph 10, proceeds from the sale of school sites, buildings or other equipment shall be deposited in the school plant fund as provided in section 15-1102.
- H. Subsections C through G of this section apply to a county board of supervisors and a county school superintendent when operating and administering an accommodation school.
- I. A school district governing board may delegate authority in writing to the superintendent of the school district to submit plans for new school facilities to the school facilities board for the purpose of certifying that the plans meet the minimum school facility adequacy guidelines prescribed in section 15-2011.



## Appendix D

### Discretionary Powers

#### A.R.S. §15-342. Discretionary powers

The governing board may:

1. Expel pupils for misconduct.
2. Exclude from grades one through eight children under six years of age.
3. Make such separation of groups of pupils as it deems advisable.
4. Maintain such special schools during vacation as deemed necessary for the benefit of the pupils of the school district.
5. Permit a superintendent or principal or representatives of the superintendent or principal to travel for a school purpose, as determined by a majority vote of the board. The board may permit members and members-elect of the board to travel within or without the school district for a school purpose and receive reimbursement. Any expenditure for travel and subsistence pursuant to this paragraph shall be as provided in title 38, chapter 4, article 2. The designated post of duty referred to in section 38-621 shall be construed, for school district governing board members, to be the member's actual place of residence, as opposed to the school district office or the school district boundaries. Such expenditures shall be a charge against the budgeted school district funds. The governing board of a school district shall prescribe procedures and amounts for reimbursement of lodging and subsistence expenses. Reimbursement amounts shall not exceed the maximum amounts established pursuant to section 38-624, subsection C.
6. Construct or provide in rural districts housing facilities for teachers and other school employees that the board determines are necessary for the operation of the school.
7. Sell or lease to the state, a county, a city, another school district or a tribal government agency any school property required for a public purpose, provided the sale or lease of the property will not affect the normal operations of a school within the school district.
8. Annually budget and expend funds for membership in an association of school districts within this state.
9. Enter into leases or lease-purchase agreements for school buildings or

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grounds, or both, as lessor or as lessee, for periods of less than twenty years subject to voter approval for construction of school buildings as prescribed in section 15-341, subsection A, paragraph 7.

10. Subject to chapter 16 of this title, sell school sites or enter into leases or lease-purchase agreements for school buildings and grounds, as lessor or as lessee, for a period of twenty years or more, but not to exceed ninety-nine years, if authorized by a vote of the school district electors in an election called by the governing board as provided in section 15-491, except that authorization by the school district electors in an election is not required if one of the following requirements is met:
  - (a) The market value of the school property is less than \$50,000 or the property is procured through a renewable energy development agreement, an energy performance contract, which among other items includes a renewable energy power service agreement, or a simplified energy performance contract pursuant to section 15-213.01.
  - (b) The buildings and sites are completely funded with monies distributed by the school facilities board.
  - (c) The transaction involves the sale of improved or unimproved property pursuant to an agreement with the school facilities board in which the school district agrees to sell the improved or unimproved property and transfer the proceeds of the sale to the school facilities board in exchange for monies from the school facilities board for the acquisition of a more suitable school site. For a sale of property acquired by a school district prior to July 9, 1998, a school district shall transfer to the school facilities board that portion of the proceeds that equals the cost of the acquisition of a more suitable school site. If there are any remaining proceeds after the transfer of monies to the school facilities board, a school district shall only use those remaining proceeds for future land purchases approved by the school facilities board, or for capital improvements not funded by the school facilities board for any existing or future facility.
  - (d) The transaction involves the sale of improved or unimproved property pursuant to a formally adopted plan and the school district uses the proceeds of this sale to purchase other property that will be used for similar purposes as the property that was originally sold, provided that the sale proceeds of the improved or unimproved



property are used within two years after the date of the original sale to purchase the replacement property. If the sale proceeds of the improved or unimproved property are not used within two years after the date of the original sale to purchase replacement property, the sale proceeds shall be used towards payment of any outstanding bonded indebtedness. If any sale proceeds remain after paying for outstanding bonded indebtedness, or if the district has no outstanding bonded indebtedness, sale proceeds shall be used to reduce the district's primary tax levy. A school district shall not use this subdivision unless all of the following conditions exist:

