

Santa Rosa City School District

Governance Team Handbook



Roxanne McNally, Board President
Nick Caston, Board Vice President
Jeremy De La Torre, Clerk of the Board
Sarah Jenkins, Trustee
Mark Kirby, Trustee
Omar Medina, Trustee
Donna Prak, Trustee

Lisa August, Interim Superintendent

MISSION STATEMENT

Students will be educated in a safe environment where they acquire critical thinking and social-emotional skills necessary to thrive in an evolving society.

VISION STATEMENT

Santa Rosa City Schools ensures equitable access to an excellent and enriching educational experience grounded in the assets of our students, staff, and community.

Core Values:

1. Integrity
2. Inclusion
3. Accountability
4. Compassion
5. Excellence

Equity Statement (DRAFT):

Santa Rosa City Schools is committed to ensuring that every student—regardless of race, ethnicity, language, ability, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, or background—has the opportunity to thrive in our schools. We recognize that historic and systemic inequities create barriers to success, and we are dedicated to dismantling those barriers through intentional action.

We affirm our responsibility to:

- **Provide equitable access** to rigorous academics, enrichment, and social-emotional supports.
- **Honor the strengths and identities** of every student, family, and staff member.
- **Allocate resources fairly** to meet the diverse needs of our schools and communities.
- **Foster inclusive environments** where all students feel safe, valued, and respected.
- **Engage in continuous reflection and improvement** to ensure equity is embedded in our policies, practices, and decision-making.

Through this commitment, we strive to empower every student to reach their fullest potential and to graduate prepared to succeed in an evolving society.

Strategic Goals (Buckets):

1. **Academics and Enrichment:** Provide outstanding educational and enrichment programs that motivate and prepare all students for their respective futures.
2. **Safety and Security:** Provide learning environments that are physically and emotionally safe for all students and staff.
3. **Fiduciary:** Act as a trusted agent of the community's educational assets.
4. **Recruit, Retain, and Support Student-Centered Staff:** Recruit, retain and support high quality staff who center students and represent District core values.

- 5. Communication:** Santa Rosa City Schools will communicate clearly, consistently and effectively to build trust, strengthen relationships, and engage the community in support of student success.

BOARD PROTOCOLS

Section 1 Board Meeting Structure & Norms

Leadership Virtues

- Instill **trust & autonomy**
- Prioritize **open communication**, honesty, and accountability
- **Lead by example**—embrace humility and own mistakes
- Ensure **clarity on expectations**; focus strategically, not operationally
- Support effective governance by acting collectively as a Board and respecting the Superintendent’s authority.
- Promote active listening, questioning, and transparency.

Section 2 Agenda Process & Board Conduct

Agenda & Communication Protocols

- **Requesting Agenda Items:**
 - Submit written requests to the Superintendent and Board President—outline: *What, Why, When*
 - If denied, a rationale must be provided
 - “Non-agendized” = no discussion. Adhere to **Robert’s Rules** and the **Brown Act**
 - Require at least **four members to agree** to add the agenda item (during the Board Meeting, which can be added to the next Board Meeting)
- **Meeting logistics:**
 - **1:1 Superintendent updates:** Scheduled as needed per member preferences
 - Keep board meetings **strategic and efficient**; avoid surprises—submit questions in advance

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work study sessions: Use them for deep dives, strategy, and policy thoughtfulness ○ Maintain a clear cadence between governance and administration ○ Use consent agendas wisely; only pull items if essential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Public comment guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allocate dedicated agenda time for public input ○ Include student voices regularly ○ Consistency is key: set and enforce time limits ○ Periodically review and adjust structure/timing—Superintendent will oversee
<p>Board Conduct & Public Perception</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote trust through transparent, collaborative processes rather than informal lobbying or public negotiations. ● Steer clear of attending parent meetings in an official capacity—maintain the distinction between parent and trustee. ● Site visits protocol: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordinate via email with the Superintendent, Executive Assistant, and the Principal—24-hour notice preferred ○ Avoid attending parent meetings in an official role ○ Use text messages for last-minute changes ○ Be mindful of public perception during all visits ● Responding to emails: (Draft to be provided for consideration)
<p>Social Media</p>	<p>Board members are committed to upholding the highest standards of transparency, professionalism, and respect in all forms of communication, including social media. To ensure that public trust is maintained and that Board deliberations occur only in properly noticed meetings, Board members agree to the following practices:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Maintain transparency and integrity by refraining from interacting with one another on social media platforms regarding District business. ● Foster open access by making their official Board member social media pages available to everyone. ● Promote accountability by allowing comments on their official pages, when enabled, without deleting or hiding them. ● Model respectful engagement by setting clear decorum standards and expectations on their official pages, including prohibiting profanity or threats. ● Encourage civil dialogue by not engaging in debates or arguments on their official pages. ● Ensure impartiality by refraining from offering personal opinions on matters that may come before the Board for action. This includes refraining from “liking” or commenting on another trustee’s post. ● Clarify their role by posting a disclaimer that they are not speaking on behalf of the District or the Board, and that their official page is not intended to serve as a public forum for school board business. (moving forward)
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<p>Section 3 Committees, Policy & Strategic Focus</p>	
<p>Committees</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board-established: Full Brown Act compliance and public notices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Finance Subcommittee ▪ Citizens’ Oversight Committee (statutory requirement)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Others may be formed as appropriate ○ Superintendent-led: Operate under Superintendent’s discretion/ advisory to the superintendent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fiscal Stabilization Advisory Committee (example) ○ Ad Hoc: Task-specific, temporary ○ 7–11 Committee: Advisory committees for surplus property. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ EDC 17387, 17388, 17389, 17390, 17391 ● Best practices: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clearly define objectives, membership, and timelines ○ Route questions through the Superintendent or the committee chair ○ Avoid unnecessary workload—be strategic ○ Chief Business Official will chair the Fiscal Stabilization Committee ○ Maintain clear separation of Board vs Staff responsibilities ○ Board Policy reviews should be staff-driven
Board Policies (BPs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SRCS staff draft and recommend board policies ● Ensure full legal compliance ● Schedule regular work-study sessions for policy onboarding—targeting new Trustees when onboarding. ● Prioritize time-sensitive and compliance-related policy items ● Provide a First Read of the Board Policy on the agenda (as an information item of sorts) and offer public comment. Then a second read as an Action Item.
Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Strategic Planning Sessions: Conduct a full-day session twice per year

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">o Review and affirm: Mission, Vision, Core Valueso Identify priority areas with budget impacto Set measurable goals (e.g., MTSS, safety, organizational management)o Encourage alignment and proactive communication district-wide
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Board Bylaws: [Board Policy Manual](#)