

***1000.3.0***  
***Governance Process***

**Global Governance Commitment (NEW)**

The purpose of the board in behalf of the Yakima community is to assure that the Yakima School District achieves appropriate results for all students at an appropriate cost (as specified in board Ends/Goals policies 1000.1), while avoiding unacceptable actions and situations (as prohibited in board Executive Limitations policies 1000.2).

With the adoption of the board policies Ends/Goals 1000.1, Executive Limitations 1000.2 et. seq., and Global Governance 1000.3 et. seq., with the exception of board policies required by law, the administrative operation of the district is delegated to the superintendent to operate and manage in accordance with the above cited policies, and in accordance with those procedures as adopted and/or modified by the superintendent.

All prior board policies in the 2000 to 6000 Yakima School District policy series not referenced above are now delegated to the superintendent as operational procedure.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Governing Style (NEW)**

The Board of Directors will govern lawfully with an emphasis on:

- a) outward vision rather than an internal preoccupation;
- b) encouragement of diversity in viewpoints;
- c) strategic leadership more than administrative detail;
- d) clear distinction of board and superintendent roles;
- e) collective rather than individual decisions;
- f) future rather than past or present; and
- g) pro-activity rather than reactivity.

Accordingly:

1. The board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility. The board, not the staff, will be responsible for excellence in governing. The board will be the initiator of policy, not merely a reactor to staff initiatives. The board will not use the expertise of individual members to substitute for the judgment of the board, although the expertise of individual members may be used to enhance the understanding of the board as a body.
2. The board will direct, control and inspire the district through the careful establishment of broad written policies reflecting the board's values and perspectives. The board's major policy focus will be on the intended long-term impacts outside the staff organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects (Ends/Goals).
3. The board will enforce upon itself whatever discipline is needed to govern with excellence. Discipline will apply to matters such as attendance, preparation for meetings, policymaking principles, respect of roles, and ensuring the continuance of governance capability. Although the board can change its governance process policies at any time, it will observe those currently in force scrupulously.

To ensure that the board's business meetings are conducted with maximum effectiveness and efficiency, members will:

- 3.1 Do their homework and ask questions. Know the policy manual. Review all pertinent materials before meetings. Ask questions if they do not understand an issue.
- 3.2 Listen with an open mind. Listen to the issues and ask questions. Remember good communication means talking and listening.
- 3.3 Avoid surprises. If a board member wishes to bring up a controversial issue, discuss it with the board chairperson and superintendent before bringing it up at a board meeting. Make building trust an important team goal.
- 3.4 Put the team and team goals first. During meetings, make decisions that support the goals of the district, not individual interests.
- 3.5 Display good manners. Watch manners, tone of voice and body language. Show respect for one another.
- 3.6 Support the majority. Once the board makes a decision, support the decision and work to make it a good one. Do not sabotage the rest of the board by publicly second

- guessing the actions of other board members. “Disagree... but disagree agreeably.”
- 3.7 Do not make snap decisions. Hurriedly passed motions usually do not get the consideration they deserve. It is better to table a motion until the next meeting than to pass one that the board will regret later.
  - 3.8 Do not take action on non-agenda items brought to the microphone or meeting without the superintendent’s recommendation or study.
  - 3.9 Discuss the issues. Do not digress, repeat, argue, provoke or reminisce.
  - 3.10 Do not engage in side conversations.
  - 3.11 Do not “play to the audience” or monopolize the discussion.
  - 3.12 Support the president’s efforts to facilitate an orderly meeting.
  - 3.13 Value equal participation of all members and the perspectives they represent.
4. Continual board development will include orientation of new board members in the board's governance process and periodic board discussion of process improvement.
  5. The board will allow no officer, individual or committee of the board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.
  6. Monitoring of Executive Limitations will be included on the agenda for purpose of monitoring organizational compliance. As a rule, members will direct any questions or concerns to the superintendent prior to official public presentation; see policies 1000.2.
  7. Throughout the year, the board will attend to consent agenda items as expeditiously as possible. Any item may be removed from the consent agenda by an individual member for discussion or action unless overruled by a majority of the board.
  8. The board will monitor and evaluate the board's process and performance of each meeting. More thorough self-monitoring of board performance will be scheduled and conducted according to the board’s annual calendar. Self-monitoring will include comparison of board activity and discipline to policies in the Governance Process and Board-Superintendent Linkage categories; see policies 1000.3 and 1000.4.
  9. The board, by majority vote, may revise or amend its policies at any time. However, as a customary practice, a proposed policy revision will be discussed at one session of the board prior to its being approved at a subsequent board meeting.
  10. The board will observe the confidentiality of executive sessions. Discussions held in executive session are not to be discussed with anyone else other than the board members, superintendent, and legal counsel.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Board Job Description (NEW)**