- (i) The school district is the sole owner of the improved or unimproved property that the school district intends to sell.
  - (ii) The school district did not purchase the improved or unimproved property that the school district intends to sell with monies that were distributed pursuant to chapter 16 of this title.
  - (iii) The transaction does not violate section 15-341, subsection G.
11. Review the decision of a teacher to promote a pupil to a grade or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school. The pupil has the burden of proof to overturn the decision of a teacher to promote, retain, pass or fail the pupil. In order to sustain the burden of proof, the pupil shall demonstrate to the governing board that the pupil has mastered the academic standards adopted by the state board of education pursuant to sections 15-701 and 15-701.01. If the governing board overturns the decision of a teacher pursuant to this paragraph, the governing board shall adopt a written finding that the pupil has mastered the academic standards. Notwithstanding title 38, chapter 3, article 3.1, the governing board shall review the decision of a teacher to promote a pupil to a grade or retain a pupil in a grade in a common school or to pass or fail a pupil in a course in high school in executive session unless a parent or legal guardian of the pupil or the pupil, if emancipated, disagrees that the review should be conducted in executive session and then the review shall be conducted in an open meeting. If the review is conducted in executive session, the board shall notify the teacher of the date, time and place of the review and shall allow the teacher to be present at the review. If the teacher is not present at the review, the board shall consult with the teacher before making its decision. Any request, including the written request as provided in section

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15-341, the written evidence presented at the review and the written record of the review, including the decision of the governing board to accept or reject the teacher's decision, shall be retained by the governing board as part of its permanent records.

12. Provide transportation or site transportation loading and unloading areas for any child or children if deemed for the best interest of the district, whether within or without the district, county or state.
13. Enter into intergovernmental agreements and contracts with school districts or other governing bodies as provided in section 11-952. Intergovernmental agreements and contracts between school districts or between a school district and other governing bodies as provided in section 11-952 are exempt from competitive bidding under the procurement rules adopted by the state board of education pursuant to section 15-213.
14. Include in the curricula it prescribes for high schools in the school district career and technical education, vocational education and technology education programs and career and technical, vocational and technology program improvement services for the high schools, subject to approval by the state board of education. The governing board may contract for the provision of career and technical, vocational and technology education as provided in section 15-789.
15. Suspend a teacher or administrator from the teacher's or administrator's duties without pay for a period of time of not to exceed ten school days, if the board determines that suspension is warranted pursuant to section 15-341, subsection A, paragraphs 21 and 22.
16. Dedicate school property within an incorporated city or town to such city or town or within a county to that county for use as a public right-of-way if both of the following apply:
  - (a) Pursuant to an ordinance adopted by such city, town or county, there will be conferred upon the school district privileges and benefits that may include benefits related to zoning.
  - (b) The dedication will not affect the normal operation of any school within the district.
17. Enter into option agreements for the purchase of school sites.
18. Donate surplus or outdated learning materials, educational equipment

and furnishings to nonprofit community organizations where the governing board determines that the anticipated cost of selling the learning materials, educational equipment or furnishings equals or exceeds the estimated market value of the materials.

19. Prescribe policies for the assessment of reasonable fees for students to use district-provided parking facilities. The fees are to be applied by the district solely against costs incurred in operating or securing the parking facilities. Any policy adopted by the governing board pursuant to this paragraph shall include a fee waiver provision in appropriate cases of need or economic hardship.
20. Establish alternative educational programs that are consistent with the laws of this state to educate pupils, including pupils who have been reassigned pursuant to section 15-841, subsection E or F.
21. Require a period of silence to be observed at the commencement of the first class of the day in the schools. If a governing board chooses to require a period of silence to be observed, the teacher in charge of the room in which the first class is held shall announce that a period of silence not to exceed one minute in duration will be observed for meditation, and during that time no activities shall take place and silence shall be maintained.
22. Require students to wear uniforms.
23. Exchange unimproved property or improved property, including school sites, where the governing board determines that the improved property is unnecessary for the continued operation of the school district without requesting authorization by a vote of the school district electors if the governing board determines that the exchange is necessary to protect the health, safety or welfare of pupils or when the governing board determines that the exchange is based on sound business principles for either:
  - (a) Unimproved or improved property of equal or greater value.
  - (b) Unimproved property that the owner contracts to improve if the value of the property ultimately received by the school district is of equal or greater value.
24. For common and high school pupils, assess reasonable fees for optional extracurricular activities and programs conducted when the common

