

POLICY – BOARD COMMITMENT AND GOVERNING APPROACH

GP-1

As the representative of the North Thurston Public Schools community, the Board of Directors is to set Strategic Outcomes (Ends) Policies and ensure achievement of these.

The Board, through example, will set a standard of excellence and integrity for the organization. In order to carry out this role effectively, the Board of Directors is committed to functioning in a collaborative manner that will retain the confidence and trust of its communities.

The Board's governing approach will:

- Clearly distinguish between Board and Superintendent roles.
- Emphasize an outward focus.
- Demonstrate commitment to community engagement.
- Encourage diverse perspectives while building consensus.
- Promote collaborative, collective decision-making.
- Demonstrate pro-active, forward thinking and strategic leadership.

The Board recognizes that its role is in governance, not management. Further, the Board recognizes its role in advocating for and serving its many stakeholders.

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. Each Board Member will support North Thurston Public Schools in achieving its Strategic Outcomes (Ends) Policies. This responsibility will take clear precedence over any role the Board Director may have to represent a particular constituency. A Board Member will be in conflict of interest if an issue under consideration by the Board could result in a personal or business gain.
3. The Board will cultivate a sense of group responsibility for excellence in governing and hence will enforce whatever self-discipline is needed to govern with excellence. This will involve:
 - Ensuring that the Board maintains a structure and process that will enhance its governance effectiveness.
 - Self-discipline with regard to such matters as attendance, preparation for meetings, respect of roles, code of conduct, and ensuring the continuity of governance capability.

- Annual review of the Board's committee structure and membership and recruitment plan.
 - Annual self-assessment related to effectiveness in fulfilling its mandate, goals, and the Board's compliance with its own policies.
 - Continual Board development including new Board Member Orientation and Ongoing Continuing Education.
 - Periodic discussion of governance process improvement.
4. The Board will be an initiator of policy. The Board will use the expertise of individual members to enhance the ability of the Board as a body to make policy. The Board will direct, set parameters, and inspire the organization 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 (the Strategic Outcomes/Ends Policies) and not on the administrative means of attaining those effects. Although the Board can change its policies at any time, it will comply with its own policies until such a time as a new consensus policy is developed and approved.
 5. The Board will speak with one voice, once Board decisions have been made.
 6. The Board will ensure that a process is in place to facilitate ongoing Board learning. Continual Board development will include orientation of new members to North Thurston Public Schools' key information and the governance process as well as ongoing Board continuing education.
 7. The Board will allow no officer, individual, or committee of the Board to hinder or be an excuse for not fulfilling group obligations.

Adopted:

May 16, 2017

North Thurston Public Schools
Board of Directors