The job of the board is to represent the community and lead the organization by determining and requiring appropriate and excellent organizational performance.

To distinguish the board's own unique job from the jobs of the superintendent and staff, the board will:

1. Employ and evaluate the superintendent. In fact, the most important job of the board is to hire, supervise, and evaluate the superintendent.
2. Serve as the link between the community ownership and the district's operational organization.
3. Establish written governing policies that address the broadest levels of all organizational decisions and situations.
  - 3.1 Ends/Goals: Organizational products, impacts, benefits, outcomes, recipients, and their relative worth. (Ends policies tell what end results are desired for whom at what cost).
  - 3.2 Executive Limitations: Constraints on the superintendent's authority which establish the prudence and ethics boundaries within which all executive activity and decisions must take place.
  - 3.3 Governance Process: Specification of how the board conceives, carries out and monitors its own task.
  - 3.4 Board-Superintendent Linkage: How power is delegated and its proper use monitored; the superintendent's role, authority and accountability.
4. Define and require demonstration of accountability for successful organizational performance on Ends/Goals and Executive Limitations; see policies 1000.2.
5. Initiate and set parameters for ballot issues and communicate the rationale for these measures to the community.
6. Advocate for the district and the students it serves, including legislative awareness of the district's financial and other needs.
7. Attend graduation ceremonies, Honors Convocation and other important district and community functions.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Agenda Planning (NEW)**

To accomplish its work products with a governance style consistent with board policies, the Board of Directors will follow an annual agenda which:

- (a) examines student achievement as defined by Ends/Goals Policies;
  - (b) examines organizational performance as defined by Executive Limitations policies; and
  - (c) improves board performance through board education and enriched input and deliberation.
1. The board's annual planning cycle will conclude each year on the last day of October so that administrative planning and budgeting can be based on accomplishing a one (1)-year segment of the board's most recent statement of long-term Ends/Goals.
  2. The cycle will start with the board's development of its agenda for the next year. The annual planning calendar will include:
    - 2.1 Consultations with selected groups in the community, or other methods of gaining community ownership input will be determined and arranged in the first (1<sup>st</sup>) quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.
    - 2.2 Board development and training designed to improve the board's ability to perform the work identified in the board's job description, including governance education and education related to Ends/Goals determination, such as presentations by futurists, demographers, advocacy groups, and staff, will be arranged in the first (1<sup>st</sup>) quarter, to be held during the balance of the year.
    - 2.3 Scheduled monitoring reports. These will be included on the agenda.
    - 2.4 Superintendent contract renewal and conditions, to be decided after a review of monitoring reports received during the last twelve (12) months.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Board President's Role (NEW)**

The president of the Board of Directors provides leadership to the board, ensures the integrity of the board's process, exercises interpretive responsibilities and normally serves as the board's official spokesperson.