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or high school is not in session, except that no fees shall be charged for pupils' access to or use of computers or related materials. For high school pupils, the governing board may assess reasonable fees for fine arts and vocational education courses and for optional services, equipment and materials offered to the pupils beyond those required to successfully complete the basic requirements of any other course, except that no fees shall be charged for pupils' access to or use of computers or related materials. Fees assessed pursuant to this paragraph shall be adopted at a public meeting after notice has been given to all parents of pupils enrolled at schools in the district and shall not exceed the actual costs of the activities, programs, services, equipment or materials. The governing board shall authorize principals to waive the assessment of all or part of a fee assessed pursuant to this paragraph if it creates an economic hardship for a pupil. For the purposes of this paragraph, "extracurricular activity" means any optional, noncredit, educational or recreational activity that supplements the education program of the school, whether offered before, during or after regular school hours.

25. Notwithstanding section 15-341, subsection A, paragraphs 7 and 9, construct school buildings and purchase or lease school sites, without a vote of the school district electors, if the buildings and sites are totally funded from one or more of the following:
- (a) Monies in the unrestricted capital outlay fund, except that the estimated cost shall not exceed \$250,000 for a district that utilizes section 15-949.
  - (b) Monies distributed from the school facilities board established by section 15-2001.
  - (c) Monies specifically donated for the purpose of constructing school buildings.

This paragraph shall not be construed to eliminate the requirement for an election to raise revenues for a capital outlay override pursuant to section 15-481 or a bond election pursuant to section 15-491.

26. Conduct a background investigation that includes a fingerprint check conducted pursuant to section 41-1750, subsection G for certificated personnel and personnel who are not paid employees of the school district, as a condition of employment. A school district may release the results of a background check to another school district for employment purposes. The school district may charge the costs of fingerprint checks

to its fingerprinted employee, except that the school district may not charge the costs of fingerprint checks for personnel who are not paid employees of the school district.

27. Unless otherwise prohibited by law, sell advertising as follows:
- (a) Advertisements shall be age appropriate and not contain promotion of any substance that is illegal for minors such as alcohol, tobacco and drugs or gambling. Advertisements shall comply with the state sex education policy of abstinence.
  - (b) Advertising approved by the governing board for the exterior of school buses may appear only on the sides of the bus in the following areas:
    - (i) The signs shall be below the seat level rub rail and not extend above the bottom of the side windows.
    - (ii) The signs shall be at least three inches from any required lettering, lamp, wheel well or reflector behind the service door or stop signal arm.
    - (iii) The signs shall not extend from the body of the bus so as to allow a handhold or present a danger to pedestrians.
    - (iv) The signs shall not interfere with the operation of any door or window.
    - (v) The signs shall not be placed on any emergency doors.
  - (c) The school district shall establish an advertisement fund that is composed of revenues from the sale of advertising. The monies in an advertisement fund are not subject to reversion.
28. Assess reasonable damage deposits to pupils in grades seven through twelve for the use of textbooks, musical instruments, band uniforms or other equipment required for academic courses. The governing board shall adopt policies on any damage deposits assessed pursuant to this paragraph at a public meeting called for this purpose after providing notice to all parents of pupils in grades seven through twelve in the school district. Principals of individual schools within the district may waive the damage deposit requirement for any textbook or other item if the payment of the damage deposit would create an economic hardship for the pupil. The school district shall return the full amount of the damage deposit for any textbook or other item if the pupil returns the textbook

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or other item in reasonably good condition within the time period prescribed by the governing board. For the purposes of this paragraph, “in reasonably good condition” means the textbook or other item is in the same or a similar condition as it was when the pupil received it, plus ordinary wear and tear.

