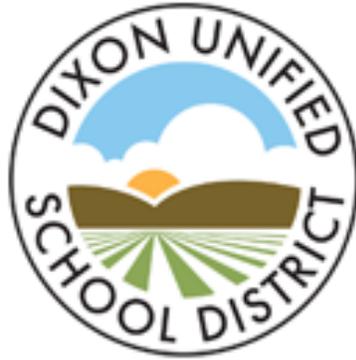


Dixon Unified School District Governance Team Handbook

Roles, Unity of Purpose, Responsibilities, Norms and Protocols



Board of Trustees

Luke Foster, President
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Jewel Fink, Clerk
John Gabby, Member
Melissa Maseda, Member

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Approved December 5, 2019

The Dixon Unified School District Mission

Dixon Unified's mission is to close the achievement gap by preparing all students for college and career readiness and success in a global society.

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Governance Team Member Roles

The Dixon Unified School District Governance Team is comprised of five locally elected public officials entrusted with governing the community's public schools. In addition, the Superintendent also serves as a member of the district's governance team and has responsibilities to support Board operations and decision-making.

President

The Governing Board shall annually elect a President from among its members to provide leadership on behalf of the Board and the educational community it serves. The President shall preside at all Board meetings. He/she shall:

1. Call the meeting to order at the appointed time
2. Announce the business to come before the Board in its proper order
3. Enforce the Board's policies relating to the conduct of meetings and help ensure compliance with applicable requirements of the Brown Act
4. Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference
5. Explain what the effect of a motion would be if it is not clear to every member
6. Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Board
7. Rule on issues of parliamentary procedure
8. Put motions to a vote, and state clearly the results of the vote
9. Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Board meetings

The President shall perform other duties in accordance with law and Board policy including, but not limited to:

1. Signing all acts and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Board
2. Consulting with the Superintendent or designee on the preparation of the Board's agendas
3. Working with the Superintendent to ensure that Board members have necessary materials and information
4. Subject to Board approval, appointing and dissolving all Board committees (The superintendent also may form district committees which are not under the approval of the Board.)
5. Calling such meetings of the Board as he/she may deem necessary, giving notice as prescribed by law
6. Representing the district as governance spokesperson, in conjunction with the Superintendent

The President shall have the same rights as other members of the Board, including the right to move, second, discuss and vote on all questions before the Board.

When the President resigns or is absent or disabled, the Vice President shall perform the President's duties. When both the President and Vice President are absent or disabled, the Clerk shall perform the President's duties.

Vice President

At the annual organizational meeting, the Governing Board shall elect a Vice President from its own membership. When the President resigns or is absent or disabled, the Vice President shall perform the President's duties. S/he will consult with the President and the Superintendent or designee on the preparation of the Board's agendas.

Secretary

The Governing Board shall appoint the Superintendent to serve as Secretary of the Board. The Secretary to the Board shall be responsible for maintaining an accurate and complete record of all Board proceedings and shall:

1. Prepare, distribute and maintain the Board agenda
2. Record, sign, distribute and maintain the Board minutes
3. Maintain Board records and documents
4. Conduct official correspondence for the Board
5. As directed by the Board, sign and execute official papers
6. Perform other duties as assigned by the Board
7. Sign documents on behalf of the district as directed by the Board

Clerk

At the annual organizational meeting, the Governing Board shall elect a clerk from its own membership.

The duties of the Clerk shall be to:

1. Certify or attest to actions taken by the Board when required
2. Maintain such other records or reports as required by law
3. Serve as presiding officer in the absence of the President or Vice President
4. Perform any other duties assigned by the Board

Unity of Purpose

In a school district, the Board and Superintendent work together as a governance team. For a governance team to work together effectively, members need to: maintain a unity of purpose; agree on and govern within appropriate roles; create and sustain a positive governance culture; and create a supportive structure for effective governance.

- We believe that by being an effective School Board we will:
- Guide the Dixon Unified School District to provide the best learning environment for all students
- Build trust while moving the district forward
- Understand our individual jobs and collective responsibilities.
- Be a team with a common focused direction
- Be partners with the staff in positive change
- Oversee the putting together of a first-rate academic program and first-rate facilities
- Perpetuate a legacy of positive culture as people come and go

Governance Team Responsibilities

Set the direction for the community's schools

- Focus on student learning
- Build a consensus on what students need to achieve at their highest potential
- Generate, review or revise setting direction documents (vision, strategic plan, mission, goals, beliefs)
- Ensure an appropriate inclusive process is used and these documents are a driving force

Establish an effective and efficient structure for the school district

- Employ and support the superintendent/set policy for hiring of other personnel
- Set direction for and adopt curriculum
- Develop and adopt policies
- Establish budget priorities, adopt the budget and oversee facilities issues
- Provide direction for and vote to accept collective bargaining agreements

Provide support through our behavior and actions

- Act with professional demeanor that models the district's beliefs and mission
- Make decisions and provide resources that support mutually agreed upon priorities and goals
- Uphold board approved district policies
- Ensure a positive personnel climate exists
- Be knowledgeable enough about district efforts to explain them to the public

Ensure accountability to the public

- Evaluate the superintendent
- Monitor, review and revise policies
- Serve as a judicial and appeals body
- Monitor student achievement and program effectiveness/require program changes as indicated
- Monitor and adjust district finances/facilities issues
- Monitor collective bargaining process
- Assess the Board's own effectiveness

Act as community leaders

- Involve the community in appropriate and meaningful ways
- Communicate to the community clear information about policies, progress on goals, programs and fiscal issues
- Listen and channel community concerns and complaints

- Advocate for children, district programs and public education to the public, community, local and state leaders

Board Governance Standards and Norms

The Governance Team is committed to:

1. Be on time, focused and prepared for our meetings
2. Review all provided documents and back-up materials before deliberating an issue
3. Contact the superintendent for clarification about board item issues
4. Focus on the issues at hand and do not have side discussions or involve other issues
5. Operate and communicate openly with trust and integrity
6. Govern in a dignified and professional manner
7. Treat each other and our constituents with respect and courtesy
8. Recognize and respect differences in leadership and style
9. Assume collective responsibility for the conduct and behavior of the governance team
10. Manage and resolve our own conflicts
11. Work on solutions rather than problems – debate issues not personalities
12. Contribute varied perspectives to further decision making
13. Put aside personal and political preferences and opinions in our deliberations – students needs and priorities drive our decisions
14. Recognize and appreciate the professional judgment of our staff and their commitment to our schools and students
15. Maintain confidentiality of closed session issues
16. Limit the personal use of technology during meetings
17. Use established Rules of Order as a guideline and abide by Board Policies and agreed upon protocols

Superintendent Governance Standards

The following professional standards recommended by the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) will be adopted.

The Superintendent:

1. Promotes the success of all students and supports the efforts of the Board of Trustees to keep the district focused on learning and achievement
2. Values, advocates and supports public education and all stakeholders
3. Recognizes and respects the differences of perspective and style on Board and among staff, students, parents and the community – and ensures that the diverse range of views inform board decisions
4. Acts with dignity, treats everyone with civility and respect, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior.
5. Serves as a model for the value of life-long learning and supports the Board's continuous professional development
6. Works with the Board as a "Governance team" and assures collective responsibility for building a unity of purpose, communicating a common vision, and creating a positive organizational culture.
7. Recognizes that the Board/superintendent governance relationship is supported by the management team.
8. Understands the distinctions between board and staff roles and respects the role of the Board as the representative to the community.
9. Understands the authority rests with the Board as a whole; provides guidance to the Board to assist in direction-making; and provides leadership based on the direction of the Board as a whole.
10. Communicates openly with trust and integrity including providing all members of the Board with equal access to information, and recognizing the importance of both responsive and anticipatory communications.
11. Accepts leadership responsibility and accountability for implementing the vision, goals and policies of the district.