Accordingly:

1. The board president's job is to assure that the board's conduct is consistent with its own rules and those legitimately imposed upon it from outside the district.
  - 1.1 Meeting discussion content will be on those issues which, according to board policy, clearly belong to the board to decide or to monitor.
  - 1.2 Discussion of incidental information that is for neither monitoring performance nor board decisions will be minimized and always noted as such.
  - 1.3 Deliberation will be fair, open, and thorough, but also timely, orderly, and kept to the point.
  - 1.4 Board meeting debriefings are timely, and periodic self-assessments ensure process improvements.
2. The authority of the board president consists of making decisions that fall within topics covered by board policies on Governance Process and Board-Superintendent Linkage (see policies 1000.3 and 1000.4) with the *exception* of :
  - 2.1 employment or termination of a superintendent; and
  - 2.2 instances where the board specifically delegates portions of this authority to others.

The board president is authorized to use any reasonable interpretation of the provisions in these policies.

  - 2.3 The board president is empowered to conduct board meetings with all the commonly accepted power of that position, such as ruling and recognizing.
  - 2.4 The board president has no authority to make decisions about policies created by the board within Ends/Goals and Executive Limitations policy areas. Therefore, the board president has no authority as an individual board member to supervise or direct the superintendent; see policy 1000.3.2.
  - 2.5 The board president will usually represent the board to outside parties in announcing board-stated positions and in stating chair decisions and interpretations within the area delegated to the board president, unless this authority is delegated.

- 2.6 The board president may delegate this authority, but remains accountable for its use.
- 3. Other duties of the president include:
  - 3.1 compiling and facilitating the board's summative evaluation of the superintendent;
  - 3.2 executing all documents authorized by the board, except as otherwise provided by law;  
and
  - 3.3 on behalf of the board, and in concert with the superintendent, developing proposed board meeting agendas consistent with the board's annual calendar.

The authority enumerated in this policy constitutes the full and total delegation of responsibility by the board.

Cross References:  
Legal References:  
Adoption Date:

**Board Members' Code of Conduct (NEW)**

The Board of Directors commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike, and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as board members.

1. Board members will represent the interests of the entire community. This accountability to the whole district supersedes:
  - 1.1 any conflicting loyalty a member may have to other advocacy or interest groups;
  - 1.2 loyalty based upon membership on other boards or staffs;
  - 1.3 conflicts based upon the personal interests of any board member who is also a parent of a student in the district; or
  - 1.4 conflicts based upon being a relative of an employee of the district.
2. Members must avoid conflicts of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility.
  - 2.1 There will be no self-dealing or business conducted by a member with the district except to the extent expressly permitted by law and appropriately disclosed. Members will annually disclose to one another their involvements with other organizations, with vendors, or any associations which might be or might reasonably be seen as being a conflict.
  - 2.2 When the board is to decide upon an issue, about which a member has an unavoidable conflict of interest, that member shall absent herself or himself without comment from not only the vote, but also from the deliberation.
  - 2.3 Board members will not use their board position to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members or close associates. Should a board member apply for employment, she or he must first resign from the board.
3. Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization.
  - 3.1 Members' interaction with the superintendent or with staff must recognize the lack of authority vested in individuals except when explicitly board authorized. Members will not give personal direction to any part of the operational organization or assume personal responsibility for resolving operational problems or complaints.
  - 3.2 Members' interaction with public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any board member but the president, or designee, to speak for the board except to repeat explicitly stated board decisions.
  - 3.3 Except for participation in board deliberation about whether the superintendent has achieved any reasonable interpretation of board policy, members will not publicly express individual negative judgments of performance of the superintendent or employees of the superintendent/district.

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4. Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and other matters that may compromise the integrity or legal standing of the board and district. Materials shared or notes taken within executive session will not be removed from the session. Executive sessions are confidential. Discussions held in executive session are not to be discussed with anyone else other than board members, superintendent, and legal counsel.
5. To build trust among members and to ensure an environment conducive to effective governance, individual members will:
  - 5.1 Focus on issues rather than personalities.
  - 5.2 Support decisions of the full board.
  - 5.3 Exercise honesty in all written and interpersonal interaction, never intentionally misleading or misinforming one another.
  - 5.4 Criticize privately, praise publicly.
  - 5.5 Make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the district and one another.
  - 5.6 Never embarrass each other or the district.
  - 5.7 Maintain an effort to foster unity and harmony within the board.
  - 5.8 Abide by their own rules and policies.
  - 5.9 Grow as a board member by attending workshops and other levels of in-service training.
  - 5.10 Not surprise the superintendent or board members at board meetings or public venues with “hidden agendas” or unexpected topics.