29. Notwithstanding section 15-1105, expend surplus monies in the civic center school fund for maintenance and operations or unrestricted capital outlay, if sufficient monies are available in the fund after meeting the needs of programs established pursuant to section 15-1105.
30. Notwithstanding section 15-1143, expend surplus monies in the community school program fund for maintenance and operations or unrestricted capital outlay, if sufficient monies are available in the fund after meeting the needs of programs established pursuant to section 15-1142.
31. Adopt guidelines for standardization of the format of the school report cards required by section 15-746 for schools within the district.
32. Adopt policies that require parental notification when a law enforcement officer interviews a pupil on school grounds. Policies adopted pursuant to this paragraph shall not impede a peace officer from the performance of the peace officer’s duties. If the school district governing board adopts a policy that requires parental notification:
  - (a) The policy may provide reasonable exceptions to the parental notification requirement.
  - (b) The policy shall set forth whether and under what circumstances a parent may be present when a law enforcement officer interviews the pupil, including reasonable exceptions to the circumstances under which a parent may be present when a law enforcement officer interviews the pupil, and shall specify a reasonable maximum time after a parent is notified that an interview of a pupil by a law enforcement officer may be delayed to allow the parent to be present.
33. Enter into voluntary partnerships with any party to finance with funds other than school district funds and cooperatively design school facilities that comply with the adequacy standards prescribed in section 15-2011 and the square footage per pupil requirements pursuant to section 15-2041, subsection D, paragraph 3, subdivision (b). The design plans

and location of any such school facility shall be submitted to the school facilities board for approval pursuant to section 15-2041, subsection O. If the school facilities board approves the design plans and location of any such school facility, the party in partnership with the school district may cause to be constructed and the district may begin operating the school facility before monies are distributed from the school facilities board pursuant to section 15-2041. Monies distributed from the new school facilities fund to a school district in a partnership with another party to finance and design the school facility shall be paid to the school district pursuant to section 15-2041. The school district shall reimburse the party in partnership with the school district from the monies paid to the school district pursuant to section 15-2041, in accordance with the voluntary partnership agreement. Before the school facilities board distributes any monies pursuant to this subsection, the school district shall demonstrate to the school facilities board that the facilities to be funded pursuant to section 15-2041, subsection O meet the minimum adequacy standards prescribed in section 15-2011. If the cost to construct the school facility exceeds the amount that the school district receives from the new school facilities fund, the partnership agreement between the school district and the other party shall specify that, except as otherwise provided by the other party, any such excess costs shall be the responsibility of the school district. The school district governing board shall adopt a resolution in a public meeting that an analysis has been conducted on the prospective effects of the decision to operate a new school with existing monies from the school district's maintenance and operations budget and how this decision may affect other schools in the school district. If a school district acquires land by donation at an appropriate school site approved by the school facilities board and a school facility is financed and built on the land pursuant to this paragraph, the school facilities board shall distribute an amount equal to twenty percent of the fair market value of the land that can be used for academic purposes. The school district shall place the monies in the unrestricted capital outlay fund and increase the unrestricted capital budget limit by the amount of the monies placed in the fund. Monies distributed under this paragraph shall be distributed from the new school facilities fund pursuant to section 15-2041. If a school district acquires land by donation at an appropriate school site approved by the school facilities board and a school facility is financed and built on the land pursuant to this paragraph, the school district shall not receive monies from the school facilities board for the

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donation of real property pursuant to section 15-2041, subsection F. It is unlawful for:

- (a) A county, city or town to require as a condition of any land use approval that a landowner or landowners that entered into a partnership pursuant to this paragraph provide any contribution, donation or gift, other than a site donation, to a school district. This subdivision only applies to the property in the voluntary partnership agreement pursuant to this paragraph.
- (b) A county, city or town to require as a condition of any land use approval that the landowner or landowners located within the geographic boundaries of the school subject to the voluntary partnership pursuant to this paragraph provide any donation or gift to the school district except as provided in the voluntary partnership agreement pursuant to this paragraph.
- (c) A community facilities district established pursuant to title 48, chapter 4, article 6 to be used for reimbursement of financing the construction of a school pursuant to this paragraph.
- (d) A school district to enter into an agreement pursuant to this paragraph with any party other than a master planned community party. Any land area consisting of at least three hundred twenty acres that is the subject of a development agreement with a county, city or town entered into pursuant to section 9-500.05 or 11-1101 shall be deemed to be a master planned community. For the purposes of this subdivision, "master planned community" means a land area consisting of at least three hundred twenty acres, which may be noncontiguous, that is the subject of a zoning ordinance approved by the governing body of the county, city or town in which the land is located that establishes the use of the land area as a planned area development or district, planned community development or district, planned unit development or district or other land use category or district that is recognized in the local ordinance of such county, city or town and that specifies the use of such land is for a master planned development.

34. Enter into an intergovernmental agreement with a presiding judge of the juvenile court to implement a law-related education program as defined in section 15-154. The presiding judge of the juvenile court may assign juvenile probation officers to participate in a law-related education



program in any school district in the county. The cost of juvenile probation officers who participate in the program implemented pursuant to this paragraph shall be funded by the school district.

35. Offer to sell outdated learning materials, educational equipment or furnishings at a posted price commensurate with the value of the items to pupils who are currently enrolled in that school district before those materials are offered for public sale.
36. If the school district is a small school district as defined in section 15-901, and if permitted by federal law, opt out of federal grant opportunities if the governing board determines that the federal requirements impose unduly burdensome reporting requirements.
37. Prescribe and enforce policies and procedures for the emergency administration of inhalers by trained employees of the school district and nurses who are under contract with the school district pursuant to section 15-158.
38. Develop policies and procedures to allow principals to budget for or assist with budgeting federal, state and local monies.



## Appendix E

### Common Education Acronyms

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| AAC     | Arizona Administrative Code (rules that govern state agencies, boards and commissions)   |
| AAHE    | American Association for Higher Education  |
| AASA    | American Association of School Administrators  |
| AASBO   | Arizona Association of School Business Officials   |
| AASPS   | American Association of State Policy Services (affiliate program of NSBA)                |
| AASPS   | Arizona Association of School Psychologists  |
| AAV     | Adjusted Assessed Valuation  |
| ABEC    | Arizona Business Education Coalition   |
| ACE     | American Council of Education  |
| ACOSA   | Arizona Council of School Attorneys (member attorneys who provide school law services)   |
| ACSA    | Arizona Charter School Association   |
| ACT     | American College Test – Assessments taken for college entry                              |
| ACTE-AZ | Association of Career and Technical Educators of Arizona                                 |
| ADA     | Average Daily Attendance; Americans with Disability Act                                  |
| ADE     | Arizona Department of Education  |
| ADHD    | Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder   |
| ADM     | Average Daily Membership (used extensively in the Arizona funding formula)               |
| AEA     | Arizona Education Association (teachers)   |
| AELAS   | Arizona Education Learning & Accountability System AFT<br>Arizona Federation of Teachers |
| AG      | Attorney General; Auditor General  |
| AIA     | Arizona Interscholastic Association  |
| AP      | Advanced Placement – College-level courses for high school students                      |

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| ARS     | Arizona Revised Statutes – Laws passed by the Arizona Legislature                       |
| ARSA    | Arizona Rural Schools Association   |
| ASA     | Arizona School Administrators   |
| ASBA    | Arizona School Boards Association   |
| ASBO    | International Association of School Business Officials                                  |
| ASCA    | Arizona School Counselors Association   |
| ASCD    | Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development                                  |
| ASHA    | Arizona School Health Association   |
| ASPAA   | Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association                                     |
| ASPRI   | Arizona School Public Relations Association   |
| ASROA   | Arizona School Resource Officers Association  |
| AZALAS  | Arizona Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents                        |
| AzMERIT | Arizona’s Measurement of Educational Readiness to Inform Teaching                       |
| COSA    | Council of School Attorneys (affiliate program of NSBA)                                 |
| CSF     | Classroom Site Fund   |
| CTE     | Career and Technical Education  |
| DAA     | District Additional Assistance  |
| DAP     | District Assessment Profile   |
| DOE     | U.S. Department of Education  |
| ECAP    | Education and Career Action Plan  |
| ELC     | Education Leadership Council  |
| ELL     | English Language Learner  |
| ESA     | Empowerment Scholarship Account   |
| ESD     | Elementary School District  |
| ESEA    | Elementary and Secondary Education Act – Principle federal law affecting K-12 education |
| ESL     | English as a second language  |

# Appendix E

## Common Education Acronyms

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|       |  |
|-------|--|
| ESSA  | Every Student Succeeds Act   |
| FAPE  | Free and Appropriate Public Education – What is promised in IDEA to students with disabilities                                     |
| FERPA | Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act   |
| FLSA  | Fair Labor Standards Act   |
| FMLA  | Family Medical Leave Act   |
| FOIA  | Freedom of Information Act   |
| FRL   | Free and Reduced Priced Lunch – Students qualify for this federal program based on family income                                   |
| FTE   | Full Time Equivalent (used in staffing models)   |
| GED   | General Education Development tests  |
| GNP   | Gross National Product   |
| GPA   | Grade Point Average  |
| GPEMC | Greater Phoenix Education Management Council   |
| HNAIC | Hispanic-Native American Indian Caucus (ASBA)  |
| HQT   | Highly Qualified Teacher   |
| IDEA  | Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – Federal law ensuring all students with disabilities FAPE                             |
| IB    | International Baccalaureate program  |
| IEP   | Individualized Education Plan  |
| ITBS  | Iowa Test of Basic Skills  |
| JTED  | Joint Technologic Education District   |
| LD    | Learning Disability  |
| LEA   | Local Education Agency – School district under a school board or other public authority (also includes charter holders in Arizona) |
| LEP   | Limited English Proficient   |
| M & O | Maintenance and Operations (the major portion of school funding)   |
| MOE   | Maintenance of Effort  |

