

WORKING RELATIONSHIP POLICY

An important aspect of the unique association that exists between a Board of Trustees, its individual members, and the Superintendent is the cooperative working relationship that is developed, refined and maintained over time. This relationship is identified through a series of working principles that are collectively known as a "Working Relationship Policy."

The Working Relationship Policy sets out the methods and standards by which individual members agree to work with each other, conduct themselves in public meetings, and while carrying out district and Board business. An effective working relationship policy also includes methods by which trustees and the Superintendent work with each other. This includes the method by which the Board collectively works with and provides direction to the Superintendent. The policy provides the guiding points by which the Superintendent serves and communicates with the Board.

An effective Working Relationship Policy provides the guidelines by which the Board, Superintendent, and District staff works together in a cooperative, professional manner.

"GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE BOARDS OF ACUSD AND ACOE"

1. Guiding principles are a tool designed by those who will use them to advance their mutual interest in promoting effectiveness, civility, and willingness to compromise in their on-going work together on behalf of Amador County Public Schools and the success of its students.
2. It is understood that how the Board operates and engages with the Superintendent, school community, and public, impacts its effectiveness as well as the effectiveness of others in the school community, and the District's and County Office of Education's work and educational environments
3. It is mutually understood that it is the intent of each Trustee and the Superintendent to act in good faith on behalf of the district.
4. There will be robust, honest, respectful and patient debate on any matter of concern to a Trustee or the Superintendent that is within the purview of the Board.
5. When disputes or disagreements occur, the governance team will work together to resolve them within the team and with a spirit of unity of purpose.
6. Decisions will be based on relevant data and other credible sources of information that have been made available to all members.
7. Trustees will avoid back-tracking; once the Board has heard and considered the views of its members and acted, all members will respect the action of the quorum, unless and until the Board takes up the matter again.

WORKING RELATIONSHIP POLICY (continued)

8. The Board will respect the requests of members to revisit issues when based on new information.
8. Trustees will hold each other accountable for following these guiding principles. No single Trustee can sidetrack the Board without the Board's acquiescence.
9. Continued board development will occur through the purposeful application of these agreed-upon guiding principles during all board processes.
11. By engaging in transparent professional development activities, the Board and Superintendent lead by example.

It is the intent of this policy to provide an environment in which trustees, the Superintendent and District Staff all are able to work in a proactive and dignified manner to provide solutions to the typical operational problems that districts and schools encounter, as well as, crafting policy for future challenges and educational needs. The Board believes that the best interests of students and the growth and development of the district's employees are best served by an environment that is based on dignity, trust, integrity and civil treatment for all.

GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD AND SUPERINTENDENT AS SET OUT BY THE WORKING RELATIONSHIP POLICY

1. The ACUSD Board of Trustees provides direction to the Superintendent rather than an individual Trustee offering direction.

Established Practice: The Board of Trustees speaks in a legal sense through its formal action. This involves majority agreement of the Board. This type of action provides direction to the Superintendent. The Board may also provide direction to the Superintendent through its public and closed session deliberations and discussions.

2. It shall be the role of the Superintendent to provide timely communication to Board members concerning operational concerns and problems, as well as, evolving policy issues.

Established Practice: The Superintendent will provide regular information updates to trustees covering items that are believed to be important for Board effectiveness. Informational Packets shall be developed for each agenda packet for scheduled Board meetings. Agendas for regularly scheduled Board meetings shall be delivered to trustees at least 72 hours prior to Board meetings. Agenda should be distributed at least 24 hours before a special meeting.

WORKING RELATIONSHIP POLICY (continued)

3. Trustees shall work in a cooperative manner with the Board President and Superintendent by thoroughly reviewing agendas and informational packets in a timely manner prior to scheduled meetings.

Established Practice: Questions and concerns that arise about operational issues or agenda items should be communicated to the Superintendent prior to scheduled meetings so that appropriate back up materials and information may be provided to the Board and individual trustees in a courteous and professional manner. Meetings run more efficiently and in a more timely manner when communication of this manner is the norm.

It shall not be the intent of trustees, the Superintendent or district staff to operate in a confrontational manner that is demeaning or embarrassing to staff, the Superintendent or other trustees. All public meetings shall be conducted in a dignified and professional manner.

4. The Board President is responsible for providing direction and leadership for Board meetings so that District business and policy determination are accomplished in a timely and professional manner.

Established Practice: The Board President presides over all Board meetings, unless absent, and is responsible for providing leadership during these meetings to insure that the agenda and objectives are accomplished in a timely, professional manner. The President shall guide discussions in a manner that allows individual trustees to provide appropriate and pertinent input relating to specific issues under consideration for action.

When an individual citizen addresses the Board under public comments, the Board President should inform the party that, by law, the Trustees can only take action on topics properly agenzized. Topics brought up may be reviewed, where appropriate, by the administration and reported to the Board either privately or publicly at a future Board meeting.

The Board President will introduce each agenda item or may call upon the Superintendent or designee as appropriate to present the item.

Any individual who wishes to address the Board on a specific agenda item shall register that intent in order to be heard on an agenda item prior to Board deliberation. The President shall provide leadership during these instances to insure that members of the public abide by time limitations and appropriate public meeting decorum. It shall not be the intent or practice of the Board to allow for free ranging discussions or questioning sessions of Trustees or District staff by members of the public.

WORKING RELATIONSHIP POLICY (continued)

5. Individual trustees may initiate communication with District and School administrative staff concerning operational issues and policies for the purpose of developing an understanding of site methods and constraints in dealing with evolving issues or proposed policy and procedures.

Established Practice: Trustees may solicit information from the Superintendent or members of the District Leadership Team, including site administrators, concerning pertinent and appropriate educational issues. If an existing report is requested, the report shall be provided. If staff time is required to prepare a particular report or accumulate requested information, the request is to be made through the Superintendent. Any report or accumulated information provided for one Trustee will be given to all Trustees. Reports that require considerable staff time and preparation require Board approval.

6. The President shall solicit from the Board its desire in terms of statements or positions that they would like before he or she represents that the statement is being made on behalf of the Board. Likewise, individual Trustees should refrain from providing statements or advocating positions that the public interprets as being official positions of the Board.
7. It is the intention of the Trustees that Board meetings should end by 10:00 p.m. Circumstances may dictate longer sessions if Trustees so agree.

Established Practice: The Superintendent works to balance Board agendas so that meetings do not run unusually late. Upon reaching 10:00 p.m., the Board President either asks for a motion to adjourn or a motion to extend the meeting for 30 minutes. Upon reaching the end of the 30-minute extension, the meeting will be adjourned unless there is a motion to extend for an additional 30 minutes (30 minute increments).