The Board's Relationship with the Superintendent

The Board will commit to work through and with the Superintendent on issues regarding the running of the District. The Board and Superintendent are expected to protect confidential information. The Superintendent will inform the Board as soon as possible of:

- Serious safety concerns
- Serious disciplinary action
- Serious or unexpected personnel changes or disciplinary issues
- Serious illness, injury or death of a student, staff member or of a the staff member's immediate family
- Legal or liability concerns
- Notable achievements

In all matters, the Board and Superintendent are expected to protect confidential information. It is the superintendent's responsibility to organize the staff in the manner that best serves the needs of the District. As a professional courtesy, the superintendent shall provide appropriate notice to the Board in advance of action being taken.

This should occur through regular communication such as:

- Weekly Friday Communications, including providing rationales or reasons for decisions or actions
- Timely responses to individual inquiries shared with all Board members
- Publishing and updating a calendar of events and Superintendent activities
- Immediate responses about serious issues and notification of emergencies

As the norm, the superintendent or designee speaks on behalf of the Board. The President or designee is authorized to speak on behalf of the Board.

All conflicts between the superintendent and the Board will be handled in Closed Session, with the superintendent being in attendance, when appropriate and necessary.

Unless it impacts the function of the Board, conflicts between individual governance team members (including the superintendent) will be addressed privately between those who hold the conflict and will not involve other members of the team.

Board Protocols

1) Issue: Orienting a New Board Member

Principles: A new member of the Board will need to invest time in training and understanding the job in order to be effective. Recent or more experienced Board members should mentor and support new members so that the entire Board can be efficient and effective.

Protocols:

- The president of the Board and the Superintendent should provide the resources and guidance and provide the new member with opportunities for training as soon as possible. The CSBA's workshops for new Board members are one such opportunity.
- As soon as possible, the Board President and/or the superintendent will schedule an orientation session for the new members. The orientation session will include but not be limited to:
 - Review the Governance Handbook protocols and agreements
 - Review of Board agenda process and procedures
 - Review of 9000 series of Board Bylaws
 - Review of the Brown Act and discussion of confidentiality
 - Review of ACSA/CSBA Professional Standards for the Superintendent as they relate to accountability of Superintendent to Board
 - Review Superintendent contract provisions and evaluation procedures
 - Discuss critical issues and any pending litigation
 - Discuss responsibility of Board to monitor fiscal matters
 - Review of Board calendar
 - Review of California State Form 700, Declaration of Financial Interests
- The president of the Board should welcome the new member, provide that member with the article, "What New Board Members Need to Learn in Their First 100 Days" (http://www.csba.org/en/NewsAndMedia/Publications/CASchoolsMagazine/2012/Spring/InThisIssue/QAGovern_Spring2012.aspx) as well as the most recent copy of the Board's Governance Handbook. Then the president should explain that any questions that arise from reading of the article and handbook can be answered by him or herself or the new Board member's assigned mentor.
- The president and vice-president should ask an experienced current or recent Board member to serve as a mentor for the new member and the mentor should meet/talk regularly with the new member to answer any questions and provide any support necessary.
- The Superintendent will meet with each new Board member individually to answer any questions and familiarize him/her with district operations.
- Each seated Board member may arrange a time to have an informal meeting with each new Board member as soon as possible after the swearing in ceremony.
- While ethics training is not legally required for school board members in California at present, the Board recommends all Board members familiarize themselves with the National School Board Association's Code of Ethics and be continually thinking about one's actions and decisions as a Board member by considering what is legal, what is ethical, and what is fair. We also highly recommend reading the brief by the NSBA

entitled “Doing the Right Thing,”

(<https://d3jc3ahdjad7x7.cloudfront.net/rVkOxlessTPe5PEk2QJRr9KeF9EfvWGMtgAo8gFi5Dap9LFy.pdf>) which lists their Code of Ethics (Appendix D)

- Ethics training, which is encouraged but not required, can be accessed at the following website - <http://oag.ca.gov/ethics>.

2) Issue: Board Members’ Role in Public

Principles: Trustees are a resource to the community about pending decisions, issues, and new programs. The final authority rests with the Board as a whole, not individual Board members.

Protocols:

- As new programs and issues are introduced, the Superintendent will inform the Board of points of information covering the scope of the issue or program.
- The Board and Superintendent will link, when possible, the program and issue to the vision, goals, and strategic plan of the district.
- When a Board member is approached by a community member about a pending decision, issue, or new program, the Board member will provide objective information. The Board member will remind the public that the role of the Board and the individual Board members is to make decisions that benefit ALL students and the community.
- The Board member will remind the public that deliberation leading to decision making will take place at open, public Board meetings.
- When the Board has reached a consensus or voted on an issue, any Board member who disagrees with the majority decision will nevertheless work in concert with the majority to implement the decision.
- If asked about the decision of the Board, the Board member should make an effort to convey the Board decision and explain the reasoning of the majority.

3) Issue: Acting As A Board Member With A Close Relative In The District

Principles: Board members who have children, grandchildren, or other close relatives enrolled in the district should articulate how their relative’s experience in the schools may affect their opinions and judgment with regard to Board decisions. Board members’ experience as relatives of students in the district can be helpful in informing the Board as they create policy and make decisions.

Protocols:

- Board members should identify, in open session, any agenda items being discussed and voted upon that may impact the education of their relative(s).
- While Board members have the right to request that their relative’s privacy be respected, it is acceptable for other Board members or members of the public to ask a Board member’s opinion from a relative’s perspective on agenda issues being discussed.
- A Board member should be allowed to recuse him or herself from participation in a vote where his or her relative is directly affected by the issue.
- Each Trustee recognizes and respects the right of other Trustees to vote “yes” or “no” on an issue, or to abstain from voting when there is a conflict of interest. When a relative of a Board Member directly and individually benefits from the action of the whole Board then the Board member involved should remove themselves from deliberations,

presentations and voting on the item. Negotiations are considered to benefit a group, not directly to an individual. Therefore a Board Member, who may have a relative who is union member, may vote on negotiation agreements since the settlement benefits a group and not directly to an individual.

4) Issue: Board Members' Site Visits, Participation in Meetings and Other Activities

Principles: The Board protects the right of a parent-board member to participate fully in their children's' education, including volunteering in the classroom, being a PTA member, chaperoning field trips, etc. The activities of an involved and supportive parent are available and encouraged for parent-trustees.

Board members are also encouraged to attend meetings at schools such as PTA meetings in their outreach to the community and to better understand what is going on in the schools. Board members may also want, and are encouraged, to volunteer to help with school activities to serve the community and learn more about the schools.

Protocols:

- Annually, at the beginning of the school year, and as needed following Board elections, each Board member will adopt one or more schools in the District, so that every school has such a Board liaison assigned. Board members are encouraged to attend PTA and site council meetings, and other meetings as may be appropriate, at their adopted schools.
- At meetings where discussions about school issues occur, a board member who is present as a Board liaison and not as a member of the organization should primarily be listening to the discussion and learning what community members think. However, when the Board member can provide information about the Board or the District that can inform the discussion, the Board member should do so.
- If a Board member is asked to give an opinion or chooses to give an opinion, s/he should make clear that s/he is speaking as an individual community member, not on behalf of the Board.
- A Board member should explain and clarify decisions the Board has made if asked to or if relevant to the discussion.
- A Board member who is attending a meeting as a participant rather than as a Board member—for example, a PTA meeting at a school where the Board member has a child—the Board member may participate fully, including voting. However, whenever speaking at such a meeting, the Board member must make it clear whether they are speaking as an individual or as a Board member. Because both situations can occur during the course of a single meeting, the Board member should make this clarification each time they speak.
- A Board member may participate as a volunteer in school activities and may participate in normal conversations as part of the activity. However, when a community member or staff member raises an issue that comes under the purview of the Board, the Board member must make it clear whether they are speaking as an individual or as a Board member. (See also Issue: Handling Concerns/Complaints From the Public and Staff).

Board members may visit any campus after checking with the principal about the best time to visit. Board members are required to check in with the principal's office and follow campus

guidelines for visitors. When a Board Member makes a visit to the site for program observation the following protocols should be followed:

- The Board member should notify the principal before visiting the school as a courtesy and to enable the principal to be available.
- When making a scheduled visit to a school or department in the primary role as a Board member, the member is encouraged to notify the Superintendent that they will be visiting a school or department, and may provide input to the Superintendent on issues or concerns that may arise from such a visit.
- When visiting their own children's teachers, board members will make it clear that they are acting as parents rather than board members.
- Such visits are for the purpose of becoming acquainted with school programs, personnel, operation and facilities. Board members shall not go into teachers' classrooms or campuses for the purpose of evaluation or investigation. Board members will not give directions or make suggestions to personnel during their visit.
- At no time while visiting schools shall a member make promises, either overt or implied, interfere with administration, or involve him or herself in personnel issues, student records, or union activities.
- Management staff are directed to relay requests from Board Members to the Superintendent to ensure that appropriate information is provided to all Board Members.

5) Issue: Handling Concerns/Complaints From The Public And Staff

Principles: Board members should be responsive to the community and be good listeners. It's important for members of the governance team to be consistent in their responses to staff and the community. Board members need to stay within their function and advise the complainant that they can not personally "fix" the problem. There are staff members whose job it is to remedy or deal with student and staff situations. Students and staff members have due process and confidentiality rights that cannot be violated. Keep in mind that the School Board is potentially the "Court of Last Resort" and members who have been too involved early in a situation may not be able to participate in a final hearing.

Protocols:

- When a community or staff member expresses a complaint or concern in private to a member of the Board, the member should listen politely and ask clarifying questions as appropriate, remembering that the member of the Board is hearing only one side of the story.
- Then, depending on the severity and nature of the complaint, the member should either refer the individual to the appropriate staff member, such as a teacher or principal, and encourage permission to share the complaint with the Superintendent. If the nature of the complaint might lead to or cause the endangerment or safe well-being of staff, community or students the Board Member must tell the complainant that they are obligated to inform the superintendent.
- If no permission is given, the member should suggest that the individual talk with the Superintendent and not share the information. If permission is given, the member should communicate with the Superintendent the conversation s/he had with the

individual. Board Members should respect the complainant's confidentiality when it is legally and ethically feasible.

- Chain of Command process - The Member should make sure the complainant understands the appropriate order of whom to contact (teacher, then principal, then district staff) and is aware of any formal forms or policies that might assist them (e.g., the uniform complaint form on the website).
- The Member should clarify that one Board member has no individual authority to fix a problem.
- As a representative of the public, it is important that the Board member invite the person with the complaint to get back to him/her if the issue is not resolved.
- If through conversation a Board member becomes aware of issues of concern to members of the community or staff, the Board member should request to talk to the Superintendent and President or should send the Superintendent and President an email describing the issue.

6) Issue: District Goals

Principles: The Board provides leadership, sets direction, and instills unity of purpose by reviewing and revising the District's mission and vision statements and by continuously updating District priorities and goals. Priorities and goals are expected to reflect community values and concerns, legal requirements, professional research and literature, and District resources.

Protocols:

- Each year, as noted on the governance calendar, the governance team (the Board and Superintendent) will set District goals, superintendent objectives and success indicators for the coming year. Annual District goals should reflect the governance team's long-range vision as set out in the District's strategic plan.
- Although there should not be separate Board, Superintendent, and District goals, the governance team should identify specific actions that are the Board's responsibility to implement as well as agreeing on the specific actions to be carried out by the Superintendent in order to achieve the established District goals.
- The Superintendent will create strategies for implementation of the agreed upon District goals, objectives and success indicators for those strategies.
- The Superintendent will report to the Board in open session at least twice each year on the District's progress toward those goals with specific reference to the success indicators. At that time, the governance team will evaluate District progress toward the goals and, if necessary, adjust the goals, actions, strategies, and success indicators.

7) Issue: Evaluation of the Superintendent

Principles: The Board uses the Superintendent evaluation as an important leadership tool to focus and align all District efforts. The process should provide an opportunity to acknowledge and commend the Superintendent's accomplishments. The evaluation should support the professional growth of the Superintendent and sustained improvement for the District and, if necessary, identify areas that need to be addressed by the Superintendent to ensure continuous progress.

Protocols:

- The Board will include in the governance calendar an annual evaluation of the Superintendent.
- The Board and Superintendent will agree on an evaluation instrument that includes the Superintendent's objectives or strategies in support of District goals, specific success indicators for each objective or strategy, and annual performance on the Superintendent governance standards (ref. above CSBA Superintendent Governance Standards)) and professional skills/competencies (See appendix A: Superintendent Evaluation Form, Part One, Sections A-E)
- Prior to the Board's evaluation, the Superintendent will prepare a self-evaluation that 1) discusses progress toward District goals as measured by the agreed objectives and success indicators, 2) assesses his/her own performance on governance standards and the professional skills and competencies, and 3) reviews any action taken to address the recommendations of the Board from the previous year.
- Board members will individually evaluate the Superintendent's performance, using the agreed evaluation instrument.
- The full Board will hold a closed session without the Superintendent to develop the final evaluation. For expediency, the Board president or the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee (comprised of two members of the Board) should, in advance, compile the individual performance reviews from each Trustee to produce a draft evaluation. Minority views may be reflected in the narrative, but the source of individual comments will not be included. The final evaluation must be approved by a majority of the Board.
- The Board as a whole will present the evaluation to the Superintendent in a confidential closed session meeting.
- The Superintendent will have the opportunity to provide a written response to the evaluation.

8) Issue: Parliamentary Procedures and Conduct of Board Meetings

Principles: It is the purpose of the Board to conduct meetings in a manner that is understandable to the public and other Board members. The public should be able to understand the communications/discussions of all Board members. As stated in Board Bylaw 9121, the President of the Board should: (4) "Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference." This bylaw allows each Board member an equal opportunity to communicate (hear and speak) as well the public to hear clearly what the Board expresses in its deliberations.

Meetings of the Board are held in public, but are not open-forum town hall meetings. Meetings will be conducted in such a way as to allow the public to provide input in the time allotted to ensure that multiple voices of the community inform Board deliberations; however, when the Board deliberates, it will be a time for the Trustees to listen and learn from each other, taking public input into consideration without re-engaging the public.

Protocols:

Placing items on the agenda

- Any Board member or member of the public may request that a matter within the jurisdiction of the Board be placed on the board meeting agenda. Agenda items will reflect the District's focus on student learning. The following steps outline the process for submitting an item for the Board Meeting agenda.

- Step 1 - The request must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent with supporting documentation at least 10 days before the scheduled meeting date. Items submitted less than 10 days before the scheduled meeting date may be postponed to a later meeting in order to allow sufficient time for consideration and research of the issue.
- Step 2 - The Board President and Superintendent shall decide whether a request is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board. Items not within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board may not be placed on the agenda.
- Step 3 - The Board President and Superintendent shall determine if the item is a request for information or whether the issue is covered by an existing policy or administrative regulation before placing the item on the agenda.
- Step 4 - The Board President and Superintendent shall decide whether an agenda item is appropriate for discussion in open or closed session, and whether the item should be an action item, informational item, or consent item.

Agenda Planning

- Whenever appropriate, the Action item should come before the Board twice, first as a discussion item and second as an Action item unless the item is routine (typically a consent item) or is time sensitive item (usually an emergency or fiscal necessity)
- Staff focus, energy, and time, as well as other district resources must be focused on achieving the agreed upon district vision, goals, and objectives and should not be diluted by new projects. The agenda committee determines the items to be placed on the agenda.

Board Member preparations for a Board Meeting

- A Board member should read all the information in the agenda packet of a meeting ahead of time.
- If the Board member has questions of clarification or requests for information, the member should first email the question to the Superintendent, copying the President, so that the Superintendent can channel the information to the appropriate staff member.
- The Superintendent should then share the requested information with all Board members.

Public Comments at the Board Meeting

- If a question is posed during public comment, it is at the direction and discretion of the President on how to respond. The President may choose to have staff respond immediately or defer the response to a future time.
- If another board member wishes to respond to the question, they should do so through the President's approval before public comment period is closed, and avoid a dialogue with the community member.
- If a board member would like clarification regarding input made during public comment, they should do so through the President's approval, before public comment period is closed and avoid dialogue with the community member.
- If a board member would like to respond to comments made during public comment, they should avoid direct dialogue with the community member and should wait to respond until Board discussion and deliberation occurs. Discussion and debate on agenda items is done between Board Members and not with community members.

While community questions may be answered and their comments clarified, discussion with the community on issues is not meant to occur at regular Board Meetings. The Board may choose to have community discussions on issues at Board workshops or town hall type meetings.

Consent Agenda Items

- Board members may request that any consent agenda item be removed and added to the standing separate agenda item for individual consideration. The Board may take action on any pulled item through this process.
- Questions on the consent calendar, once asked and answered in advance of a Board meeting, should not be asked again at the meeting unless the Board member feels there is information that is important for the public to know, or unless the member wants a separate vote on the item. In the latter case, the member should ask that the item be pulled from the consent calendar.
- Only re-occurring and standard contracts should be placed on the consent calendar. Unique and first-time contracts should be listed as action items.
- Consent calendar items should be routine and non-controversial

Regular Agenda Items

- The governance team will strive for brevity in deliberations, keeping remarks brief and to the point so that all opinions can be expressed and meetings can be efficient. Addressing each agenda item the Board shall, normally, adhere to the following process:
 - Staff Presentation/addressing questions from the Board
 - Input from the Community
 - Board Discussion and Deliberation

Rosenberg's Rules of Order

- The Board meetings shall follow the rules of order procedures described in Appendix B.

9) Intervention to Assure that the Meeting Guidelines are Being Followed

Principles: Board members and the public have the right to a safe environment for the deliberations necessary in a meeting. At times, inappropriate, disrespectful or disruptive behavior may occur at a Board meeting. It is the responsibility of the President of the Board to enforce the adopted meeting norms.

- If, in the opinion of any member of the Board or the Superintendent, a person or group is not adhering to the Meeting Norms, a request can be made to the President to take intervention steps to correct the situation. This request will take precedence over the current business of the Board.
- The President will call for a break.
- If in the judgment of the President, Superintendent, or another member of the Board, the situation is overly hostile, demeaning or disruptive the following protocol will be followed in order to insure a safe and productive meeting environment;
 - Option A-The President may call for a break to reduce tension, or to table the item to later in the meeting. No vote of the Board is required.

- Option B-The President, with a second, can table the item to a future meeting and/or adjourn the meeting if immediate action or discussion on the agenda item is not required. No vote of the Board is required.
- Option C- If the meeting is being willfully interrupted by a group or groups of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting infeasible, the Board President may direct the removal of individuals who are interrupting the meeting; if such removal does not resolve the interruption, the Board may clear the room other than news media who are not participating in the disruption, pursuant to Government Code section 54957.9

10) The Brown Act

Principles: The Brown Act describes California's Open Meeting rules and regulations. The attached article from the City of Santa Cruz is a good summary of the law (See Appendix C). Listed below are the most frequent topics of concern for Board Members.

Protocols:

- Majority conversations outside of an open meeting are when a majority of the Board discusses a topic that is within the jurisdiction of the school district in any setting that is not a publicly noticed meeting.
- Serial Conversations are when a majority of the Board Members talk about a school related topic in a chain conversation one person to another to another and so on until a majority of the Board has participated but not all at the time or place. This is a violation of the Brown Act.
- Board meetings and Board appointed committees must have open meetings that have agendas posted usually 72 hours in advance of the meeting.
- There are certain topics that can be discussed in a closed session where the public is not present (See Appendix C)
- There are five exceptions to when the majority of the Board can be present together outside a meeting but they still need to restrict their conversations and involvement in those meetings when a majority is present (See Appendix C)
- Emails addressed to the entire Board or to multiple Board members shall be responded to by the Board President or by a member designated by the President. Any individual board member may also respond if they choose to, but he/she must avoid using "reply-all" or otherwise creating a Brown Act violation. If the President was not included in the original address list, any recipient of the email should forward the email to the President and Superintendent. The Superintendent might also wish to respond. The Superintendent and President will copy each other on all correspondence that is in response to emails from the public.
- The Board May want to periodically have their attorney conduct a workshop for them on the Brown Act.

11) Board Member Elections

Principles: Sitting board members have the right to be active participants in the election campaigns of fellow board members or opposition candidates. However, the Board can only accomplish its stated goals and provide the best possible education for the district's students if they act as a group, following the principles and guidelines in this handbook. Therefore, board

members are expected to temper their participation in election campaigns so as to maintain the effectiveness of the Board as a whole, regardless of the outcome of the election.

12) The Ongoing Implementation of Board Approved Protocols

Principles: Following the election/appointment of a new Board member or appointment of a new Superintendent, a study session of the whole Board will be held for the purpose of reviewing/updating the governance protocols of the Board.

Upon the request of two or more Board members, a special study session will be called for the purpose of reviewing/updating of the governance protocols of the Board.

13) Board Self-Evaluation

Principles: The Governing Board shall annually conduct a self-evaluation in order to demonstrate accountability to the community and ensure that district governance effectively supports student achievement and the attainment of the district's vision and goals.

Protocols:

- The evaluation may address any areas of Board responsibility, including by not limited to Board performance in relation to vision setting, curriculum, personnel, finance, policy, collective bargaining and community relation.
- The evaluation also may address objectives related to Board meeting operation, relationships among Board members, relationships with the Superintendent, understanding of Board and Superintendent roles and responsibilities, communication skills, or other boardsmanship skills.

14) Hiring and Release of Staff

Principles: The Board and the superintendent each have roles in the hiring and release of staff. The superintendent is responsible for all recommendations to the Board for hiring and release of staff. The Board is responsible for approving, ratifying or rejecting the superintendent's recommendations.

Protocols:

- For all administrative positions the district administration will conduct a hiring process that engages staff and community in the process with the purpose to give input and/or provide the strengths and concerns about candidates. This process should be described in writing and be reflected in Administrative Regulations.
- The final recommendation to the Board to hire an administrator is the full responsibility of the superintendent. The Board has the role and responsibility to either approve or deny the superintendent's recommendation.
- All other staff hiring recommendations (all non-administration positions) are the final responsibility of the superintendent and are ratified by the Board.

- The Board takes final action on the release of staff upon the recommendation of the superintendent.
- The only person the Board evaluates is the superintendent
- The Board holds the superintendent accountable for the quality of new hires, the honest and timely evaluation of staff, and personnel actions taken for staff who are not meeting performance standards.

Appendix

Appendix A: Superintendent Evaluation Format

DIXON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Superintendent: _____ **Date:** _____

Evaluation Year: _____

An evaluation shall be rated overall “satisfactory” if a majority of board members have rated the superintendent’s performance as “effective” (an average numerical score of 2.0 or higher) in individual evaluations prepared by such board members.

Any ratings of “ineffective” and/or “developing” should include comments from the Board member as the reason for the rating. As is good practice, comments for any rating that will help the Superintendent areas where they are performing well or need improvement, are critical to support future performance.

Using feedback from the 360 degree evaluation and your own judgement, please rate the Superintendent on the following Professional Skills:

Part One: Evaluation of Professional Skills/Competencies

A. Relationship with the Board

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Information | Does not provide the information the board needs to perform its responsibilities. | Keeps only some members informed, making it difficult for the board to perform its responsibilities. | Keeps the board informed with appropriate information as needed so it may perform its responsibilities. | Keeps all board members informed with appropriate, regular communication so it may perform its responsibilities. | |
| Materials and background | Meeting materials aren't available. Members arrive at meetings without any prior information regarding agenda. | Meeting materials are incomplete, and don't include supporting information. | Materials are provided. Some supporting information is included. | Meeting materials are provided with supporting information in order to make informed decisions. | |
| Board questions | Board questions are rarely answered. | Board questions are answered, but not all members are apprised of relevant questions/ answers. | Board questions are answered with occasional follow-up to members. | Board questions are answered thoroughly with communication to all members to ensure understanding. | |
| Policy Involvement | Makes decisions without regard to adopted policy, CDE requirements, and association contractual agreements. | Is minimally involved in the development, recommendation and administration of the district policy, adherence to CDE requirements, and association contractual agreements. | Is actively involved in the development, recommendation and administration of district policy adherence to CDE requirements, and association contractual agreements. | Is proactive in the determination, recommendation and administration of district policy, adherence to CDE requirements and association contractual agreements. | |
| Board Development | Doesn't promote board development. | When asked, provides members with information about board development. | Provides members with information regarding board development opportunities when they arise. | Actively and continuously encourages board development by seeking and communicating opportunities. | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made): | | | | | |
| | | | | | Category Rating |

A. Community Relations

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|--|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| District Image | Is negative about the district. | Doesn't actively promote this district. | Projects a positive image of the district as expected. | Projects and promotes a positive image of the district. | |
| Communication with community | Isn't readily available. | Provides appropriate information only when asked. | Actively seeks two-way communication with the community as appropriate. | Actively seeks communication, as appropriate, and works to provide alternative means of contact with the community. | |
| Media Relations | Communicates with the media only as requested. | Isn't proactive, but cooperative with the media. | Promotes the district in the media. | Initiates and actively engages media. | |
| Authentic parent engagement | Doesn't authentically engage parents in school and district operations and decision-making. | Somewhat engages parents in school and district operations and decision-making. | Promotes engagement of parents in school and district operations and decision-making. | Actively seeks to promote and ensure engagement of parents in school and district operations and decision-making. | |
| Approachability | Is neither visible or approachable by the members of the community. | Is visible, at a distance. | Is visible and approachable by members of the community. | Is visible and approachable by members of the community. Attends a variety of events. | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made): | | | | | |
| | | | | | Category Rating |

A. Staff Relationships

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|--|--|--|---|--|-----------------|
| Internal Communications | Doesn't have a specific system to inform staff of important matters. | Is inconsistent in keeping staff informed of important matters. | Keeps staff informed of most important matters. | Establishes a system, of keeping staff continually informed of important matters. | |
| Personnel matters | There is no system to handle personnel matters in a consistent manner. Some situations may be handled with bias. | A system has been established, but is not applied consistently. | A system is used to address personnel matters with consistency, fairness, discretion and impartiality. | Establishes a system that is proactive with personnel matters. Personnel policies are routinely discussed and promoted. | |
| Builds relationships | No system established to meet and confer with association leadership. | Is inconsistent with meeting and conferring with association leadership. | Establishes, meet and confers with association leadership in informal ways (as requests come in), representing to the best of his ability and understanding, the will of the board. | Establishes, meet and confers with association leadership in informal ways (through proactive set meetings), representing to the best of his ability and understanding, the will of the board. | |
| Delegation of duties | Doesn't delegate duties. Maintains personal control over all district operations. | Delegates duties to staff, but retains final decision-making authority. | Delegates responsibility to staff within their abilities and then provides support to ensure their success. | Delegates responsibility to staff that will foster professional growth, leadership and decision-making skills. | |
| Recruitment | There is no formal recruitment process/or hires are considered in an arbitrary manner. | A formal recruitment process is in place, but is not used consistently. | Follows a formal recruitment process for each hiring opportunity. | Follows a formal recruitment process for each hiring opportunity. Actively recruits the best staff available and encourages their application to the district. | |
| Visibility | Seldom visits sites. | Is present at site programs and special activities. | Visits sites/classroom as time permits. | Regular visits to site and classrooms are a priority item. | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made): | | | | | |
| | | | | | Category Rating |

A. Business and Finance

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|--|--|--|--|--|-----------------|
| Budget Development and maintenance | Superintendent’s budget knowledge is limited. The budget is developed and managed without taking into consideration current needs of the district. | Superintendent works to develop and manage the budget to meet the immediate fiscal issue. Decisions are primarily reactive to current needs of the district. | Budget actions are proactive and consider the most current information and data. A balance is sought to meet the needs of the students and remain fiscally responsible to the community. | Budget actions are proactive and consider both current and long-range information and data. A balance is sought to meet the current and future needs of students and remain fiscally responsible to the community. | |
| Budget reports | Doesn’t report financial information to the board except with the annual audit. | Reports the status of financial accounts. | Regularly reports to the board concerning the budget and financial status. | Consistent flow of budgetary/financial information provided with discussion of the ramifications of any changes. | |
| Facility management | A facilities management plan is not created. Maintenance is only performed when absolutely needed. | Facility needs are discussed internally, but a plan is not created. Issues are addressed on an as-needed basis. | A facilities management plan is in place that includes the current status of the buildings and the need to improve any facilities in the future. | Facilities management plan in place, includes current status of building and the need to improve facilities in the future with a projected plan to secure funding. | |
| Clean and safe learning environment | Doesn’t ensure a clean and safe learning environment. | Somewhat ensures a clean and safe learning environment at some sites. | Ensures a clean and safe learning environment at sites. | Proactively ensures a clean and safe learning environment throughout the district, and uses facilities management plan as a guide. | |
| Resource allocation | Resources are allocated without consideration of District needs. | Resources are allocated to meet immediate needs. | Resources are distributed based upon district goals and seek to meet immediate objectives. | Resources are distributed based on district goals and seek to meet immediate and long-range objectives. | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made): | | | | | |
| | | | | | Category Rating |

A. Instructional Leadership

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|---|--|---|---|--|---------------|
| Professional Knowledge | Is unaware of current instructional programs | Is somewhat knowledgeable of current instructional programs. Relies on others for info/data. | Demonstrates knowledge of current instructional programs, and is able to discuss them. | Demonstrates knowledge and comfort with current instructional programs. Seeks to communicate with others how the district is implementing best practices. | |
| Self-Improvement | Does not participate in professional development activities. | Passively participates in some professional development opportunities. | Seeks to learn and improve upon personal and professional abilities. Attends professional conferences when appropriate. | Eagerly seeks to learn and improve upon personal and professional abilities. Is able to apply this new learning for the benefit of the district. Participates actively in professional groups and organizations. | |
| Focus on students | Focus is on management of the district and maintaining day-to-day operations. Student achievement is not the priority. | Student achievement is a concern, but does not always guide decisions made within the district. | Student achievement is important and guides decisions made within the district. | Places student achievement as the top priority and consistently communicates this to others. Bases decisions on improving student achievement. This priority is reflected in the budget. | |
| Supervision & evaluation of all district employees | Does not ensure timely implementation of supervision and evaluation of all district employees. | Somewhat ensures timely implementation of supervision and evaluation of all employees. | Ensures timely implementation of supervision and evaluation of all district employees. | Ensures timely implementation of supervision and evaluation of all district employees with goal setting and staff development plans. | |
| Goal development | Goals are not developed. | Goals are defined by implementing state curriculum and seeking to maximize student scores. | Facilitates the development of short-term goals for the district. Provides the necessary financial resources to meet those goals. Works with Directors to implement goals through | Believes in and facilitates the development of short/long term goals for the district. Aligns the available resources within the budget to accomplish these goals. Works closely with Directors through workplans and holds them accountable, to | |

| | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|--|
| | | | workplans. | implement goals. | |
| Staff development | Staff development isn't provided. Staff members are responsible for their own improvement. | Staff development programs are offered based upon available opportunities. | Staff development programs are offered based upon available opportunities that are targeted toward increasing student achievement. | Staff development programs are targeted toward district-specific goals and are sustained to increase student achievement. | |
| Curriculum | Curriculum isn't a priority in the district. | Allows teachers to define their own curriculum. There is little or no coordination. | A curriculum is in place that seeks to meet state standards. | There is an on-going review process to be sure the curriculum is aligned to the state standards and meets the needs of our students. | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made): | | | | | |
| | | | | Category Rating | |

Part Two: Progress on Goals and Objectives

Using Superintendent Reflections, and your own judgement, please rate the Superintendent's effectiveness on progress on goals and objectives for the current school year. The following specific goals were developed and agreed upon with the Board, as indicators of District results:

Goal 1 –

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|---|---|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Objective 1.1 | Shows no progress toward meeting the goal | Shows progress but did not meet the goal | Meets the established goal | Exceeds the established goal | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made: | | | | | |

Goal 2 –

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|---|---|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Objective 2.1 | Shows no progress toward meeting the goal | Shows progress but did not meet the goal | Meets the established goal | Exceeds the established goal | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made: | | | | | |

Goal 3 –

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|---|---|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Objective 3.1 | Shows no progress toward meeting the goal | Shows progress but did not meet the goal | Meets the established goal | Exceeds the established goal | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made: | | | | | |

Goal 4 –

| | Ineffective (0 – 0.9) | Developing (1.0 – 1.9) | Effective (2.0 – 3.0) | Highly Effective (3.1 – 4.0) | Rating |
|---|---|--|----------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Objective 4.1 | Shows no progress toward meeting the goal | Shows progress but did not meet the goal | Meets the established goal | Exceeds the established goal | |
| Comments (comments for ratings below <i>Effective</i> must be made: | | | | | |

Determining the Overall Evaluation Rating

| | | |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| Superintendent's Name: | School District Name: | School Year: |
|------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|

RATINGS ON INDIVIDUAL DOMAINS:

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Relationship with Board | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Community Relations | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Staff Relationships | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Business & Finance | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Instructional Leadership | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |

RATINGS ON INDIVIDUAL GOALS:

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Goal 1 | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Goal 2 | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Goal 3 | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
| Goal 4 | Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |

OVERALL EVALUATION RATING:

| | | | |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------------|
| Ineffective | Developing | Effective | Highly Effective |
|-------------|------------|-----------|------------------|

Appendix B – Dixon Unified’s Rules of Order

The President Moderates Discussions

When conducting a meeting, it is the Board President who is responsible for keeping to the agenda, making sure the meeting is concluded on time, and most importantly, ensuring that every member is heard during discussions. It is the purpose of these rules of order to provide a structure that enables the President to conduct the meeting in such a way that every member has his or her say, the public is heard from, and both the Board members and the public know at all times what is being discussed and what decisions have been reached.

Although all members of the governing Board should know and understand the rules of order, it is the Board President who is charged with applying the rules. In doing so, the president may direct all dialogue and questions to go “through the chair” (receiving permission from the chair to address another) either when interacting with each other on the Board or when interacting with someone addressing the Board.

Because the President conducts the meeting, it is common courtesy for the President to take a less active role than other members in debates and discussions. This does not mean that the President should not participate in the debate or discussion. On the contrary, as a member of the Board, the President has full rights to participate in debates, discussions, and decision-making. The President should, however, strive to be the last to speak at the discussion and debate stage, and should not make or second a motion unless he or she is convinced that no other member of the Board will do so.

** This material is based on, and in many cases directly quotes, Rosenberg’s Rules of Order by Dave Rosenberg, 1 copyright 2003, League of California Cities.*

The Basic Format for an Agenda Item Discussion

- 1) The President should clearly announce the agenda item number and should clearly state what the subject is.
- 2) The President should invite the appropriate people to report on the item, including any recommendation they might have.
- 3) The President should ask members of the Board if they have any questions for clarification. At this point, members of the Board may ask clarifying questions to the people who reported on the item, who should be given time to respond.
- 4) The President should ask members of the Board if they have comments to make on the item. At this point, the Board may have a free and open discussion of the item. As long as each member who wants to speak gets to do so, no one interrupts anyone else, and no two people attempt to talk at the same time, the President need not interfere with the exchange of ideas. However, if any member is having trouble getting a chance to speak, he or she should raise a hand and the President should interrupt the discussion at an appropriate time to give that member a chance to speak. Also, if anyone interrupts another speaker or speaks while another is already speaking, the President should intervene to return order to the discussion.
- 5) The President should invite public comments. If numerous members of the public indicate a desire to speak to the subject, the President may limit the time allotted to

each public speaker. At the conclusion of the public comments, the President should announce that public input has concluded (or that the public hearing, as the case may be, is closed).

- 6) The President should determine when the Board has reached a consensus on the issue. A consensus in this case means that a majority of the Board seems ready to proceed to a vote or action, not that there is a unanimity of opinion
- 7) If the item is not an action item but the Board has reached a consensus that amounts to a Board action as defined by Ed Code, the President should announce what the decision is and what the action consists of.
- 8) If the item is an action item, and there has been no discussion or a very brief discussion, the President should invite a motion from the governing Board members. If there has been substantial discussion, the President should sum up his or her understanding of what the issue is under discussion and what the consensus is that has been reached; then invite a motion from the Board.
- 9) The motion may be the original proposal under discussion, the proposal amended as proposed by one or more Board members, or a substitute proposal. The motion may also be to table the item, either indefinitely or until a specific future date.
- 10) Motions are made in a simple two-step process. First, the President recognizes the member. Second, the member makes a motion by preceding the member's desired approach with the words: "I move". A typical motion might be: "I move that we give 10 days' notice in the future for all our meetings."
- 11) The President usually initiates the motion by either inviting the members to make a motion: "A motion at this time would be in order" or suggesting a motion to the members: "A motion would be in order that we give 10-days' notice in the future for all our meetings."
- 12) If no other member of the Board wishes to make a motion, the president may do so. If there is no motion, the item is considered to have been tabled and the President should report that fact for memorialization in the minutes.
- 13) The President should determine if any member of the Board wishes to second the motion. If no one wishes to second the motion, the president may do so. If there is no second, the motion is considered to have been tabled and the President should report that fact for memorialization in the minutes.
- 14) If the motion is made and seconded, the President should make sure everyone understands the motion. This is done in one of three ways:
 - a. The President can ask the maker of the motion to repeat it;
 - b. The President can repeat the motion; or
 - c. The President can ask the secretary or the clerk of the Board to repeat the motion.
- 15) The President takes a vote. Simply asking for the "ayes" and then the "nays" is normally sufficient. Unless Ed code requires a super-majority, a simple majority determines whether the motion passes or is defeated. Any member may request a roll-call vote, however a roll-call vote is not required to record a dissenting vote.
- 16) The President should announce the result of the vote and should announce what action (if any) the Board has taken. In announcing the result, the President should indicate the names of the members, if any, who voted in the minority on the motion. This announcement might take the following form: "The motion passes by a vote of 4, with

Smith dissenting. We have passed the motion requiring 10 days' notice for all future meetings of this Board."

- 17) A Board Member may change their vote up until the time the president announces the result of the vote. Once the vote is announced a member can not change their vote on the motion, however a motion to reconsider can be made for the entire Board to reconsider the issue (See Below)

Motions

Motions are the vehicles for decision-making. The President has every right as a member of the Board to make a motion, but normally should do so only if he or she wishes a motion to be made but no other member seems willing to do so.

Types of motions

- The basic motion. The basic motion is the one that puts forward a decision. A basic motion might be: "I move that we approve the agenda" or "I move that we approve the agenda contingent on changing item 6 to be an action item."
- A motion to table. This motion, if passed, requires the agenda item to be placed on "hold." The motion may contain a specific time in which the item can come back to the Board: "I move we table this item until our regular meeting in October." Or the motion may contain no specific time for the return of the item, in which case a motion to take the item off the table and bring it back to the Board will have to be taken at a future meeting. A motion to table an item (or to bring it back to the Board) requires a simple majority vote.
- A request to recess. If a member desires a recess, he or she may interrupt the discussion to request one. Normally, the President determines the length of the recess. No vote is required.
- A motion to fix the time to adjourn. This motion, if passed, requires the Board to adjourn the meeting at the specific time set in the motion. For example, the motion might be: "I move we extend this meeting by 20 minutes." It requires a simple majority vote. This motion is often requested by the President when the meeting time extends past the time in the agenda.
- A motion to limit debate. The most common form of this motion is to say: "I move the question" or "I call for the question." When a member of the Board makes such a motion, the member is really saying: "I've had enough debate. Let's get on with the vote." When such a motion is made, the President should ask for a second to the motion, stop debate, and vote on the motion to limit debate. The motion to limit debate requires a two-thirds vote of the Board. Note that a motion to limit debate could include a time limit. For example: "I move we limit debate on this agenda item to 15 minutes." Even in this format, the motion requires a 2/3 vote.
- The Motion to Reconsider. A tenet of parliamentary procedure is finality. After vigorous discussion, debate, and a vote, there must be some closure to the issue. And so, after a vote is held and announced by the president, the matter is deemed closed, subject only to reopening if a proper motion to reconsider is made.
 - A motion to reconsider requires a majority vote to pass, but there are two special rules that apply only to the motion to reconsider.

- First is the matter of timing. A motion to reconsider must be made at the meeting where the item was first voted upon or at the very next meeting of the Board.
- Second, a motion to reconsider may be made only by a member who voted in the majority on the original motion. If such a member has a change of heart, he or she may make the motion to reconsider (any other member of the Board may second the motion). If a member who voted in the minority seeks to make the motion to reconsider, it must be ruled out of order. The purpose of this rule is finality. If a member of the minority could make a motion to reconsider, then the item could be brought back to the Board again and again, which would defeat the purpose of finality.
- If the motion to reconsider passes, then the original matter is back before the Board. The matter may be discussed and debated as if it were on the floor for the first time.

Courtesy and Decorum

The rules of order are meant to create an atmosphere where the members of the Board and the members of the public can attend to business efficiently, fairly, and with full participation. It is up to the President and the members of the Board to maintain courtesy and decorum.

It is always best for only one person at a time to have the floor.

The President should always ensure that debate and discussion of an agenda item focus on the item and the policy in question, not on irrelevant matters such as the personalities of the members of the Board. The President has the right to cut off discussion that is too personal, too loud, too rude, or too crude.

Debate and discussion should be focused, but free and open. In the interest of time, the President may, however, limit the time allotted to speakers, including members of the Board.

Can a member of the Board interrupt the speaker? The general rule is no. There are, however, exceptions. A speaker may be interrupted for the following reasons:

- A member cannot hear the speaker or cannot see an exhibit or graphic being discussed.
- The President makes a mistake in procedure, such as calling for a vote on a motion that permits debate without allowing the debate .
- A member believes that the Board has drifted from the agreed-upon agenda. The member may call on the president to return to the agenda. If the President discovers that the agenda has not been followed, the President simply reminds the Board to return to the agenda item properly before them.

Appendix C – Dixon Unified School District Summary of the Board Act

The Brown Act or “Open Meeting Law” is officially known as the Ralph M. Brown Act and is found in the California Government Code § 54950 et seq. 1. The Brown Act was enacted in 1953 to guarantee the public’s right to attend and participate in meetings of local legislative bodies, and as a response to growing concerns about local government officials’ practice of holding secret meetings that were not in compliance with advance public notice requirements. The Brown Act is pivotal in making public officials accountable for their actions and in allowing the public to participate in the decision making process.

Who is Governed by the Brown Act?

The Brown Act governs local agencies, legislative bodies of local government agencies created by state or federal law and any standing committee of a covered board or legislative body, and governing bodies of non-profit corporations formed by a public agency. Examples of these would be city council, county board of supervisors, special district, school boards, standing committees, and even some types of Home Owners Associations (if they were created by a public entity and constituted as some sort of public district.)

What is a “Meeting?”

A meeting, as defined by the Brown Act, is “any congregation of a majority of the members of a legislative body at the same time and place to hear, discuss or deliberate upon any item that is within the subject matter jurisdiction of the legislative body” (§ 54952.2 (a)). For instance, when the quorum for a Board of Supervisors reaches the number necessary to be a majority (i.e. 5 out of 7), that is considered a meeting under the Brown Act. Also, when the same or a greater number of supervisors are attending a social gathering, for which no meeting notice was given, and they start discussing business under the jurisdiction of their legislative body, that would be considered a meeting that falls under Brown Act regulations.

The key elements for a meeting are quorum and discussion, hearing or deliberation of issues; the meeting needs not to be formally convened in order to be subject to the act. That means that “informal”, “study,” “discussion,” “informational,” “fact-finding,” or “pre-council” gatherings of a quorum of the members of a board are within the scope of the Act as meetings.

Exceptions (Meetings Not Covered by the Brown Act)

Conferences and retreats, other public meetings, meetings of other legislative bodies, social or ceremonial events are exempt from the Brown Act provided that legislative members follow certain rules such as limiting the discussion to the agenda in the conference; or that legislative members do not discuss amongst themselves business of their legislative body. Regulations for these exceptions to meetings are contained in § 54952.2(c). Also excluded from the application of the Brown Act are individual contacts or conversations between a member of a legislative body and any other person (§ 54952.2(c) (1)). Any other person is defined as a non-staff or non-board member.

Serial Meetings

The Brown Act explicitly prohibits the use of “direct communication, personal intermediaries, or technological devices that is employed by a majority of the members of the legislative body to develop a collective concurrence as to action to be taken on an item by the members of the legislative body” (§ 5495.2(b)). Serial meetings involve communication between members of a legislative body that are less than a quorum, but when all participants are considered, it constitutes a majority. “For example, a chain of communications involving contact from member A to member B who then communicates with member C would constitute a "serial meeting" ... Similarly, when a person acts as the hub of a wheel (member A) and communicates individually with the various spokes (members B and C), a serial meeting has occurred. In addition, a serial meeting occurs when intermediaries for board members have a meeting to discuss issues.

For example, when a representative of member A meets with representatives of members B and C to discuss an agenda item, the members have conducted a serial meeting. In *Stockton Newspapers, Inc. v. Redevelopment Agency* (1985) 171 Cal.App.3d 95, the Court concluded that a series of telephone conversations conducted by the agency's attorney as an intermediary constituted a meeting within the scope of the Brown Act. (See also, 65 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 63 (1982); 63 Ops.Cal.Atty.Gen. 820 (1980)).³ Thus, the use of email to create consensus among the legislative members might be in violation of the Brown Act.

Teleconference Meetings

The Brown Act allows teleconference meetings if they comply with the following specifications:

- The teleconference location is accessible to the public and it is noted in the agendas;
- The meeting is useful to the public and the legislative body;
- All votes are taken by roll call, and;
- At least a quorum of the members of the legislative body are located within the boundaries of the territory over which it exercises jurisdiction (§ 54953(b)).

Closed Sessions

The Brown Act allows closed sessions under the scope of a regular meeting. It stipulates that they shall comply with agenda posting and be held within the jurisdiction of the legislative body (§ 54954), which shall include a description of the items to be discussed (§ 54954.2). In addition, prior to holding any closed session, the legislative body shall disclose, in an open meeting, the item or items to be discussed in the closed session (§ 54957.7). Items that can be discussed by the legislative body are according to § 54954.5:

License or permit determination (§ 54956.7)

Conference with real property negotiators (§ 54956.8)

Conference with legal counsel regarding existing or anticipated litigation (§ 54956.9)

Liability claims (§ 54956.95)

Threat to public services or facilities (§ 54957(a))

Public employee appointment, employment, performance evaluation, discipline, dismissal or release (§ 54957(b))

Conference with labor negotiators (§ 54957.6)

Case review or planning (§ 54957.8)

Report involving trade secret or hearings (§ 54956.87, California Health and Safety code §§1461,32106 and 32155; or California Government Code §§ 37606 and 37624.3)

Charge or complaint involving information protected by federal law (§ 54956.86).

The legislative body should publicly report actions, along with the vote and abstention count, taken as result of a closed session (§ 54957.1). Documentation relative to the reports should be available to any person on the next business day following the meeting (§ 54957.1(c)).

Special Meetings

Either the presiding officer or the majority of members of the legislative body may call special meetings at any time by delivering each of its members a written notice and by notifying the media (which has previously requested notification of special meetings): the notice shall be received at least 24 hours in advance before the meeting. Special meetings notice shall be also posted at least 24 hours prior to the meeting and it should be held in a location that is freely accessible to members of the public. The discussions at the special meeting are limited to the issues posted in the agenda. No other business shall be considered (§ 54956).

What Rules Must a Meeting Follow?

Local agencies, in order to comply with the Brown Act, shall:

Hold open and public meetings (§ 54953 (a)). In addition, no legislative body shall conduct any meeting in a facility that prohibits the admittance of any person(s) on the basis of: race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex; or that is inaccessible to disabled persons, or where the public, in order to gain access to the facility, needs to pay or purchase something (§ 54961 (a)).

Vote publicly, no secret ballots are allowed (§ 54953 (c)).

Comply with the protections and prohibitions of Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (§ 54953.2).

NOT require public registration, as a condition for attendance; the public is not required to register, provide any other information –such as self-identification–, or fulfill any condition precedent to its attendance. If an attendance list is circulated, it shall clearly state that the signing, registering, or completion of the document is voluntary (§ 54953.3)

Allow recording of the proceeding (video tape, audio tape) provided that recording is done in an undistruptive way (§ 54953.5)

NOT prohibit or restrict broadcasting unless there is a finding that this would be disruptive to the proceedings (§ 54953.6)

Post notice of meetings, information shall include specified time and location, except for advisory or standing committees (§ 54954 (a))

Post agendas at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting and it shall contain a brief general description of each item of business (§ 54954.2(a))

NOT take action or discuss any item not appearing on the posted agenda except under certain conditions (§ 54954.2(a), conditions appear on subsection (b)) \

Hold meetings in the jurisdiction of the legislative body (§54954 (b))

Allow and honor any person's request to provide and mail a copy of the agenda at the time the agenda is posted (at least 72 hours in advance) or of all the documents of the agenda packet of any meeting (§ 54954.1)

Provide an opportunity for comment from members of the public to directly address the legislative body on any item of interest to the public on every agenda for regular meetings (§ 54954.3(a))

Allow public criticism of the legislative body (§ 54954.3(c))

Hold at least one public meeting, allowing for public comment, before adopting any new or increased general tax or increased assessment, and

the legislative body shall provide at least 45 days public notice of such meeting (§ 54954.6)5

Not charge fees for the attendance to a meeting or for carrying out any provision in the Brown Act (§ 54956.6). The only exception is when legislative bodies are allowed to charge a fee that covers the cost of mailing an agenda or agenda packet (§ 54954.1). A related requirement is found on § 54961(a) that prohibits meetings in a place where the public needs to pay or purchase something

Disclose to the public agendas of public meetings and any other writings, when distributed to all, or a majority of all, of the members of a legislative body of a local agency. In addition, under the California Public Records Act these documents shall be made available upon request and without delay (§ 54957.5)

Preserve the order in meetings. Moreover, if a group willfully interrupts a meeting and the order can only be restored by the removal of disruptive individuals, then the legislative body may order the meeting room to be cleared. The session might be reinitiated and representatives of the media shall be allowed to stay and attend the session. The legislative body may also establish a procedure for readmitting individual(s) not responsible for the disruptive conduct that caused the meeting room to be cleared (§ 54957.9).

Appendix D: NSBA Board Member's Code of Ethics

The National School Board Association (USA) 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:

- attend all regularly scheduled board meetings insofar as possible, and become informed concerning the issues to be considered at those meetings;
- recognize that I 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 myself 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;
- 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

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