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|       |   |
|-------|---|
| MOU   | Memorandum of Understanding   |
| NABSE | National Association of Black School Educators  |
| NASS  | National Affiliation of Superintendent Searchers  |
| NABT  | National Association for Beginning Teachers   |
| NAEP  | National Assessment of Educational Progress – “Nation’s Report Card” – Nationally normed test |
| NAESP | National Association of Elementary School Principals  |
| NASBE | National Association of State Boards of Education   |
| NASSP | National Association of Secondary School Principals   |
| NCLB  | No Child Left Behind – 2002 reauthorization of ESEA (replaced by ESSA)                        |
| NCREL | North Central Regional Educational Laboratory   |
| NCSS  | National Council for the Social Studies   |
| NCTE  | National Association for Teachers of English  |
| NCTM  | National Association for Teachers of Mathematics  |
| NEA   | National Education Association (teachers)   |
| NGA   | National Governors Association  |
| NMSA  | National Middle School Association  |
| NSBA  | National School Boards Association  |
| NSPRA | National School Public Relations Association  |
| NSTA  | National Science Teachers Association   |
| NVEC  | Northeast Valley Education Consortium   |
| OCR   | Office of Civil Rights  |
| OEO   | Office of Economic Opportunity  |
| OML   | Open Meeting Law  |
| OMLET | Open Meeting Law Enforcement Team   |
| PAC   | Political Action Committee  |
| PRM   | Policy Reference Manual   |
| PSAT  | Pre Scholastic Assessment Test – Generally taken by juniors to prepare for the SAT            |

# Appendix E

## Common Education Acronyms

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|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| PTA       | Parent Teacher Association (part of a national PTA)  |
| PTO       | Parent Teacher Organization (individual organizations)   |
| RCL       | Revenue Control Limit – Part of the Arizona funding formula  |
| RIF       | Reduction in Force   |
| SAT       | Scholastic Aptitude Test – Assessment taken for college entry  |
| SBE       | State Board of Education   |
| SES       | Socioeconomic Status   |
| SFB       | Arizona School Facilities Board  |
| SIMS/SIS  | Student Information Management System/Student Information System   |
| SIP       | School Improvement Plan (site improvement plan)  |
| SNOA      | School Nurses Organization of Arizona  |
| SRO       | School Resource Officer  |
| STO       | Student Tuition Organization   |
| TEI       | Teacher Experience Index   |
| TIF       | Teacher Incentive Fund   |
| Title I   | Largest federal education funding program – Helps students who are in a low SES, funding based on FRL        |
| Title II  | Federal funding for professional development   |
| Title III | Provides additional funding for English language acquisition   |
| Title IX  | Bans sex discrimination in schools receiving federal funds whether in academics or athletics                 |
| Title VII | Civil Rights Act of 1964: Prohibits discrimination on basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin |
| UHSD      | Union High School District   |
| USD       | Unified School District  |
| USFR      | Uniform System of Financial Records  |





## **Appendix F**

### **Arizona Education Offices and Agencies**

#### **Arizona Department of Education**

- Headed by the elected Superintendent of Public Instruction
- Implements statute and State Board of Education policy
- Has service responsibility and power to interpret/apply statute where no rules exist
- Source of information for:
  - Statewide student assessment data (AzMERIT and AIMS)
  - School and district A-F grades
  - Teacher and administrator certification

#### **Auditor General**

- With the Board of Education, sets a financial reporting system for school districts

#### **State Board of Education**

- Appointed by the governor
- Has policy and regulatory responsibility, including adoption of state academic standards and assessments

#### **County School Superintendent**

- Elected official
- Provides services to local school districts, such as paying vouchers, depositing funds and general bookkeeping activities, recording and checking professional certificates
- Operates accommodation schools
- Responsible for governing board elections and for filling governing board vacancies (by appointment or special election)



## Appendix G

### Publications of the Arizona School Boards Association

- **ASBA Political Agenda**
  - Outlines the positions approved by membership at the annual Delegate Assembly that ASBA will promote legally and legislatively
- **The Arizona Open Meeting Law**
  - A handy reference manual on the Arizona Open Meeting Law
  - References to the agency handbook from the office of the Arizona Attorney General
- **ASBA Annual Journal**
  - An informative annual magazine for school board members in the state of Arizona that celebrates annual award dinners and previews upcoming activities, opportunities and initiatives
- **ASBACONnect**
  - A bi-weekly newsletter sent electronically to all board members, superintendents, business managers and board/superintendent secretaries statewide
- **AZEdNews E-Weekly**
  - The latest news on Arizona K-12 education from ASBA's Arizona Education News Service ([www.azednews.com](http://www.azednews.com))
- **Legislative Comprehensive Brief/Legislative Wrap-Up Brief**
  - These briefs, published electronically each legislative session, provide summaries of all bills introduced that impact public education in Arizona (comprehensive brief) and report on how they fared in the process (wrap-up).

### Publications of the National School Boards Association

- **Becoming a Better Board Member: A Guide to Effective School Board Service**
  - A comprehensive manual of school board service
- **The Key Work of School Boards**
  - Discusses the five areas that should be the focus of school board service: vision, accountability, policy and board operations, community leadership and board/superintendent relationships



## Appendix H

### Helpful Websites

Arizona School Boards Association: [www.azsba.org](http://www.azsba.org)

Arizona Education News Service: [www.azednews.com](http://www.azednews.com)

Friends of ASBA: [www.friendsofasba.org](http://www.friendsofasba.org)

National School Boards Association: [www.nsba.org](http://www.nsba.org)

Arizona Department of Education: [www.ade.state.az.us](http://www.ade.state.az.us)

Arizona State Legislature: [www.azleg.gov](http://www.azleg.gov)

Auditor General: [www.azauditor.gov](http://www.azauditor.gov)

- Reports on school district dollars in the classroom:  
[www.azauditor.gov/reports-publications/school-districts](http://www.azauditor.gov/reports-publications/school-districts)
- USFR: <https://www.azauditor.gov/reports-publications/school-districts/manuals-memorandums>

Arizona Association of School Business Officials: [www.aasbo.org](http://www.aasbo.org)

Arizona School Administrators: [www.azsa.org](http://www.azsa.org)

Arizona Education Association: [www.aea.org](http://www.aea.org)

Arizona Agency Handbook: [www.azag.gov/agency-handbook](http://www.azag.gov/agency-handbook)

Arizona Revised Statutes: <http://www.azleg.gov/>

[ArizonaRevisedStatutes.asp](http://www.azleg.gov/ArizonaRevisedStatutes.asp)

Attorney General Agency Handbook on Open Meeting Law:

[www.azag.gov/sites/default/files/sites/all/docs/agency-handbook/ch07-2013.pdf](http://www.azag.gov/sites/default/files/sites/all/docs/agency-handbook/ch07-2013.pdf)



## Appendix I

### Board Calendars

Throughout each year, governing boards must take certain policy-related actions to comply with state and federal laws as well as board policies. Some actions do not have specific timeframes, a portion require action on an annual or biennial basis and still others specify finite dates by which action shall have been taken. The following lists items that require board action and the policy where the specific language can be found.

#### Before January 1:

##### Accounting System (DIA)

If your district intends to manage its own accounting, you must apply to the auditor general by January 1 preceding the fiscal year (which runs from July 1 to June 30) the district wishes to assume the accounting responsibility. Districts need only apply once.

##### Banking Services (DG)

The governing board by majority vote shall designate one (1) or more banks for the safeguarding of its funds.

#### Between January 1 and 15 in years following elections:

##### Board Organizational Meeting (BDA)

Between January 1 and 15 boards should elect a board president and clerk. This is only required in years following an election but can be done yearly if desired. The meeting must take place in a convenient public facility within the district.

#### April-May

##### Evaluation of Superintendent (CBI)

The governing board shall evaluate the superintendent at least once each year and is also responsible for contract negotiations and renewals. See your board policy CBI for specific dates and requirements.

##### Budget Planning, Preparation and Schedules (DBC-R)

By February 1, the District shall submit evidence to the State Board Arizona Education Offices and Agencies that it continues to meet the standards and qualifications required for additional teacher compensation monies for the budget year.

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## May-June

### **Budget Planning, Preparation and Schedule (DBC-R)**

May and June have numerous budget planning and preparation deadlines. See DBC-R for specific schedule of deadlines.

### **Before July 15:**

#### **Budget Planning, Preparation and Schedules (DBC-R)**

- By July 15, the board must file a copy of the district's adopted budget with the County Superintendent and electronically submit a copy to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. This budget must be adopted at a public hearing.
- The district (board) must publish or mail to the public, at least ten (10) days in advance of the required hearing (no later than July 5) the proposed budget or a summary of the proposed budget.

#### **Annual Budget – Desegregation (DB)\***

On or before July 15 a school district operating under a court order of desegregation or an administrative agreement with the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights shall collect and report data regarding activities in a format prescribed by the Department of Education.

\*Only districts under federal court order or OCR administrative agreement need comply

#### **English Language Instruction (IHAA)**

Districts must file a request for additional monies set aside for the instruction of ELL students from ADE by July 15. (Funding varies or may not be available every year depending on the district's budget for ELL and Legislative appropriation).

## August-September

### **Budget Planning, Preparation and Schedules (DBC-R)**

Board approved budgets can be revised at a public hearing until September 15, if law changes or calculation errors outside the district's control make a revision necessary.



### **September-October**

#### **Annual Budget (DB)**

- If the district will seek an override at the November general election, the board must order the override election at least 90 days before election day. The board must publish two budgets for the voters for comparison: one that includes the override, and one that does not.
- Between September 1 and October 31, each school district that currently has a capital outlay override in place must hold a public hearing at which an update of the progress of capital improvements financed through the override is discussed and at which the public is permitted an opportunity to comment.

### **December**

#### **Budget Planning, Preparation and Schedules (DBC-R)**

Board approved budgets must be revised on or before December 15 if the district has been notified that the adopted budget exceeds the allowable budget limits for the year.

#### **Annually in a Month of the Board's Choice**

##### **Board Member Conflict of Interest (BCB)**

ASBA recommends board members annually review and sign a conflict of interest statement and update as needed during the year.

##### **Payment Procedures (DK)**

The board may approve a resolution authorizing the signing of vouchers between meetings, with the vouchers being ratified at the next meeting of the board.

##### **Evaluation of Professional Staff Members (GCO-RA)**

A process for the evaluation of professional staff must be approved by the governing board annually.

##### **Types of Funds and Revolving Funds (DIB)**

The board may apply to the county school superintendent to set up funds for a specific purpose as necessary.



## Appendix J

### Definitions of Terms

**Board of Directors (Governing Board):** A group of individuals elected by the voters of the district to hire and supervise the chief executive of the district (superintendent) and to set policy for the district to be managed.

**Board Committee:** A group of people appointed by the board to study and review issues within the committee's area of responsibility. A committee makes recommendations to the entire school board for action.

**Policy:** Board policies are statements that prescribe the organization and operation of the school district. Policy regulations constitute a guide in making decisions and indicate the manner in which the district business should be conducted.

**Budget:** An itemized summary of estimated or intended expenditures for a given period along with proposals for financing all operations in the district.

**Audit:** An examination of records or financial accounts to check their accuracy.

**Financial Statements:** A report providing financial statistics relative to a given part of a district's operations or status. The two most common financial statements are the expenditures and revenue status reports.

**Fiduciary:** A person or organization that holds, manages and has discretionary authority and control over money belonging to another person or organization.

**Mission Statement:** A formal, concise statement outlining the purpose of the district. The mission statement should guide the actions of the district, spell out the overall goal, provide a sense of direction and guide decision-making.

**Operational Planning:** Operational planning is setting out clearly the implementation of the strategic plan against specific objectives. Operational planning drives action plans at all levels throughout the district including at the building level.

**Strategic Planning:** The process of determining a district's long-term goals and then identifying the best approach for achieving those goals.

**Vision Statement:** A statement giving a broad, inspirational image of the future that the district is aiming to achieve.





Cultivating excellence in locally-governed school districts.



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