BIGGS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Governance Handbook

Board of Trustees
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Adopted: 2016

This handbook reflects the governance team's work on creation of a framework for effective governance. This involves ongoing discussions about unity of purpose, roles, commitment to norms and coming to agreement on standards/formal structures that will enable the governance team to perform its responsibilities in a way that best benefits all children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE 1

Our Beliefs 1

BUSD Board of Education Standards 2

Limits of Board Member Authority 2

Board Meeting Management 2

Individual Board Member requests for action 2

Voting 3

Closed Session and the Brown Act 3

Individual Board Member requests for Information 3

Self-monitoring of governance team effectiveness 3

Visiting schools 3

Handling concerns from the public and staff 4

Six R's of Communication 4

Email 5

Role and responsibilities of the Board President 6

Role and responsibilities of the Board Vice President 6

Role of the Clerk 7

Designated Spokesperson(s) 7

All Board Members – Events 8

Role of the Superintendent 9-10

Code of Ethics for School Board Members 11

AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP 12

STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES TO SUPPORT EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

Effective governance teams discuss and agree on the formal structures and processes used by the trustees and the Superintendent in their functioning as a team (e.g., processes or structures for agenda setting, set-up of Board room and table, agenda structure, handling complaints or concerns from the community, bringing up a new idea); how governance teams operate, and how they do business. These agreements about how groups will operate are often called standards.

OUR BELIEFS:

We have an obligation to set an example of good government in action for our community. We will model dignified problem solving for our community and our children. The Board President works with the Superintendent to ensure Board Meeting effectiveness. We intend that our Board Meetings proceed professionally, efficiently and effectively and that district staff will have the opportunity to provide necessary background materials and information to the Board in a respectful environment. Each Board Member must have the opportunity to express his or her viewpoint during Board deliberation. Everyone in attendance at Board Meetings will be treated with dignity and respect.

It is essential that important information be communicated to members of the Board, the staff and the community in as timely a fashion as possible. Board Members and the Superintendent have an obligation to communicate clearly about district issues to the staff and community. We recognize that some situations have legal or other considerations that may place restrictions on what may be told to the media or public. Confidential issues must remain confidential. It is important that the Board speak with clarity and consistency regarding Board actions in order to maintain the trust of our community.

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS

The following standards were developed to support and promote the effectiveness of our governance team.

Issue	Standard
Limits of Board Member Authority	• The Governing Board recognizes that the Board is the unit of authority over the District and that a Board Member has no individual authority. Board Members shall hold the education of students above any partisan principle, group interest, or personal interest. • Individual Board Members do not have the authority to resolve complaints. Any Board Member approached directly by a person with a complaint should refer the complainant to the Superintendent or designee so that the problem may receive proper consideration and be handled through the appropriate district process.

Issue	Standard
Board Meeting management	• We understand that Board Meetings are meetings of the Board held in public, not open forum town hall meetings. • We will keep this in mind as we conduct our meetings, allowing the public to provide input at the time allotted to ensure the multiple voices of the community inform Board deliberations. • However, when the Board deliberates, it will be a time for the Board to listen and learn from each other, taking the public input into consideration, not a time to re-engage with the public. • We will consistently abide by our formal processes relating to this issue so that all persons are treated fairly and equally. • We will review our policies, bylaws and standards relating to Board Meeting management (e.g., time limits on input from members of the public), revising or reaffirming them as appropriate.

Issue	Standard
Individual Board Member requests for action	• The only authority to direct action rests with the full Board sitting at the Board table. • A majority vote sets such direction. • Individual Board Members may request future agenda items through the Board President or Superintendent.

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS (Cont'd)

Issue	Standard
Voting	• Each trustee respects the right of other trustees to vote no, yes, or abstain on an issue.

Issue	Standard
Closed Session and the Brown Act	• The Brown Act prohibits Board Members from disclosing information discussed during closed session. It is in violation of the law to do so.

Issue	Standard
Individual Board Member requests for information	• An individual Board Member will request information pertaining to an agenda item through the Superintendent. • Individual Board Members will self-monitor to ensure one person's request for information does not divert an inappropriate amount of time from staff efforts to achieve district goals.

Issue	Standard
Self-monitoring of governance team effectiveness	• We will schedule a workshop annually to review governance team agreements and processes by reviewing the Governance Handbook.

Issue	Standard
Visiting Schools	• Visits are encouraged. • As a professional courtesy, trustees will notify the Superintendent prior to making an arrangement for the visit. • Trustees will also be cautious about encroaching on the learning environment. To assist in this matter, the Superintendent will ensure principals and teachers know that a teacher does not need to interrupt his/her lesson when a Board Member visits a classroom. Many Board Members have dual roles i.e. parent/guardian and BPA. When a Board member is visiting a school in a non- Board Member role they must follow the Board Policy. • The Superintendent will make arrangements for the Board Members to visit each school annually.

Issue	Standard
Handling concerns from the public and staff	• When someone brings a concern to the Board, we will listen carefully, remembering we are only hearing one side of the story, and then we will direct that person to the person in the District most appropriate and able to help them resolve their concern. • We will make sure the person having the concern is put in contact with the Superintendent. • This ensures everyone is treated fairly, equally and expeditiously and that the processes and procedures of the District are upheld. • This clarifies that one Board Member has no individual authority to fix a problem.

SIX R's of COMMUNICATION

Receive:

Listen to what the person has to say without preparing a response.

Repeat:

Paraphrase or ask a question to clarify for understanding. We will ask the person to identify those to whom they have spoken about the matter prior to contacting a Board Member.

Request:

Ask what the person would like the Board Member to do with the information and/or what they see as a solution to the problem.

Review:

Go over the real options available to the person to remedy the situation.

Redirect:

Put the person back into the system at the appropriate place-remembering lines of authority and chains of command. We will not divulge confidential information to the community members or staff. *Remember: Uniform Complaint forms are available in the District Office.*

Report:

We will maintain open lines of communication between the Board and the Superintendent and will notify the Superintendent of the conversation as soon as possible:

- So the Superintendent can verify or clarify the situation and follow–through as necessary and /or appropriate.
- So that the Superintendent knows first hand what the Board Member said to the community or staff member.
- We will ask the community or staff member to follow-up with us about the issue.

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS (Cont'd)

Issue	Standard
Email	• We will use email carefully to ensure that we do not violate the Brown Act which prohibits Board Members from exchanging facts to – Develop collective concurrence – Advance or clarify an issue – Facilitate agreement or compromise – Advance ultimate resolution • We recognize that by using Reply All – Easily makes email part of the deliberative process – Creates a public record – Inhibits opportunity for any other two Board Members to have a conversation on a topic Board Members will be aware of and follow District policy as it pertains to electronic communication.

Issue	Standard
Role and Responsibilities of the Board President	*The Board President has a facilitation role relative to Board Meetings, and acts as spokesperson for the Board. S/he has no more authority than any other Board Member outside of Board Meetings.* **Our Agreement:** The role of the Board President is to: • Chair meetings. • Work with the Superintendent as necessary to help ensure Board Members have the necessary information and materials to make wise decisions. • Make sure that pending agenda items are addressed appropriately. • Confer with the Superintendent before meetings to prepare, as necessary for the upcoming meeting. • Model the tone and behavior the Board wishes to convey to the community. As meeting chair, the Board President will: • Open and preside over meetings. • Introduce agenda items, providing some background information as appropriate, different from background information that is provided by staff *(e.g., "This is an item we have had on our agendas four times in the last three months. We have given it a great deal of consideration and appreciate all of the input we have received from the public and the information staff has provided on the issue. Tonight we will receive additional public input, deliberate further and hope to make a final decision.")*. • Call on speakers. • Ensure that a motion is made at an appropriate time during deliberation or Make a motion him or herself. • Make sure all Board Members have a chance to share in deliberation. • Work to facilitate effective deliberation. • Interpret and clarify for understanding to ensure that all Board Members have an accurate understanding as the deliberation proceeds. • Wait until all other Board Members who wish to speak on an issue have done so before adding his or her own comments. • Call for a vote restating the motion. • Clarify and authenticate all action, order and procedures of the Board. • Adjourn meetings. • Remind the governance team and audience members of any meeting guidelines and Professional Governance Standards the Board has adopted, as necessary. • Work with the Superintendent to make sure there is appropriate follow-up and clarification of possible options for the Board following the Board Meeting. • Serve as the spokesperson for the Board – always bearing in mind the direction and commitment of the Board given during Board Meetings. • Sign the minutes.

Issue	Standard
Role and Responsibilities of the Board Vice President	• The Board Vice President assumes all the functions and responsibilities of the Board President in the absence of the Board President.

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS (Cont'd)

Issue	Standard
Role of the Clerk	**Our Agreement:** The duties of the clerk shall be to: • Certify or attest to actions taken by the Board when required. • Maintain such other records or reports as required by law. • Sign documents on behalf of the District as directed by the Board. • Serve as presiding officer in the absence of the President and Vice President. • Chair "Night of the Stars." • Perform any other duties assigned by the Board.

Issue	Standard
Designated Spokesperson(s)	**Our Agreement:** In most cases, everyone is comfortable having the press contact any Board Member. However, occasionally an issue requires there be one chief spokesperson. Who fills this role may vary from year to year and from issue to issue. The designated spokesperson will vary depending on the issue or situation: • **Crisis**: The Superintendent will be the primary spokesperson and may involve the Board President at his/her discretion. • **Meeting Information** (e.g., Board Meetings, agenda items, study sessions): The Board President and the Superintendent will serve as primary spokespersons. • **Core Values / Vision / District Priorities / General District Information:** All governance team members may serve as spokespersons. • During the Annual Governance Workshop the governance team will discuss which team members are going to be networking with which community groups and organizations. • If a Board Member is invited to speak to a community group or organization on behalf of the Board, s/he will make sure other Board Members know about the invitation and will request updated district information as appropriate. • The Board Member visiting a community group will provide a report to the Board at the next Board Meeting under Agenda Item: ***Report from Board Members.***

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS (Cont'd)

Issue	Standard
All Board Members	Board Members are invited and encouraged to participate in the Events of the Biggs Unified School District as follows: August: Welcome Back Breakfast September: Back to School Night at all three school sites October: Homecoming activities November: Richvale Spaghetti Fundraiser December: Winter Programs at Biggs Elementary/Richvale Elementary February: FFA Dinner May: Variety Show Scholarship Night Night of the Stars AKA Spotlight on Academic Excellence Graduations from Biggs & Richvale Elementary Schools and Biggs High School Spring Sing at Richvale Elementary School Year: Various sporting events Monthly Board Meetings Butte County Workshops

Issue	Standard
Role of the Superintendent	*Our school community has high expectations of our schools. As our budget has diminished, our Superintendent and Principals have taken over responsibilities normally delegated to other administrators. In assessing our needs to insure the future of our District, the following sets forth functions and expectations for our Superintendent. This document is by no means a comprehensive list of the Superintendent's responsibilities. We will update this document as we identify additional areas that we expect our Superintendent to address.* * **Expectations For Our Superintendent:** • **District Governance Team.** Lead the governance team to establish and implement Professional Governance Standards and an Ethics Statement for the Board Members and the Superintendent. Lead the governance team in the development of core values. Work with the governance team to develop a vision and set the direction for the District. • **Long Range Plans and Strategic Initiatives.** As a member of the District Governance Team lead the District in setting and implementing long-range plans, priorities, strategic initiatives, and action steps. • **Instructional Leadership**. Develop the best possible attainable program of education. Keep informed of current curricular and educational thoughts, trends, and practices as well as proposed legislation impacting the District. Move the District forward in developing goals and action steps to identify and assess progress toward meeting our instructional goals. Assures continuous study and revision of the curricular program. Work collaboratively with the site leadership (Principal and teacher leaders) to assure that the District's students are continually progressing toward meeting or exceeding state and district content. • **Budget and Leadership.** Maintain budget oversight. Establish systems of control that account for district funds. Keep current on district and state funding and resources. Administer the budget and keep expenditures within those limits. Assure compliance with funded and unfunded mandates. Present to the Board long-range financial needs and budget proposals. Lead the District's school community in establishing budget priorities. Take measures to enhance revenues through advocacy (such as school foundation, school/community fundraisers) by significant daily and weekly communications and meetings

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS (Cont'd)

Issue	Standard
Role of the Superintendent Continued	• **Communication, Community and Leadership.** Open and maintain lines of communication and cooperative working relationships with our school community. Establish communication channels with our school staff, our community and surrounding communities. Speak on behalf of the District. Prepare reports for public release. Restore and establish consistency and stability with the District's most important resources: teachers and support personnel. • **Personnel Management and Leadership**. Reorganize and implement effective, well-organized personnel practices. Follow appropriate collective bargaining processes. Communicate and implement bargained agreements. Manage district litigation. Provide support for new teachers as well as supervising and coaching for district principals to assure success. • **Board Policies and Leadership.** Bring and keep the District current with all state and federal laws that have been added or amended over the past years. • **Technology and Leadership.** Develop a five-year technology plan. • **Special Education**. Oversight of special education. Maximize resources in serving our students with special education. Be aware of and manage encroachment of the District budget along with pending litigation, shared services, and SELPA. **It is expected that the Superintendent may delegate some of the authority and responsibilities of the position. However, the Superintendent has the final responsibility under such delegation.*

BUSD BOARD OF EDUCATION STANDARDS (Cont'd)

Issue	Standard
Code of Ethics for School Board Members	Each school Board Member shall abide by the following Code of Ethics for School Board Members: • I will uphold and enforce all laws, rules and regulations of the State Board of Education, and court orders pertaining to schools. Desired changes shall be brought about only through legal and ethical procedures. • I will make decisions in terms of the educational welfare of children and will seek to develop and maintain our schools to meet the individual needs of all children regardless of their ability, race, creed, sex, or social standing. • I will confine my board action to policy making, planning, and appraisal, and I will help to frame policies and plans only after the Board has consulted those who will be affected by them. • I will carry out my responsibility not to administer the schools, but together with my fellow Board Members, to see that they are well run. • I will recognize that authority rests with the Board of education and will make no personal promises nor take any private action that may compromise the Board. • I will refuse to surrender my independent judgment to special interest or partisan political groups or to use the schools for personal gain or for the gain of friends. • I will hold confidential all matters pertaining to the schools, which if disclosed would needlessly injure individuals or the schools. In all other matters, I will provide accurate information and, in concert with my fellow Board Members, communicate to the Superintendent the perspective of the community for its school. • I will vote to appoint the best qualified personnel available after consideration of the recommendation of the Superintendent. • I will support and protect school personnel in proper performance of their duties.

BIGGS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT GOVERNANCE TEAM

AGREEMENTS TO FACILITATE GOVERNANCE LEADERSHIP

A major difference between groups and teams is that teams have clear agreements (norms that identify expectations for behavior, and protocols that describe how the team will operate) set by the team's members. Once developed, these norms and standards shape how team members behave with each other and how they perform their responsibilities.

Group expectations help a group work together to not only address difficult issues in an objective and consistent way, but also to confirm what each member will do in the normal course of business to help the team succeed.

- CSBA

BUSD Governance Team Norms and Standards

The Board of Education for the Biggs Unified School District is entrusted by the community to uphold the Constitutions of California and the United States, to protect the public interest in schools, and to ensure that a high quality education is provided to each student.

To effectively meet district challenges, the Board and Superintendent must function together as a governance leadership team. Agreed upon behaviors (or norms) and operating procedures (or standards) support consistent behaviors and actions among team members.

The purpose of the BUSD governance team agreements is to ensure a positive and productive working relationship among Board Members, the Superintendent, district staff, students, and the community. Our beliefs, standards, and Code of Ethics were developed for and by the members of the governance team, and may be modified over time as needed.

We have reviewed and agree to follow the aforementioned governance team norms and standards in support of a positive and productive working relationship among the Biggs Unified School District Board of Education, staff, students and the community. We shall renew this agreement at the Annual Governance Workshop of the BUSD Board of Education.

Affirmed on this 5th day of October, 2016.

Kari Wheeler, Board President

Dennis Slusser, Member

Kathryn Sheppard, Vice President

Pamela Sheppard, Member

America Navarro, Clerk

Doug Kaelin, Superintendent