The Board of Directors has a right to expect adherence to the school board members’ code of ethics; see policy 1815.

Cross References:  
(cf.: 1311 – Policy Manuals)  
Legal References:  
Adoption Date:

**Board Committee Principles (NEW)**

Board committees, when used, will be assigned so as to reinforce the wholeness of the board's job and so as to never interfere with delegation from board to superintendent. Board committees will be advisory in nature. The school board may accept or reject all or some of the committee's recommendations.

Accordingly:

1. Board committees are to help the board do its job, as defined in policy 1000.3.2 Board Job Description, not to help or advise the staff. Committees ordinarily will assist the board by preparing policy alternatives and implications for board deliberation. In keeping with the board's broader focus, board committees will normally not have direct dealings with current staff operations.
2. Board committees may not speak or act for the board except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes. Expectations and authority will be carefully stated in order not to conflict with authority delegated to the superintendent.
3. Board committees cannot exercise authority over the superintendent or staff.
4. Board committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole. Therefore, a board committee that has helped the board create policy on some topic will not be used to monitor organizational performance on that same subject.
5. Committees will be used sparingly and ordinarily in an *ad hoc* capacity.
6. Committees report to the board as a whole and not to individual board members.
7. Composition of the committee shall be according to its stated purpose.
8. This policy applies to any group which is formed by board action, whether or not it is called a committee and regardless whether the group includes board members. It does not apply to committees formed under the authority of the superintendent.
9. All requirements of the Open Meetings Act which bind the work of the board also bind the work of board committees.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Board Committee Structure (NEW)**

A committee is a board committee only if its existence and charge come from the board, regardless whether board members sit on the committee. The only board committees are those which are set forth in this policy. Unless otherwise stated, a committee ceases to exist as soon as its task is complete.

The only board committees are those listed in this policy, as follows:

**1. Board Committees:**

1.1 Name:

1.1.1 Purpose/Charge

1.1.1.1 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.1.2 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.2 Membership:

1.1.2.1 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.2.2 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.3 Reporting Schedule:

1.1.3.1 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.3.2 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.4 Term:

1.1.4.1 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.4.2 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.5 Authority over resources:

1.1.5.1 \_\_\_\_\_

1.1.5.2 \_\_\_\_\_

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Cost of Governance (NEW)**

Because poor governance costs more than learning to govern well, the board will invest in its governance capacity.

Accordingly:

- 1.** Board skills, methods, and supports will be sufficient to assure governing with excellence.
  - 1.1 Training and retraining will be used liberally to orient new members and candidates for membership, as well as to maintain and increase existing member skills and understandings.
  - 1.2 Outside monitoring assistance will be arranged so that the board can exercise confident control over organizational performance. This includes, but is not limited to, the fiscal audit.
  - 1.3 Outreach mechanisms will be used as needed to ensure the board's ability to listen to community owner viewpoints and values of the Yakima School District related to the development of the district's Ends/Goals. This will include ensuring board contact information is publicly available.
- 2.** Costs will be prudently incurred, though not at the expense of endangering the development and maintenance of superior capability. Annually, the board will develop and approve a budget for training, monitoring and advocacy mechanisms for the coming year. Additional member commitments or expenditures require board approval.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date:

**Process for Addressing Board Member Violations (NEW)**

The board and each of its members are committed to full compliance with the provisions of the board's policies. In the event of a member's violation of policy, the board will seek remedy by the following process:

1. Converse in a private setting between the offending member and the board president or other individual member.
2. Discuss in a private session between the offending member and the full board, as permitted by law.
3. Possibly remove from any leadership or committee positions to which the offending member has been appointed or elected.
4. Publicly censure the offending member of the board.

This process will normally be progressive, except at the discretion of the board.

Cross References:

Legal References:

Adoption Date: