

BOARD OPERATING AGREEMENT

2018-19

Purpose

The Board of Directors is the educational policy-making body for Rainier School District. To effectively meet the District's challenges, the School Board members must function together as a leadership team. To ensure unity among team members, effective group agreements must be in place. The following are the group agreements for the Rainier School Board

Governance Principles

1. **Children's interests come first.** The board will represent the needs and interests of all the children in our district.
2. **Focus on Governance.** The primary work of the board is to clarify district purpose, to focus on policymaking and planning and evaluation (curriculum, district performance and superintendent), rather than day-to-day operations.
3. **Follow the chain of command.** The last stop, not the first, will be the board. We agree to follow the chain of command and insist that others do so. While the board is eager to listen to its constituents and staff, each inquiry is to be referred to the person who can properly and expeditiously address the issue. Board request that will likely require considerable time or have political implications are to be directed to the superintendent. All personnel complaints and criticism received by the board or its individual members will be directed to the superintendent.
4. The board will act as ambassadors to the schools, the community and the district.

Meeting Operational Agreements

1. **Don't spring surprises** on other board members or the superintendent. Surprises to the board or the superintendent will be the exception, not the rule. We agree to ask the board chair or the superintendent to place an item on the agenda instead of bringing it up unexpectedly at the meeting.
2. **Meeting protocol.** Conduct at a board meeting is very important. We desire to have a legacy of a well-functioning, effective board. We agree to avoid words and actions that create a negative impression on an individual, the board or the district. We will be open-minded and willing to deeply listen to all speakers/presenters. We agree that we can disagree and will do so using common courtesy and respect for others. We will not react to impromptu

complaints on the spot but will assure any individual(s) that the school district will follow up.

3. **Practice efficient decision-making.** Board meetings are for decision-making, action and votes, not endless discussion. We agree to move the question when discussion is repetitive.
3. **Speak to agenda issues.** The board will not converse with the audience. We agree to speak to the issues on the agenda and attend to our fellow board members. Facts and information needed from the administration will be referred to the superintendent.
4. **Utilize CEO input.** The superintendent is the chief executive officer of the senior leadership team and should make recommendations, proposals or suggestions on most matters that come before the board.
5. **Executive/closed session** will be held only for legally appropriate subjects. Executive session will be held only when specific needs arise. Board members will be extremely sensitive to the legal ramifications of their meetings and comments.

Communication Agreements

1. **Communication** between staff and the board is encouraged as long as it follows board policy. The senior leadership team recognizes that “good,” “timely,” “open” and “constant” communication regarding school district issues is extremely important. We will strive to anticipate issues which may become important or are sensitive to our school district and district stakeholders.
2. The chair responds to group email sent to the board.

Annual Planning and Evaluation

1. **Clearly state goals.** The board and superintendent will participate annually in establishing goals and objectives. The board will set goals for itself and the superintendent. The board and superintendent will set clear goals for the district.
2. **Annually conduct a self-assessment/evaluation.** The board will address its behavior by yearly self-evaluation and by addressing itself to any individual problems, such as poor meeting attendance or disclosure of confidential information.