

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

OPERATING PRINCIPLES – BELLINGHAM SCHOOL BOARD

1. ESTABLISH AN ATMOSPHERE OF COOPERATION AMONG THE BOARD

1. Board members agree to uphold the WSSDA Code of Governance.
2. Board members agree to foster open communication, which requires trust, respect for individuals, and a fundamental belief in goodwill among people.
3. Board members agree to respond promptly to requests for information from other Board members, the Superintendent or the Central Administrative Team. It is assumed that email is the preferred mode for non-urgent communication with Board members, unless a member has specified another method.
4. Board members agree to be considerate of each other and to refrain from public criticism of one another.
5. Board members agree to encourage constructive disagreement, recognizing that conflict and criticism can provide an avenue for growth for our schools and ourselves.
6. Board members agree that once a decision is reached, each Board member has the responsibility to respect that decision and not take any action to undermine the decision.
7. Board members agree to recognize and cultivate the range of individual talents on the Board and to model a personal commitment to professional growth.

2. ESTABLISH A PROCESS OF COOPERATION AMONG THE BOARD, STAFF, AND COMMUNITY

1. In general, the Board will foster an atmosphere of being willing to listen, and by listening, show an interest in both the information and the person.
2. Board members are encouraged to offer praise for employees, but criticism should be channeled through the Superintendent's office.
3. Board members will encourage resolution of problems at the lowest possible level. When the Board receives a complaint from a community member, the person will be encouraged to discuss the issue with the individual immediately responsible. The Board will also describe the appropriate channels that should be followed, if the complaint is not resolved. The Superintendent will be advised of the complaint.
4. Board members sometimes have children or family members in the schools. When there are individual concerns about a child who is a relative, Board members will seek to resolve those concerns at the lowest possible level. The Superintendent will be advised of the concerns if appropriate.

5. If there is any doubt about contacting employees of the district, the Superintendent should be contacted first. Questions about operation, direction, etc., should be directed through the Superintendent.
6. The Superintendent or Board President will communicate the official district position to the media and to inquiring community members. Board members may state personal positions as long as it is made known that the Board member is not speaking for the Board or the district.

3. ESTABLISH THE BASIS FOR SCHOOL BOARD DECISION-MAKING

1. Board members will base decisions on a common goal of a quality education for all students.
2. Board members will be prepared for meetings and will read materials supplied in advance. If a Board member needs more information or has questions, either the Superintendent or the Board president is to be called before the meeting. The requested information will be given to all Board members.
3. The Board is committed to basing all decisions on a full understanding of the situation; analysis of the facts; a consideration of a range of alternatives; and with due regard for the impact on those affected by those decisions.
4. The Board will make decisions consistent with expressed goals.
5. Board members recognize that their authority to act can be exercised only when participating in an official meeting of the board, or when empowered to act by vote of the Board.
6. In keeping with the Open Meetings Act, the Board will restrict use of email to sending “information only” items, unless the exchange is between two Board members only. Individual members will refrain from commenting by email to all Board members following receipt of “information only” items. Address email questions regarding Board meeting materials to the Superintendent or his/her designee who will distribute answers to the questions to all members of the Board.
7. Board members understand that they will not agree on every issue and that divergent thinking and dialogue will encourage the best decisions.
8. Board members commit to allow meaningful dialogue in order that informed decisions may be made.
9. In order to avoid surprises in business meetings, Board members agree to inform the Superintendent in advance when they have major concerns about a proposal or before presenting major proposals publicly.
10. Board members commit to maintaining confidentiality regarding personnel information, negotiations, and other confidential matters discussed in executive session. Executive sessions will be held strictly in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.
11. Board members designate the Superintendent as the only contact person with the Board’s lawyer or negotiator. The Board President may contact the district’s counsel in reference to the Superintendent’s contract.
12. Board members will seek to ensure the design of systems for translating district goals into specific work plans, assessing progress at regular intervals, and communicating plans, successes and failures to the community.

Operating Principles–Bellingham School Board–1001P

13. Board members will restrict their remarks at School Board meetings to three (3) minutes and to comment on items that relate to Board business, with the exception of the legislative report.

The Board will annually review and reaffirm or amend these principles at the first meeting in January.

The Board of Directors and each of its members are committed to faithful compliance with the provisions of the Board Operating Principles. When three or more Board members indicate a member has violated any provision, the Board of Directors will first seek remedy by conversation in a private setting between the offending member and the Board president or other individual member. If the compliance issue remains unresolved, the Board of Directors may vote for public censure of the offending member.

Approved: 05/13/93

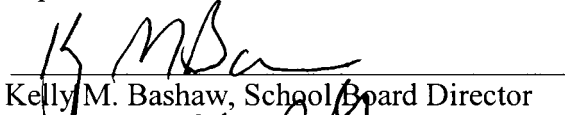
Revised: 11/08/07

Revised: 01/15/09

Approved:



Kenneth D. Vedra
Superintendent of Schools



Kelly M. Bashaw, School Board Director

1-29-09

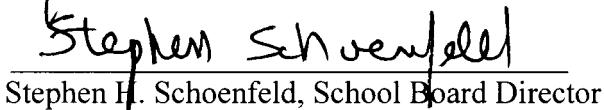
Date



Kenneth B. Gass, School Board Director

1-29-09

Date



Stephen H. Schoenfeld, School Board Director

1-29-09

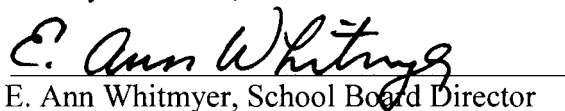
Date



Melody G. Rhode, School Board Director

1-29-09

Date



E. Ann Whitmyer, School Board Director

1-29-09

Date